

Romantic Ecologies

19TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY FOR ENGLISH ROMANTICISM (GER)
29 September – 2 October 2022 | Haus St. Ulrich, Kappelberg 1, 86150 Augsburg

www.uni-augsburg.de/philhist/romantic-ecologies-2022

Hosted by

University of Augsburg, Chair of English Literature
Martin Middeke and David Kerler

Keynote Speakers

Jeremy Davies (University of Leeds, UK)
Dewey W. Hall (California Polytechnic Pomona, USA)
Timothy Morton (Rice University, Houston TX, USA)
Kate Rigby (Universität Köln)

Contact

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**Gesellschaft für
englische Romantik**
German Society for
English Romanticism

GESELLSCHAFT DER
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Contact

The 'Romantic Ecologies'-conference is hosted by the Chair of English Literature at the University of Augsburg. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the organisers Martin Middeke (martin.middeke@uni-a.de) and David Kerler (david.kerler@uni-a.de).

Conference Venue

- View and Address
- How to reach Augsburg from Munich Airport



(Haus St. Ulrich, image taken from house website)

Haus St. Ulrich – Conference Hotel in the Diocese of Augsburg

Address:

Kappelberg 1, 86150 Augsburg

Phone: +49 (0)821 3152 0

Image above: William Blake, "Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing", 1786
(taken from tate.org.uk) CC BY NC ND 3.0

Useful information for travelling with public transport in Germany:

- **COVID-19 transmission and protective measures:** wearing a FFP2 mask is obligatory;
- Downloading the 'Deutsche Bahn App' would help you find the route tailored to your arrival time in Munich.
For Android users: [DB Navigator – Apps bei Google Play](#)
For the users of Apple products: [DB Navigator im App Store \(apple.com\)](#)

The way from Munich Airport, terminal 1 or 2, to Haus St. Ulrich:

1. Take **S1 or S8** train (S-Bahn) from Munich Airport to Munich Main Station (München Hbf). (S8 is faster)
2. At Munich Main Station go up to the main hall where long-distance trains arrive and depart.
3. We suggest taking **the regional train (Regionalbahn, RB)** to Augsburg and **not the ICE**. Regional trains that pass Augsburg have the following final destinations: Dinkelscherben, Donauwörth, Treuchtlingen, or Ulm Hbf. It is also often shown on the departure board if the train will make a stop in Augsburg. The said trains often depart from platform 17 in Munich. Please go to the information desk in case you are not sure.
4. Leave the regional train at the stop "Augsburg Haunstetterstraße" and go down to the tram station.
5. Take **tram 2** towards 'Augsburg West P+R' or **tram 3** towards 'Augsburg Hbf' and alight at station 'Theodor-Heuss Platz/IHK.'
6. From there: 4 min walk to the hotel (**see the picture on the next page**).

PROGRAMME

Thursday, September 29

14:00–16:00 Registration

17:00 Conference Opening

Music

Dorothee Velten (Augsburg, vocals) and **Christoph Teichner**
(Augsburg, grand piano)

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: “Auf Flügeln des Gesanges“ (Words: Heinrich Heine)

Welcome Addresses by

Klaus Maiwald (Dean of the Faculty of Philology and History)

Jens Gurr (President of the German Society for English Romanticism)

Martin Middeke and **David Kerler** (Chair of English Literature)

Music

Edward Elgar: *Sea Pictures*, op. 37, no. 2: “In Haven (Capri)” (Words: C. Alice Elgar)

17:45–18:45 Keynote Address by **Kate Rigby** (Cologne) —
‘A dark unmeaning blank’: Romantic Ecologies at the End of
the World

Chair: **Jens Gurr** (Duisburg-Essen)

19:00 Dinner (Haus St. Ulrich)

20:30 Reception

Music

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach: “The Rainy Day” (Words: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Friday, September 30

9:00–10:30 PANEL 1: Eco-Politics: (Post-)Colonial and/or (Trans-)Atlantic Perspectives
Chair: **Katrin Röder** (Berlin/Bamberg)

Angela Esterhammer (Toronto): Nature, Settlement, and History in John Galt's Transatlantic Tales

Marie Hologa (Dortmund): The Planter Picturesque: Jamaican Plantocracy and Imaginative Geography in Colonial Histories of the Late 18th Century

Sophia Möllers (Dortmund): Infinite Nature, Infinite Ambition: William Godwin's Socio-Political Criticism as Romantic Ecopoetics

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

11:00–12:00 Keynote Address by **Jeremy Davies** (Leeds): Ecology and Industry in the 'Period of Manufactories'
Chair: **Ralf Haekel** (Leipzig)

12:00–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–15:30 PANEL 2: Romantic Ecologies, (Post-)Capitalism and (Post-)Industrialism
Chair: **Gerold Sedlmayr** (Dortmund)

Hélène Ibata (Strasbourg): Revisiting the Romantic Sublime in Landscapes of the Anthropocene

Johannes Schlegel (Würzburg): Romantic Electrification: Re-Reading Electric Energy in the Shelleys

Ute Berns (Hamburg): Ecologies of Steam-Power: Joanna Baillie's 'Address to a Steam-Vessel'

15:35–17:05 PANEL 3: Romantic Biosystems and Their (Inter-)Dependencies, I
Chair: **Christoph Bode** (Munich)

Marvin Reimann (Bonn): ‘Thy function was to heal and to restore’: The River as Ecosystem in William Wordsworth’s *The River Duddon Sonnets*
Yuko Otagaki (Hyogo): Diverse Environmental Aesthetics in European Romantic Pastorals: Cowherd and Milkmaid Songs from the Wave of the Genius Craze

Ian Duncan (Berkeley): Experimental Tourism: Environmental Aesthetics in the Highlands of Scotland

17:05–17:30 Coffee Break

17:30–18:30 Keynote Address by **Timothy Morton** (Houston): Proverbs of Hell
Chair: **Martin Middeke** (Augsburg)

19:00 Dinner at Zeughaus, Augsburg

Saturday, October 1

9:00–10:30 PANEL 4: Romantic Biosystems and Their (Inter-)Dependencies, II
Chair: **Marie Hologa** (Dortmund)

Shinya Matsuzaki (Gunma): Animism Has Always Mattered—Even among English Romantics

Theresa Kelley (Madison): Romantic Epigenesis and Ecology

Alexandra Böhm (Erlangen-Nürnberg): Concepts of Organism and Nature’s Interdependency in British and German Proto-Ecological Children’s Literature of the Romantic Period

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

11:00–12:00 Keynote Address by **Dewey H. Hall** (Pomona): The Ecology of the Goslar Verses: Weather, Pico Viejo, and Material Objects
Chair: **Frank Erik Pointner** (Duisburg-Essen)

12:00–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–15:30 PANEL 5: Ecology and Materiality
Chair: **Stefanie John** (Braunschweig)

Silvia Riccardi (Uppsala): Blake's 'Fibres of life': Anatomy, Botany, and Human Form

Rebekka Rohleder (Flensburg): Mediated Nature in Mary Shelley's *Keepsake Stories*

Joanna E. Taylor (Manchester): Dorothy Wordsworth's Wildness

15:35–17:05 PANEL 6: Romantic Ecologies and Ethics
Chair: **David Kerler** (Augsburg)

Jonathan Culler (Cornell): Addressing Nature

Stefanie John (Braunschweig): The Romantic Child as Environmental Educator: Dara McAnulty's *Diary of a Young Naturalist*

Jennifer Wawrzinek (Berlin): Dorothy Wordsworth's Excriptions: Worlding as Compearance

17:30 City Tour

19:45 Dinner at Ratskeller, Augsburg

Sunday, October 2

9:00–10:30 PANEL 7: Beyond Ecocritical Theory
Chair: **Michael Meyer** (Koblenz-Landau)

Christoph Reinfandt (Tübingen): Ecological Romanticism for the 21st Century? Suzanne Simard's *Finding the Mother Tree*

Catherine Jones (Aberdeen): 'Translations' from Poetry to Music: Concepts of Nature in Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-18) and Liszt's *Album d'un voyageur* (1842)

Tilottama Rajan (Western Ontario): The Textual Ecology of Schelling's *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* (1799)

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

11:00–12:30 PANEL 8: Sustainability and Regeneration in Romantic Aesthetics and Art

Chair: **Sophia Möllers** (Dortmund)

Cynthia Chase (Cornell): Departure and Arrival in the Scottish Highlands

Sebastian Ørtoft Rasmussen (Aarhus): Material Team Spirit: Literary Form and Ecological Sentiment in Charlotte Smith's Geological Poetry

Philipp Erchinger (Düsseldorf): Poetry as Rural Work: Wordsworth's Georgic Ecology

12:30–13:30 Lunch Break

13:30–14:30 General Meeting

END OF CONFERENCE

Speakers and Abstracts

Kate Rigby was awarded an Alexander von Humboldt Professorship in 2021, which she took up at the University of Cologne in February 2022. Having been appointed to one of the world's first professorships of Environmental Humanities at Monash University in 2013, she became the founding Director of the Research Centre for Environmental Humanities at Bath Spa University, U.K., in 2016. Much of her research is focused on the Romantic period, informed by German and British philosophies of nature, ecological feminist, new materialist and decolonial thought. Her monographs include: *Topographies of the Sacred* (2004), *Dancing with Disaster* (2015) and *Reclaiming Romanticism* (2020).

'A dark unmeaning blank': Romantic Ecologies at the End of the World

To reconsider Romantic ecologies within the catastrophic horizon of current ecological crises and climate chaos is to recall that the processes driving what many are today experiencing as end times had already undone any number of other worlds by the early nineteenth century, whilst more were beginning to unravel. The colonial undoing of the socioecological connectivities that sustained the world co-created by the first people of the Americas (and subsequently elsewhere), in consort with their other-than-human kin, had a counterpart in the enclosure of the commons in Britain, which also began during the 16th century, and intensified during the Romantic period. As Jonathan Bate demonstrated in his landmark book on 'Romantic Ecology' (1991), the English labouring class poet John Clare, who had hitherto been a marginal figure in Romanticism Studies, moves in the foreground when viewed through an ecocritical lens attentive to the entanglement of social injustice and ecological damage. Much has been written about Clare's poetic witness to the devastating socioecological impacts of enclosure in the interim. In this lecture, however, I focus instead on Clare's astute diagnosis of the ontological dimensions of enclosure: namely the transformation of a vibrant and nourishing terrain, abounding in diverse agencies and shimmering with inherent significances, into what he refers to in an early poem as 'a dark unmeaning blank' ('A Ramble'). This is another kind of world-ending: an ontological deadening that is integral to the era that I have dubbed the Ploutocene, when the powers of the Underworld, the realm of Plouton in Greek mythology, or combination with those allied to Ploutos, the god of wealth, invade the lifeworld of Earth's Critical Zone through the extraction and combustion of the fossilized remains of the long deceased. The instrumentalizing and extractivist ethos of the Ploutocene renders those in its grip unable to apprehend what Clare calls here the 'witching face of nature.' Yet the deadening, and death-dealing, ontology of the Ploutocene is itself a type of bewitchment: to break out of its spell, the spell cast by 'capitalist sorcery,' as Philippe Pignarre and Isabelle Stengers put it, we need a counterspell. The ingredients for such a counterspell, I propose, might also be found in Clare's poetic witness, conjoining in a unique way aspects of the contemplative, affective, creaturely, prophetic and decolonial eco-poetics, which appear in various guises across the diverse legacy of British Romantic literature.

Angela Esterhammer is Professor of English and Comparative Literature, and Principal of Victoria College, at the University of Toronto. Previously, she held a Chair in English Literature at the University of Zurich and was a Distinguished University Professor at the University of Western Ontario. Books publications include *Creating States* (1994), *The Romantic Performative* (2000), *Romanticism and Improvisation, 1750-1850* (2008), and, most recently, *Print and Performance in the 1820s: Improvisation, Speculation, Identity* (2020). She is the General Editor of *The Works of John Galt*.

Nature, Settlement, and History in John Galt's Transatlantic Tales

The bestselling Scottish writer John Galt worked as a land agent in Upper Canada during the 1820s and studied land use throughout eastern North America, thus giving him a first-hand perspective on issues of settlement and relationships with Indigenous peoples. While Galt's novels *Lawrie Todd; or, The Settlers in the Woods* (1830) and *Bogle Corbet; or, the Emigrants* (1831) are recognized for their in-depth depiction of settler experience in the United States and Canada respectively, his extensive short stories on North American topics remain almost unknown today. Unlike his realistic novels that depict the experience of British emigrants, these stories blend history and fiction in the form of legends set in earlier centuries or in a vague prehistoric past. In two series titled "American Traditions" and "Canadian Sketches" and in the strange tale "The New Atlantis" that posits the pre-history of Indigenous peoples, Galt hybridizes settler experience with romance tradition and uses his remarkable ability to write from different perspectives to produce stories that question the values usually attached to colonial concepts such as "nature" and "civilization." Galt's short stories were remarkably widespread in nineteenth-century print culture, reprinted in American and Canadian newspapers and periodicals in whole and in part, with and without attribution, for the remainder of the century. In many cases, in fact, these fictional tales entered into the historical record of communities in the United States and Canada. Using resonant examples such as "The Bell of St. Regis" (1830) and "The Early Missionaries; or, The Discovery of the Falls of Niagara" (1831), this paper will explore the themes of land, settlement, and Indigenous peoples, and the intersection of fiction and history, in Galt's speculative stories and their unexpected legacy.

Marie Hologa is a research assistant in British Cultural Studies at TU Dortmund. Her dissertation (2014) is on the deconstruction of Scottish nationalism in devolution literature. Further research interests include the construction of race in Romanticism, Transatlantic slavery, the British Empire, travel writing, tourism and postcolonialism.

The Planter Picturesque: Jamaican Plantocracy and Imaginative Geography in Colonial Histories of the Late 18th Century

New Enlightenment genres like colonial histories, natural philosophy and travelogues, often adorned with sketches and engravings, employed Romantic landscaping practices in their literary and visual representations of colonial scenery, f.ex. Jamaica, by deliberately ignoring, concealing or at least beautifying elements of forced captive labour and enslaved Africans, racial terror and violence. Aesthetic categories like the picturesque and the sublime were instrumentalised by planter historians like Edward Long, Matthew Lewis, Bryan Edwards or William Beckford to lobby against increasing sympathies with the abolitionist cause in the metropole with an eye to overwriting "the tropics with European nature, remaking Jamaica into an English countryside or Italian *campagna* with a difference." (Bohls 2014: 10).

The picturesque as "something both sinister and delimiting [...], to naturalize and obscure" (Galperin 2002: 95) was distinctly informed by a metropolitan discourse of taste and therefore adapted to the ideological purposes of both Creole and absentee slave-holders' defense of the plantation system on the tropical island. The lush, exotic and productive space that is constructed as the colonial setting of British economic expansion was thereby represented in familiar terms, countering the anti-slavery rhetoric that the lack of liberty for *all* humans in the colonies is un-British, and instead trying to render the status quo palatable to a large readership in the motherland.

As slavery is silenced or made entirely invisible in the accounts and images of colonial histories, my paper aims at offering a symptomatic reading of this absence in these examples of discursive place-making and imaginative geography of the West Indies.

Sophia Möllers is a PhD student and research assistant in British Literary and Cultural Studies at TU Dortmund. She is currently working on her PhD Thesis on “Inheritance in the Godwinian Novel” and is co-editing a volume on *Romantic Ethics and the ‘Woke’ Romantics* with Marie Hologa (forthcoming in 2022).

Infinite Nature, Infinite Ambition: William Godwin’s Socio-Political Criticism as Romantic Eco-poetics

In his *Thoughts on Man*, William Godwin dedicates a significant section to a critical discussion of astronomical discoveries. While acknowledging the sublime findings of astronomers who muse on the possibility of other planets “stocked with rational inhabitants” (414), the philosopher remains firmly invested in the earth as that element of the universe which demands utmost attention. Godwin is baffled by the political history of man, which seems to him “one tissue of misery and vice” as men not only destroy the environment and kill animals for their subsistence, but also wage war as if “struck with the most pernicious madness.” (416) Praising the omnipotence of nature that must not be subjugated by man’s unbound ambition, the philosopher reveals the complex interdependencies between humanity and the environment by stressing how a continuous advancement of the sciences backed by capitalist endeavours contributes to an abandonment of pressing socio-political issues. This estimation is reflected in his novels, most predominantly in a re-configuration of unobstructed nature as catalyst for self-assertion and escape from the gothic trappings of the law, countering Romanticism’s charge of “wilderness fetishism [...] [...] commonly attributed to the Romantic poetics of solitary rambling.” (Rigby 16)

The proposed paper considers Godwin’s astronomical scepticism as socio-political criticism, reflected in both his late novels and philosophical treatises. By turning away from the sublime cosmos to focus on the dire state of our globe, nature is employed as an affective context to highlight 18th- and 19th-century socio-political ills. Whether in *Imogen’s* unobstructed commons as source of ultimate happiness, *Fleetwood’s* praise of nature as invaluable teacher, or *Cloudesley’s* conceptualisation of the environment as safeguard against political evils, Godwin’s novels cherish nature as essential for humankind. Combined with his philosophical treatises, the texts offer striking insights into Romantic eco-politics, which continue to echo into 21st-century environmental protection against capitalist exploitation. Godwin’s works should therefore be considered alongside poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge, who have been readily accepted as ‘green’ poets, keenly aware of the environmental politics of their times (see Klaus and Cunningham 2012).

Jeremy Davies is Associate Professor of English at the University of Leeds, where he is the convenor of the Environmental Humanities research group. He is the author of *Bodily Pain in Romantic Literature* (2014) and *The Birth of the Anthropocene* (2016), one of the first books to propose a new geological epoch. His current research focusses on a cultural history of Romantic-period schemes to change the physical environment: a book with the working title ‘The Altered Landscape, 1793-1834’ linking literature and philosophy to experiences of agricultural reform, land reclamation, estate management, horticulture and industrial planning. It aims to define a new kind of ‘Romantic ecocriticism.’

Ecology and Industry in the ‘Period of Manufactories’

In addressing this conference to the question of ‘Romantic ecologies’, the Gesellschaft für Englische Romantik sustains an influential tradition. Romanticism has been understood as a point of origin of ecological values. Environmentally minded critics have celebrated both the Romantic ideals of coalescence between external nature and the experiencing subject, and Romanticism’s ironic scrutiny of

that ideal. In this lecture, however, I will take a contrary approach. I argue that amid the current crisis of the Earth system, debates about how Romantic-period literature anticipated modern environmental attitudes have reached their limit. Deeper attention to the historical conditions of Romantic writing enables a different way of looking at Romanticism and its ecologies.

Some of those historical conditions are named by a phrase that is surprisingly little used in Romantic studies: the Industrial Revolution. British Romanticism roughly coincides in time and place with the so-called classic period of Britain's industrialization. The Romantic decades were in part an era of moneyed aggrandizement fuelled by unprecedented fossil fuel use and the accelerating importation of land-hungry resources—cotton, potash, sugar, wood—from overseas. Henry Brougham characterised the interval from the 1770s to the 1820s as the 'period of manufactories.' The literary culture of the 'period of manufactories' might ultimately be significant less for its nurturing of green consciousness than for its ambivalent confrontation with a new carbon- and resource-intensive social order. This lecture will take up Brougham's phrase in order to explore some of the ways in which Romantic writing indexes economic and ecological transformation.

Hélène Ibata is Professor of English and visual studies at the University of Strasbourg. Her work on Romantic visual culture includes *The Challenge of the Sublime: from Burke's Philosophical Enquiry to British Romantic Art* (2018, Manchester University Press). She has also published articles on the sublime, Romantic artist travellers, early panoramas, book illustrations, exhibition practices, William Blake and J.M.W. Turner, in journals like *Word and Image*, *The European Romantic Review*, *Romanticism on the Net* and *The British Art Journal*. Her most recent research focuses on the idea of landscape and its evolution from Romantic times to the current environmental crisis.

Revisiting the Romantic Sublime in Landscapes of the Anthropocene

In an age which has been called the Anthropocene to convey the dramatic impact of human action on the environment, the powerlessness experienced by observers in the face of uncontrollable natural devastation has more than once been translated in terms of the aesthetics of the sublime. Since the 1970s in particular, artists and photographers like Lewis Baltz, Peter Goin, or Robert Adams in North America, Randolph Langenbach and Ian Beesley in England's industrial North, more recently Edward Burtynsky, have thus drawn a new form of fascinating terror from natural spaces transformed by rapid industrialization on a vast scale, referring to the natural and apocalyptic sublime of Romantic painters, while at the same time suggesting more disturbing implications. Terror, awe and a form of aesthetic pleasure are compounded with guilt as the viewer is compelled to observe the irreversible action of humanity. As Michel Ribon writes, "the ultimate catastrophe that is looming, while suggesting the terror that is specific to the aesthetics of the sublime, has nothing sublime about it, inasmuch as it derives from a warped use of our reason and our freedom" (Ribon 1999, 17).

This paper aims to compare some of these contemporary artistic responses to industrialization and ecological degradation with the responses of British Romantic artists to the first Industrial Revolution. It will especially argue that in both situations, the quest for sublimity can be ascribed to a perceived incommensurability of man and the natural world, in a context of dramatic environmental upheavals. At the same time, it will also underline the differences between the two periods, and try to assess the relevance of the aesthetics of the sublime to address today's environmental concerns.

Johannes Schlegel teaches English Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Würzburg. His doctoral dissertation *Anthropologie und Medialität des Bösen bei Blake, Hogg und Byron* was awarded the international Novalis-Prize.

Romantic Electric(a)tion: Re-Reading Electric Energy in the Shelleys

Romantic writings about electricity have proved a fruitful topic for scholars of the period, and the study of electrical discourse is a fast-growing interdisciplinary field. Important and immensely influential studies by, among others, Tim Fulford (2004), Richard C. Sha (2012), and Mary Fairclough (2017) have predominantly focused either on the ways in which electricity appears as an image of revolutionary activity, or on the use of electric imagery in Romantic poetry as a figure for creativity and vitality, thus contextualising it to contemporary medical discourses. In light of recent developments in the field of the so-called energy humanities (Szeman & Boyer, 2017), the proposed paper seeks to re-read electricity not as metaphor or discursive node, but rather as energy and fuel in its own right. As such, it is unlike solid or liquid forms of fuel, which can be stored and released. It is both invisible and ubiquitous. Electricity is not a thing but a set of phenomena produced by the flow of an electric charge; unlike a lump of coal (the epitome of inertia) electricity is never at rest (see Ackerman 2017). By referring to *Prometheus Unbound* and *Frankenstein*, this paper thus seeks to argue that Romantic electric(a)tion renders visible electricity both as a material force of cultural production and a means of cultural acceleration, which establish decisive enmeshments of human subjects, nature, and natural actors.

Ute Berns is Professor of British Literature and Culture at the University of Hamburg. Her research interests are Romantic literature and culture, theories of performance and performativity, and discourses of science, politics, gender, and ecology in literature and culture. Selected publications in romantic studies comprise *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Lovell Beddoes* (with Michael Bradshaw 2007), the monograph *Science, Politics and Friendship in the Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes* (Delaware UP 2012) and, with Susan Gustafson, the cluster issues *Expanding and Blurring Borders in German Romanticism* (2015) and *Figurations of Knowledge in German and British Romanticism(s)* (2017) in *The European Romantic Review*.

Ecologies of Steam-Power: Joanna Baillie's 'Address to a Steam-Vessel'

British romanticism witnessed the emergence of two kinds of knowledge formation that mark the period as a crucial phase in the history of the Anthropocene. The first is a re-conception of the planet's geobiological history that totally eroded the Biblical time frame of creation and envisioned geological deep time (e.g. James Hutton's *Theory of the Earth* 1788). The second is the refined steam technology patented, in several steps, by James Watt in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In the given capitalist framework, that technology catapulted the country into the first industrialization of manufacturing based on fossil fuel. It is through the lens of this conjunction of contemporary geohistory and technology that this paper will address the period's proto-ecological sensibilities as it enters a course of accelerated terraforming in a 'world ecology' (Jason Moore).

As steam engines changed from stationary to more flexible models, they began to provide the motor force for different industries and revolutionized transport, beginning with shipping. Briefly introducing the history of steam ships, the first of which were commercially deployed shortly after 1800, this paper focuses on the contemporary discourse shaping the perception of these human-nonhuman assemblages and the ecologies they impacted. I will showcase Joanna Baillie's "Address to a Steam-Vessel" (1823), so far neglected by her critics. In a form reminiscent of an ode the poem celebrates this new means of transport and its democratizing potential even as it wrestles with a plethora of economic, social and ecological paradoxes that remain unresolved as it closes on the lines "Fitful I gaze with adverse humours teased, / Half sad, half proud, half angry and half pleased". My reading, drawing, not least, on concepts

developed in the field of energy humanities, will investigate the different agencies, material forces and temporalities that shape the ecologies thus envisioned.

Marvin Reimann received his Master's degree in *English Literatures and Cultures* at the University of Bonn in 2018. He is currently a second-year doctoral student and research assistant at the DFG Graduate School 2291 *Contemporary / Literature. History, Theory, and Praxeology* at the same university. His dissertation follows an interdisciplinary approach as it consists in a comparative analysis of selected philosophical texts (Novalis, Schelling, Coleridge) and poems (Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats) with respect to their conceptions of personal temporality by also taking into consideration their scientific backgrounds.

'Thy function was to heal and to restore': The River as Ecosystem in William Wordsworth's *The River Duddon Sonnets*

Despite its altogether favourable reception upon its first publication in April 1820, William Wordsworth's *The River Duddon, A Series of Sonnets* has not garnered much critical attention by literary scholars. In those cases in which it did, however, it has mostly been read as a celebration of the nation expressed through a close depiction of the local (see Bate 2000, 219–27). While such an interpretation is indeed warranted by the sonnets' topographic specificities and historical allusions, it generally tends to neglect the sequence's ecological dimension which is intricately linked to its regionalism. This is why this paper propounds that, by employing a loco-descriptive mode, Wordsworth evokes the idea of the river, "remote from every taint / Of sordid industry," (Wordsworth 1954, sonnet ii, p. 246) as a local ecosystem in which the fluvial, vegetal and animal are presented as mutually interdependent. These thoughts will be further corroborated by taking into account the concept of the hydrologic cycle incorporated by Wordsworth into his sonnet sequence in order to eternalise the constitutive symbiotic relations to which the river gives rise. The permanent yet dynamically varying flow of the Duddon, whose function is "to heal and to restore, / To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute," (ibid., sonnet viii, p. 249) is thus conceived as the life-sustaining base of this ecosystem. As such, it will be further argued, the river also constitutes the livelihood of several human individuals presented in the poems as well as the fertile and inspiring source of the speaker's imagination, thereby revealing "humanity's fundamental connectedness with, and place in the context of, the natural world" (Feder 2002, p. 47). In elaborating these issues, this paper will ultimately elucidate in how far this sonnet sequence, brought to life by the river as the underlying element that connects the thirty-four diverse poems into a unified whole (see Khan 2002) dynamically mirrors the Duddon's flowing movement on a formal level and, in so doing, becomes an integral part of this ecosystem's eternal cyclicity and reciprocity.

Yuko Otagaki is Professor of English at the University of Hyogo, Japan. She is also a member of BARS, JAER and ASLE-Japan (the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment in Japan). Primarily interested in walking literature and travel writing, she has published widely in the field of British Romanticism.

Diverse Environmental Aesthetics in European Romantic Pastorals: Cowherd and Milkmaid Songs from the Wave of the Genius Craze

This paper examines the diversity of environmental aesthetics or sensibility arising from poets from an often overlooked class, focusing on the individual aspects seen in their works as well as the characteristics inherited from Romantic works by middle-class artists. Here are dealt with two female peasant poets who

took advantage of the late eighteenth-century fad for natural genius: Anna Louisa Karsch (1722–1791), a German cowherd woman, and Ann Yearsley (1753–1806), an English milkmaid.

The nature that Karsch and Yearsley depict through writing in the tradition of pastoral and picturesque aesthetics, is not property, where the gaze belongs to the master of all he surveys. Neither is the nature the playground apprehended by Joachim Ritter (1963), disentangled from work to free people to appreciate it aesthetically. As practical users of nature, these poets suffering from agricultural poverty share female sensibility to nature in a ‘tangled wood’ with other female peasants and animals, such as cows and songbirds.

Among many domestic animals in Western countries, cows have played a significant role both in practical and cultural senses. Additionally, the factory farming system and its negative environmental impact have been significant social issues for decades. Showing how the figures of the cowherd and milkmaid came to be freighted with class, gender and racial bias, this paper communicates how economic exploitation and animal suffering have co-existed with a triumphalist narrative of milk as a catalyst of Western civilisation. Ultimately, these poems will be used as a springboard to critique a direction taken in our society, thus helping us explore alternative human and non-human relationships in the 21st century.

Ian Duncan is Florence Green Bixby Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley, where he works on the novel, Scottish literature, Romanticism, and Victorian literature and culture. Besides having authored and (co-)edited numerous monographs and collections in the field of British Romanticism, he edited novels by Walter Scott, James Hogg, Robert Louis Stevenson and Arthur Conan Doyle for Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford University Press). He is a general editor of the *Collected Works of James Hogg* (Edinburgh University Press) and a monograph series, *Edinburgh Critical Studies in Romanticism*.

Experimental Tourism: Environmental Aesthetics in the Highlands of Scotland

Dorothy Wordsworth’s *Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland, 1803* stages a “Romantic” reversal of the aesthetic rendering of wild mountain scenery in the most famous of eighteenth-century Highland travelogues, Samuel Johnson’s *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775). Johnson attaches aesthetic value to the contrast (“delightful contrariety”) between a sublime outdoors and a sheltered interior, the domain of the imagination and of culture or civilization as such. Wordsworth, a generation later, trains a new aesthetic of the sublime (resonant with Kantian philosophy as well as her brother’s poetry) upon the dynamic, panoramic – wide-ranging and mobile – vision of a potentially boundless exteriority, the field of a distributed life-force, in contemplating which the imagination intuits its own creative powers. Wordsworth’s descriptions are striking, however, for their refusal of the association between a sublime aesthetic and the mutable, turbulent, revolutionary earth history proposed in the new (Plutonian) geology, becoming standard in touristic as well as scientific writings on the Highlands. Instead, she fixes her aesthetic response upon the evocation of a primordial inhuman stasis, a diffusive presence that is alive but immobile, mute and featureless: a natural scenery that turns its back on – withholds a legible face from – the human subject. What commentators have characterized as Wordsworth’s environmental or proto-ecological vision is at odds with the new (Scottish) geology and its production of a totalizing account of the earth as a dynamic historical system.

Timothy Morton is professor and Rita Shea Guffey Chair in English at Rice University, Houston, TX. Their theoretical work explores the intersection of object-oriented thought and ecological studies. Their subjects include the poetry and literature of P. B. Shelley and Mary Shelley, the cultural significance and

context of food, ecology, and environmentalism, and object-oriented ontology. Major monographs include *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste: The Body and the Natural World* (1994), *Radical Food: The Culture and Politics of Eating and Drinking, 1790–1820* (2000), *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (2007), *The Ecological Thought* (2010), *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (2013), and *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (2016).

Proverbs of Hell

In the name of Heaven, some people seem okay with the idea that the Earth itself should burn. They are okay with creating Hell on Earth, in the name of Heaven. Why might this be, and is there anything we can do about it? One solution is to look to the work of the Romantic poet William Blake. Blake is not often thought of as an ecological writer, but in this lecture I will demonstrate that he is perhaps the most ecological of all the Romantic poets.

Shinya Matsuzaki is a professor at Gunma Prefectural Women's University. Shinya Matsuzaki's academic interest is in English Romanticism, haiku and animism.

Animism Has Always Mattered—Even among English Romantics

Animism was once, or is even now, considered as a primitive, therefore erroneous, belief in spiritual beings including spirits in inanimate objects. According to today's anthropologists who take animism seriously, it is an alternative worldview better "in its comprehension of the fullness of existence" than the western human/nature dualistic overview of the world (Ingold 2018). That is because the human/nature dualism seems a cause of the ecological crisis in the devastating Anthropocene Epoch and the animistic monism regarding all as persons has been expected to change the modern lifeways that are a negative impact on the environment.

The animism discussed in today's anthropology, the "new animism," is defined as the mode of thought and action in which non-human beings are considered to have the same personhood as humans do. The new animism tries to take the indigenous animistic discourse literally, not as a metaphoric, or as-if-it-were-human, speech.

Non-human persons in the romantic animistic discourse have not been taken literally by scholars interested in the mind/nature relationship, metaphorization, or mythologization, that is, imagination in Romantic poetry. Their dualistic mode of thought has blunted animistic non-humans in romantic poetry into something described by the pathetic fallacy.

Developmental psychology has observed that we are all animist till the age of about 10. In his *Prelude*, Wordsworth refers to his early animistic recollections. His poetry is his efforts to recover the animistic monism and to ascertain our sharing the identical interiority with the world. To Keats, who could sense even the delight of a billiard ball, one of the poetic talents is to be an animist.

In our age of the environmental crisis, to read Romantic poetry, taking its animistic non-human persons seriously, is to reenchant the world, which nothing but the pathetic fallacy has been believed to make it possible to personify.

Theresa Kelley is Marjorie and Lorin Tiefenthaler Professor Emerita of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has written about Romantic poetics, rhetoric, aesthetics, visual culture, botany, color theory, archives and philosophy. She has published widely in the field on British Romanticism. Monographs include *Clandestine Marriage; Botany and Romantic Culture* (2012), *Reinventing Allegory* (1997), and *Wordsworth's Revisionary Aesthetics* (1988). At the moment, is working on two book projects: *Reading for the Future* and *Color Trouble*.

Romantic Epigenesis and Ecology

This paper asks how Romantic writing about biosystems, epigenetic change and their interaction might offer us ways to think about the future in our own time. Much as Romantic writing about life forms did, this paper suggests, so does contemporary writing on ecological systems invite us to think epigenetically about the future not as a fixed prophetic end but as an ongoing project that requires a degree of critical and practical attention that is epigenetic in disposition. I explore this claim by imagining a conversation between Erasmus Darwin's *Botanic Garden*, Susan Oyama's theory of epigenesis and what Anna Tsing and her colleagues have described as the arts of living on a damaged planet. For these writers and the questions they ask or invite, it is what happens in time that matters if we are to think at all about end time. We are, in literary terms, concerned with narrative middles as epigenetic markers of what happens moment by moment, across species and systems. I conclude the paper Linda Gregerson's poem "C. Elegans," which traces epigenetic changes in a bacterial community that alters species life, including our own.

Alexandra Böhm received her PhD in 2010 with a comparative study on *Heine and Byron*, which focused on the interventionist poetics of the poets' work between 1815 and 1830. Since 2015, she has been working as research assistant at the Department of German Literature of the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. Her present research focuses on narratives of empathy in human-animal encounters since 1850.

Concepts of Organism and Nature's Interdependency in British and German Proto-Ecological Children's Literature of the Romantic Period

At the end of the 18th century, the traditional Enlightenment metaphor of the macro- and microcosmos as well-ordered, perfect machine gives way to the proto-ecological concept of the organism. Johann Gottfried Herder, for instance, famously criticizes in his *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit* from 1774 the supremacy of notions of the machine and the mechanic in his time. His counter-model of the organic stresses dynamic interaction, interdependency and the equal significance of parts and whole, small and big, for the overall process. Herder applies his organicist anthropology to cultural manifestations as well as to nature. The notion of interdependency, which characterizes the idea of the organic, is seminal to the development of an ecological awareness.

Contemporary narrative fiction, I will argue in my paper, also negotiates this new cultural knowledge and puts it in scene on different levels of the texts. Fictional texts not only reflect this paradigm shift and its ecological consequences on the diegetic level but also in their aesthetic structure. My focus will lie on the period's children literature as in poems, fairy tales or pedagogical stories that deal with natural history. One of the texts I will discuss is John Aikin and Anna Barbauld's *Evenings at Home, or The Juvenile Budget Opened* (1792-96), where the narrative voice repeatedly uses the metaphor of the machine, although the collection seems closer to the new idea of the organism. The notion of balancing that is important in pieces like "Earth and Her Children" is central to the organism, in which parts and whole interrelate dynamically. My paper claims that the concept of the organic characterizes several levels of the text – the natural world, the collection's poetic principle and its political dimension – and shows how they interrelate. An analysis of the texts will show, to what extent children's literature as a 'small' genre allows for experiments with new ideas such as the notion of proto-ecological interdependency.

Dewey W. Hall is Professor of English at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, CA. He has written extensively on the long 19th century and Romanticism, major publications in this field include: *Romantic Naturalists, Early Environmentalists: An Ecocritical Study, 1789-1912* (2014), *Romantic Ecocriticism: Origins and Legacies* (2016), *Gendered Ecologies: New Materialist Interpretations of Women Writers in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2020).

The Ecology of the Goslar Verses: Weather, Pico Viejo, and Material Objects

The study of interspace, what I wish to call *interstitial ecology*, examines the gaps, lacuna, or fissures. The interstices—voids, separations, or intervals—between entities constitute relational distance prior to entanglement. Whether it be the chemical bond between two elements such as sulfur and oxygen in the formation of sulfur dioxide or crevices between strata of lava hardened over time or actors as part of an assemblage, interstices become an intricate part of an ecological system, which can be overlooked because they appear in between, shifting according to the coordinates of material objects.

While staying in Goslar, Germany during the 1798–1799 winter chill, one of the coldest on record, William Wordsworth contemplated the interspace among entities—subjects and objects, animate and inanimate, material and immaterial. Informed by Sir Isaac Newton’s study of celestial and terrestrial objects in *Mathematical Principles of Natural History* (1687), which he read while at Cambridge, Wordsworth infused his verses written in Goslar, such as “Strange fits of passion” and “A slumber did my spirit seal,” with speculative reasoning about motion and force.

Unbeknownst to Wordsworth, however, a few months before his arrival in Goslar, a cataclysmic volcanic eruption occurred from June 8 till September 9, 1798 on Tenerife along the Canary Islands. The Pico-Viejo volcanic eruption spewed pumice, ash, and a sulfate cloud, reaching the lower atmosphere, which subsequently altered weather conditions in the Northern Hemisphere. Similar eruptions, such as Laki (1783–1784), Vesuvius (1794), and Tambora (1815), resulted in severe winter freezes, which have been measured nowadays by two scales: the Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI) (Simpkin et al., 1981) assessed the explosivity of historic eruptions; and the Dust Veil Index (DVI) (Lamb, 1970) estimated solar radiation depletion based on density, extent, and duration. Collectively, the eruptions represent intervals across time of what climatologists have called the “little ice age.”

The foregoing paper examines the climactic effect of the Pico Viejo eruption on Tenerife, which induced the anomalous 1798–1799 winter chill in the Northern Hemisphere, by documenting records of severe river freezes, climatological studies, and firsthand observations. Together, the Pico Viejo eruption and weather created conditions by which Wordsworth remained housebound, inducing poetry about material objects.

Silvia Riccardi is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Uppsala. Her project explores literary and pictorial forms of Biomorphism from the Industrial Revolution to the Anthropocene, with special focus on William Blake and William Morris. She is currently working on a monograph on Dark Romanticism, with chapters on William Blake, Henry Fuseli, and Mary Shelley.

Blake’s ‘Fibres of life’: Anatomy, Botany, and Human Form

By combining words and images, humans and nonhumans in one single body, William Blake’s work opens compelling questions about life generation, primitivism, and the transformations that arise between the encounter of competing forms of natural knowledge, e.g. the scientific and the literary. How is the relationship between humans and nature characterized in graphic and textual forms? What significance do interactions between humans and nonhumans gain in light of environmental concerns in Romanticism?

Based on the term *biomorph* (from the Greek *βίος*, life, and *μορφή*, form), coined by British anthropologist A. C. Haddon to define forms of animate sources, this essay analyzes graphic and textual instances of merging human and nonhuman organisms. Biomorphism is pervasive in Blake's work. It places an emphasis on forms that evoke naturally occurring patterns, such as plants and body parts, focusing on the relevance of organic shapes and the power of life. Human bodies exhibit plant-like features which seem to cause paralysis, confinement, or even death. Veins, nerves, and tendons are pulled out from the anatomical structure and root themselves in the ground (Figure 1). Extended hair and stretched out fingers ramify in intricate patterns. Flesh turns into fibrous tissue. Blake adopts these elements to question the deceptiveness of the corporeal eye (or sensorial vision). What seems to be dying is living, what appears to be paralyzed moves. Moving beyond traditional approaches, which identify nature as the limiting condition for human beings, I intend to reopen the discussion around humans and nature in Blake's work, in order to outline an aesthetics of biomorphism that accounts for a world in which living organisms of human and nonhuman nature are interrelated at various levels. The analysis will place special emphasis on how Blake builds on images and concepts supplied by Darwin and incorporates Romantic modulations from the natural world into his own prophetic iconography.

Rebekka Rohleder received her PhD in English literature there in 2017. She has worked at the University of Hamburg's Institute of English and American Studies, taught at Leuphana University Lüneburg, and currently works at Europa-Universität Flensburg's Department of English and American Studies. Her research interests include British Romanticism, in particular Mary Shelley and her circle, literary space, and depictions of work in contemporary British and Irish culture.

Mediated Nature in Mary Shelley's *Keepsake* Stories

In Mary Shelley's novels and stories, nature is inseparable from its cultural forms: it appears as cultivated and culturally represented nature only, or else it remains meaningless, as it is to Frankenstein's creature when he first experiences natural phenomena without knowing what they are. Among Shelley's novels, it is surely *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* which stage the most dramatic human attempts to make sense of nature (including the human body). But in this paper I want to look at her stories rather than her novels, and in particular at two of the stories she wrote for the annual *The Keepsake*. After all, in Shelley's *Keepsake* stories, encounters with the natural environment are, for the reader, encounters with a doubly mediated nature: the stories accompany steel engravings which frequently depict landscapes. The texts' descriptions of the natural environment add even more layers of meaning by means of their confrontation with the picture for which the story makes a companion piece (the pictures in *The Keepsake* normally existed before the stories, which were then commissioned to accompany them, not the other way around). I want to look at two of these stories in particular: "The Mourner" (1829) and "The Swiss Peasant" (1830), both of which offer a variety of distinct perspectives on the natural world as depicted in the engravings, which narrators and characters keep revisiting. In "The Mourner", the central natural environment is a park, i.e., cultivated nature; in "The Swiss Peasant" then natural environment is the mountains, which function as a wilderness. But in both texts, nature is represented as both culturally formed and as having an agency of its own, with the relationship between nature and culture unstable across its different representations.

Joanna E. Taylor is Lecturer in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Digital Humanities at the University of Manchester. Her work explores intersections between environmental studies, literary geographies, and digital methods. She has worked extensively with the Wordsworth Trust on projects related to Dorothy Wordsworth (most recently on the exhibition Dorothy: Writer, Sister, Friend [2021-22]). Her book, co-

authored with Ian Gregory and titled *Deep Mapping the Literary Lake District: A Geographical Text Analysis*, was published with Bucknell University Press in 2022.

Dorothy Wordsworth's Wildness

One of Dorothy Wordsworth's most frequent descriptions throughout her journals is to call something 'wild'. The wild thyme, wild roses, wild strawberries and, even, wild people she documents sit within landscapes that are 'curiously wild'. She meant it as a compliment; recording their tour around Scotland, Wordsworth recalls how, when one resident took William's saying that it was 'a pretty, wild place' as an insult, they had to work hard to assure him that it was 'praise'. In this instance, what made the place wild was its remoteness, the high and unenclosed mountains across the sea loch, the simple cottages, and, not least, the names, which made Wordsworth imagine that 'Ossian's old friends, sunbeams and mists, as like ghosts as any in the mid-afternoon could be, were keeping company with them'. Being wild made the landscape both solidly tangible and hauntingly unfamiliar.

Yet, as Wordsworth's journals make clear, wildness was a combination of geographical features and a certain state of mind. How these environmental and imaginative forms of wildness combine towards an ecological imperative will be the focus of this paper. Situating Wordsworth's journals as a starting point alongside recent geographical scholarship on wildness, this paper will ask how wildness matters literarily and environmentally, to investigate the ways in which we might read Romantic writing like Wordsworth's as a guide towards rewilding ourselves and our landscapes in the twenty-first century.

Jonathan Culler is Class of 1916 Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Emeritus, at Cornell University. He is the author of a series of books on contemporary critical theory, including *Structuralist Poetics* (winner of the MLA's 1976 Lowell Prize); *Ferdinand de Saussure* (1976); *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (1981); *On Deconstruction* (1982); *Roland Barthes* (1983); *Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions* (1988), *The Literary in Theory* (2006), and *Theory of the Lyric* (2015). His *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (1997, augmented edition, 2011) has been translated into 28 languages.

Addressing Nature

In 1977 I published an essay entitled "Apostrophe," which sought to rehabilitate this figure of address, which seemed both endemic to Romantic literature and systematically ignored in critical accounts of poems in which it appears. I argued that Apostrophe, in animating fictional addressees, is both a mark of the ambitions of poetry (lyric poetry especially) and example of the poem's attempt to be itself an event rather than a representation of an event.

This figure of poetic address also plays an important role in my 2015 *Theory of the Lyric*, which treats lyric poems' play with the enunciative apparatus (especially the indirect address by which the poem addresses the audience through address to a fictional addressee) as one of the important parameters of lyric. I propose to revisit the topic of apostrophic address to natural entities, these fictional addressees, taking account of a recent discussion in Anahid Neressian's *The Calamity Form* (Chicago, 2020), where her final chapter, "Apostrophe: Clouds," explores apostrophe "as an address to a nature in the process of disappearing," as an instance of "the action of the Romantic lyric, which thrives on making attenuated moments or regimes of existence hyperbolically intense" (p. 21).

Does the animating of nature, the treatment of addressees as subjects which are asked to do something or refrain from doing it, take on a different character as we confront climate change, where nature has become for us something that acts in powerful and destructive ways? Neressian speaks of the "slender

promise” of momentary solace that Romantic poetry offers in the face of the calamities of capitalism. Is this what happens when we talk to clouds?

Stefanie John is Lecturer and Postdoctoral Researcher in English Literary and Cultural Studies at Technische Universität Braunschweig. Her research focuses on the Romantic and Victorian periods and their legacies, with particular interests in poetry and poetics, nature writing, and intersections of literature and material culture. Her first monograph, *Post-Romantic Aesthetics in Contemporary British and Irish Poetry*, was published with Routledge in 2021.

The Romantic Child as Environmental Educator: Dara McAnulty’s *Diary of a Young Naturalist*

William Wordsworth’s paradoxical dictum that “The child is father of the man” (from “The Rainbow”, written in 1802) seems particularly apt in the light of the Fridays for Future movement. Teenagers and children have taken on the roles of educators who admonish adults for their failures in preventing the climate crisis. Young voices are also on the rise in the field of environmental literature. The Northern Irish author and conservationist Dara McAnulty, born in 2004, wrote his *Diary of a Young Naturalist* (2020) at the age of 14. In 2020 McAnulty received the prestigious Wainwright Prize for UK Nature Writing as the youngest writer ever shortlisted for the award. He also been praised for his openness about being diagnosed with autism, inviting comparisons with Greta Thunberg.

In this paper, I discuss Romantic legacies in McAnulty’s nonfictional prose. I argue that *Diary of a Young Naturalist* “upcycles” Romantic notions of childhood and ecology. The *Diary* combines an autobiographical narrative about self-discovery and growing up with poetic descriptions and celebrations of the non-human world. But unlike Wordsworth or Blake, who in works such as *The Prelude* or *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* reflected on childhood in hindsight, McAnulty writes about childhood from the point of view of a minor. After examining how these formal peculiarities shape McAnulty’s reworking of the Romantic self-in-nature in the context of the contemporary environmental crisis, I will address the book’s educational stance. I will discuss McAnulty’s self-representation as an educator and learner and assess the didactic impetus of his writing. I will close with some brief reflections on university students’ responses to *Diary of a Young Naturalist* in a course on Teaching Climate Change Literature.

Jennifer Wawrzinek researches and teaches at the Freie Universität Berlin and the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. She is an associate of the research unit “Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Contemporary Culture”, University of Melbourne, a British Academy Fellow, and research fellow of the Centre for the History of Emotions, Melbourne. Her current project in development with the ERCC examines forms of Romantic worlding in works by Shelley, De Quincey, and Blake.

Dorothy Wordsworth’s Exscriptions: Worlding as Compearance

The history of Romanticism scholarship has for the most part been dominated by what can only be described as the cult of the subject, even if that subject is frequently shown to be susceptible to an intense anxiety over one’s place within the world and its others, both human and nonhuman. Yet as Heidegger argues in *On the Way to Language*, this insistence on the primacy of self in Western culture effectively turns the world into an exploitable commodity, the result of which is an alienation from the richness and multiplicity of experience that might exist prior to signification and classification. Although there are Romantic writers and thinkers that uphold the human faculties of reason and imagination as evidence of subjective interiority and thus as superior to the natural world, from which women were seen as only

partly extricated, other writers can be seen to demonstrate an acute awareness of the problems associated with the assertion of an autonomous self at the expense of more ecological and ethical engagements with the world. One of the most radical of these is perhaps Dorothy Wordsworth, whose self-negations and resistance to any epistemology of the self has been the subject of much criticism, especially within feminist scholarship. In contrast to these readings, this paper explores the ways in which Dorothy's journals specifically resist such epistemologies, not as a pathologised self-negation or fear of agency, but rather as a productive means of envisioning an alternative way of being in the world – one, I might add, that is remarkably at odds with her brother's transcendentalising poetics of self. This paper thus examines Dorothy's *Grasmere Journal* for its recordings of everyday events as various passages to the limit – ones that extend and orient one towards the world, not as a fluid symbiosis (as some would have it), but rather as a fracturing that creates an opening from which various forms of being might emerge and/or disperse as an event. This figures the self as one that emerges *with* the world – one that is fashioned by the ecological coordinates of the elements that make up that world, thus allowing not only the richness and multiplicity of experience denied by the self-enclosed subject, but similarly a greater ethical awareness of existence as intrinsically inter-relational and ecologically entwined.

Christoph Reinhardt is Professor of English Literature at the University of Tuebingen. His main areas of research are the history and theory of the novel, Romanticism, contemporary literature and culture (including popular culture), Irish literature, Indian literature in English, and theory. He has written monographs on the meaning of fictional worlds in the English novel from the 18th century to the present (1997), on the persistence of Romantic modes of communication in modern culture (2003), and on English Romanticism (2008).

Ecological Romanticism for the 21st Century? Suzanne Simard's *Finding the Mother Tree*

Following up on my exploration of "The Persistence of Romantic Discontent" in literary narrative, which demonstrated how Karl Ove Knausgaard's *My Struggle* (2009-11) can be profitably read in a lineage that goes back to Wordsworth's *The Prelude* by way of B. S. Johnson's novels of the 1960s and early 70s (in Bode, *Romanticism and the Forms of Discontent*, Trier: WVT, 2017: 181-209), this paper will demonstrate how a Romantic poetics of self-fashioning fares under different and distinctly non-literary conditions. In 2021, Canadian forest ecologist Suzanne Simard published the narrative of her life under the title *Finding the Mother Tree*. Besides its traditional autobiographical bent, the book is also a programmatic attempt at making her insights into how forests work as networks between various ecosystems and how human agency has affected this in the Anthropocene available and urgently persuasive for a wider readership. Accordingly, the book also has a fully referenced academic apparatus. The analysis will single out the prototypical Romantic elements in this project (such as the series of decisive 'spots of time' experiences that are identified in the narrative) and try to identify where the narrative goes beyond traditional Romantic strategies. For this, the current context is crucial, in which *Finding the Mother Tree* clearly resonates with recent academic and popular inquiries into the agency of mushrooms (Anna Lovenhaupt Tsing's 2015 book *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* is the most prominent example here) and trees (German forester Peter Wohlleben's best selling *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate* springs to mind, originally published in German also in 2015). At the same time, Simard herself has also been identified as the model for the character of Patricia Westerford in Richard Powers's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic novel about the end(s) of the Anthropocene and environmentalism in the twentieth century, *The Overstory* (2018), which affords another opportunity for comparing literary and non-literary modes of narrative.

Catherine Jones is Professor of English at the University of Aberdeen. She has published widely on literature and the arts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Her books include *Literary Memory: Scott's Waverley Novels and the Psychology of Narrative* (2003), *Scotland, Ireland and the Romantic Aesthetic* (co-edited with David Duff, 2007), and *Literature and Music in the Atlantic World* (Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

'Translations' from Poetry to Music: Concepts of Nature in Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-18) and Liszt's *Album d'un voyageur* (1842)

In recent years, ecocritical perspectives on landscape and nature in nineteenth-century literature and music have enriched interpretations of both canonical and non-canonical texts. Building on the work of scholars such as Thomas Grey (2017, pp. 183-198) and Timothy Morton (2007, pp. 155-170), this paper explores concepts of nature in Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-18) and Liszt's *Album d'un voyageur* (1842), paying particular attention to the role of intermedial intertextuality – allusions/citations in one medium that are taken from another medium – in the creation and conveying of meaning.

Composed between 1835 and 1838, and shaped by his travels around Switzerland and Italy, Liszt's *Album d'un voyageur* was his first major published piano cycle. Of its three parts, the first, *Impressions et poésies*, later formed the basis of the initial 'Swiss' volume of the 1850s *Années de pèlerinage*, praised by Humphry Searle (1966, p. 29) for its innovative depiction of landscape in music. *Album d'un voyageur* comprises six pieces: 'Lyon', 'Le lac de Wallenstadt', 'Les cloches de G...', 'Vallée d'Obermann', 'La chapelle de Guillaume Tell', and 'Psaume'. Quotations from Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* form epigraphs to 'Le lac de Wallenstadt' and 'Les cloches de G...' 'Vallée d'Obermann' was published with an epigraph from Byron's poem in the reworked *Années de pèlerinage: Suisse*.

In the Preface to *Album d'un voyageur*, Liszt (1842, p. 5) describes how he sought to use 'the most appropriate rhythms, motions, and figures to express the fantasy, passion, or thought that inspired them.' Inspired by Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Senacour's epistolary novel, *Obermann* (1804), and Schubert's song 'The Wanderer' (composed 1816), Liszt's 'Vallée d'Obermann' expresses a specific literary conceit musically: the composer/pianist becomes Obermann, and through the piano, which acts as conduit, the hero experiences the overwhelming forces of nature. This paper compares the aesthetic interactions with nature of the listener to Liszt's piece to the reader of Byron's poem, in order to ask questions about the aesthetic value of nature and the status of art about nature.

Tilottama Rajan is Distinguished University Professor and Canada Research Chair at the University of Western Ontario (Canada), and founder of the North American Society for the study of Romanticism (NASSR), which she chaired from 1992-2020. She is the author of four books: *Dark Interpreter: the Discourse of Romanticism* (Cornell UP 1980), *The Supplement of Reading: Figures of Understanding in Romantic Theory and Practice* (Cornell UP, 1990), *Deconstruction and the Reminders of Phenomenology* (Stanford UP, 2002), and *Romantic Narrative: Shelley, Hays, Godwin, Wollstonecraft* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2010).

The Textual Ecology of Schelling's *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* (1799)

In his *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature (FO)*, Schelling writes that "the same demands" cannot be made on a "guide for lectures" as on a text "for the public at large." Yet Schelling did publish *FO*, which is hardly a "guide" but a chaos of (un)divided parts without a conventional

architecture, including “Zusätze,” “Anmerkungen,” and further notes and complications added for Schelling’s collected works in 1854. I therefore read *FO* as what Barthes calls a “text”: a weave of possibilities produced and shifted in their writing, as science finds itself in restless transition between fields of knowledge through which it focalises and becomes entangled in nature. These fields (physics, geology, physiology, medicine and yet unnamed sciences like pedology) run into and complicate each other in a body without organs where, as Schelling himself suggests, organs—and organs of knowledge—form epigenetically in relation to situations and needs rather than being pre-formed.

The text’s experimental form mirrors Schelling’s unique view of the mind-nature relationship, which makes mind a fold of nature, and departs from the subject-object correlationism of his own *System of Transcendental Idealism*. Schelling writes that to “philosophise about nature” means to “create it,” and nature thus exists only as thought; but new models for thought are immanently generated at sites where mind enfolds itself in nature. Thus Schelling begins with an “original fluidity” of nature which is determined in “figures” that occur when actants (*Aktionen*) of thought-matter are bound, only to be unbound by the pressure of other repressed actants. In his physics of “dynamic atomism,” as “Nature organizes to infinity,” the “sphere” it delimits “again contain[s] an infinity,” within which further spheres are formed: a process that also occurs in sciences as momentary bindings that contain differences within differences. Likewise, the earth sciences (geology, pedology) open up processes of composition and decomposition in soils and other solids that have consequences for the materials of thought as absolutely “indecomposable” and yet capable of being “[re]inserted...into the universal circulation of matter through composition.” This paper will focus on the feedback loops between mind and nature across the range of fields that intersect in *FO*.

Cynthia Chase taught in the Departments of English and Comparative Literature at Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York until her retirement in June 2020. She is the author of *Decomposing Figures: Rhetorical Readings in the Romantic Tradition* and editor of *Romanticism for the Longmans Critical Readers*. Her research and teaching focused on literature of the Romantic period, psychoanalysis, and on nineteenth and twentieth century writing about the survival of poetry and the concept of human rights. She is currently working on how poetry and novels resurface as works of music or theater, particularly in opera of the eighteenth and nineteenth century directed in new ways in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Departure and Arrival in the Scottish Highlands

Goethe’s great elegy, “Euphrosyne,” attests to the Erlebnis of sheer memory—in the form of the poet’s vision of a beloved young actress who died of TB caught when she ventured away from the Weimar stage. Christiane Becker-Neumann played the most touching role in König Johann, the first Shakespeare play ever staged by Goethe at Weimar. Did he intend to exacerbate the tension among the three genres he sought to mess with, if not master? – drama, lyric, and “Bildungsroman”? The editor of the Norton Shakespeare writes, of King John, “The logic of the plot is to undermine logic, to frustrate expectation, to reveal the uncertain relationship between intention and outcome in a world that offers only fragments of an overarching consolation” (p. 1045). Goethe’s elegy would not be great if it did the same. Instead, Massenet’s musical motif “Clair de Lune” and “Le Lied d’Ossian” enable listeners to hear both the terrible loss and the supreme consolation which Werther at times imagines he had found in the features of Albert’s Lotte. The verses of the aria bring us back to the thistle-flower knowing it will be shattered by the storm, the “gale” (sic.), the tempest that will scatter its leaves. And thus it addresses the wind with a question or reproach: “Why wake me up?” “Pourquoi me réveiller?” “Why should I wake up?” The storm will be of tears, however, “larmes,” and it will be consolatory: such is the wager of the genre “opera,”

trending away from ancient tragedy toward an intervention in times of plague, as at the start, before the Sphinx.

Sebastian Ørtoft Rasmussen is a Ph.D.-student in Comparative Literature at Aarhus University. His research studies the affective reactions to the immense geological discoveries of the late 18th- and early 19th century, by looking closer at relationships between romantic literature, philosophical aesthetics, and natural science.

Material Team Spirit: Literary Form and Ecological Sentiment in Charlotte Smith's Geological Poetry

To enhance understanding of the sensorial consequences of the ongoing climate crisis, my monograph in progress, tentatively titled *A Dizzying Perspective: Geological Sensibility at the Dawn of the Anthropocene* studies the appearance and development of what I propose to call a geological sensibility in late 18th to early 19th century romantic literature. This refers to a new sense of ecological awareness which, brought to life by the geoscientific revolutions of the period, structures how the romantic authors interpret and represent the natural world. Based on archival work into the "roads" connecting geoscience, aesthetics, and literature, and methodologically inspired by new insights into the relationship between representation and sense, I herein explore three distinct versions of such a geological sensibility – a *sense of wonder*, a *sense of meaninglessness* and a *sense of interconnectedness* – in a diverse array of romantic authors.

Digging deeper into *the sense of interconnectedness* this paper presents some of my ongoing work on a sense of affiliation between the romantic poets and the material world around them. Here, I propose to trace an atmosphere of belonging – a sort of "material team spirit" – in the poetic works of Charlotte Smith, by looking into a recurring stylistic trait of her poetic works, the syllepsis. Inspired by new ways of comprehending the material world in geology and broader natural science, Smith, I argue, through this poetic device instills in her poetry close connections between geological and generational time, microscopical and gigantic space, as well as the social and the natural world. As such, Smith's work provides us with a prism in which the relationship between geological discoveries and the sociocultural experience of the natural world are rendered not only visible but also highly sensuous, as she explores the affective and emotional consequences of the periods scientific and environmental revolutions.

Philipp Erchinger teaches Modern British Literature at Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany. His research engages with poetry and prose of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially with questions of epistemology, anthropology, and ecology. His publications include *Artful Experiments: Ways of Knowing in Victorian Literature and Science* (2018); and *Kontingenzformen: Realisierungsweisen des fiktionalen Erzählens bei Nashe, Sterne und Byron* (2009).

Poetry as Rural Work: Wordsworth's Georgic Ecology

In an early letter to his friend William Mathews, Wordsworth, speaking of his aspirations as a poet, wrote that the "field of Letters is very extensive, and it is astonishing if we cannot find some little corner, which with a little tillage will produce us enough for the necessities, may even the comforts, of life." (*Letters of W. and D. Wordsworth: The Early Years*, ed. E. de Selincourt, p. 76) Taking my cue from this metaphorical equation of the man of letters with a farmer, I wish to argue that Wordsworth's poetic practice is a way of cultivating nature that is – to some extent at least – comparable with the activities of shepherds, rural labourers, and other inhabitants of the countryside. To this end, I would like to offer readings of some of

the poems from *Lyrical Ballads*, including “Michael”, “The Idle Shepherd-Boys”, and “The Pet-Lamb”, that Wordsworth explicitly denoted as pastorals.

Building on the work of David Fairer, Michael Graver, Annabel Patterson, and Anne Wallace, I seek to show, however, that Wordsworth’s use of the ancient genre of pastoral involves elements of a concomitant tradition of georgic writing that also takes its rise in antiquity. My key argument will be that, in this georgic tradition, the work of the poet often appears as continuous with the labour of the practical people to which it refers. By contrast, pastoral poets do not typically dwell in the same landscape as the shepherds about or through whom they speak. As I hope to show, Wordsworth, reviewing his pastoral imagination through the georgic mode, wrote as much about shepherds and husbandmen as he thought and worked with them, as one of their own kind. Wordsworth’s poet, the poet who speaks through Wordsworth’s texts, is a rural worker himself.

