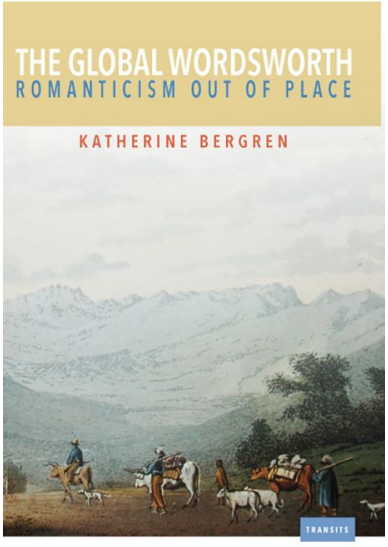

The Global Wordsworth

Romanticism Out of Place

by Katherine Bergren

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DESCRIPTION

The Global Wordsworth charts the travels of William Wordsworth's poetry around the English-speaking world. But, as Katherine Bergren shows, Wordsworth's afterlives reveal more than his influence on other writers; his appearances in novels and essays from the antebellum U.S. to post-Apartheid South Africa change how we understand a poet we think we know. Bergren analyzes writers like Jamaica Kincaid, J. M. Coetzee, and Lydia Maria Child who plant Wordsworth in their own writing and bring him to life in places and times far from his own—and then record what happens. By working beyond narratives of British influence, Bergren highlights a more complex dynamic of international response, in which later writers engage Wordsworth in conversations about slavery and gardening, education and daffodils, landscapes and national belonging. His global reception—critical, appreciative, and ambivalent—inspires us to see that Wordsworth was concerned not just with local, English landscapes and people, but also with their changing place in a rapidly globalizing world. This study demonstrates that Wordsworth is not tangential but rather crucial to our understanding of Global Romanticism.

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