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WORDSWORTH AND THE ART OF PHILOSOPHICAL TRAVEL

At the heart of Wordsworth's concerns is the question of how travel – both foreign and everyday – might also become an adventure into philosophy itself. This is an art of travel both as an approach to experience, one that draws on habits in order to revise them in the shock of the new, and as a poetic approach that gives voice to the singular and foreign through the unique shapes of verse. Close readings of Wordsworth's 'pictures of Nature, Man, and Society' show how the natural is entangled with – and not simply opposed to, as many critics have suggested – the social, the political and the historical in this verse. The book draws both on eighteenth-century anthropology and travel literature, and on debates in modern critical theory, to highlight Wordsworth's remarkable originality and his ongoing ability to transform our theoretical prejudgements in the unknown territory of the travel encounter.

MARK OFFORD teaches at the University of Cambridge.

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For Rosemary, in remembrance

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'For the tragic transport is actually empty, and the least restrained.– Thereby, in the rhythmic sequence of the representations wherein the transport presents itself, there becomes necessary what in poetic metre is called caesura, the pure word, the counter-rhythmic rupture.'

Friedrich Hölderlin, 'Annotations to Oedipus'

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Abbreviations (of Wordsworth Editions Cited)

B	*The Borderers*, ed. Robert Osborn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).
DS	*Descriptive Sketches*, ed. Eric Birdsall (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984). References will be to the first draft of the poem (1791–2), unless indicated.
EW	*An Evening Walk*, ed. James Averill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).
Exc.	*The Excursion*, ed. Sally Bushell, James A. Butler and Michael C. Jaye (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).
EY	*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, *Early Years 1787–1805*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt, revised by Chester L. Shaver (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).
14BkPr.	*The Fourteen-Book Prelude*, ed. W. J. B. Owen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).
HG	*Home at Grasmere, Part First, Book First, of The Recluse*, ed. Beth Darlington (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).
LB	*Lyrical Ballads, and Other Poems, 1797–1800*, ed. James Butler and Karen Green (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).
LP	*Last Poems, 1821–1850*, ed. Jared Curtis (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).
LY	*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Later Years*, 4 vols., ed. Ernest de Selincourt, revised Alan G. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).
MY	*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Middle Years*, 2 vols., ed. Ernest de Selincourt, revised Mary Moorman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).
PB	*Peter Bell*, ed. John E. Jordan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

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Pr.	*The Thirteen-Book Prelude*, vol. I, ed. Mark L. Reed (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). References will be to the 'A-B Reading Text' of the poem in 1805.
Pr2	*The Thirteen-Book Prelude*, vol. II, ed. Mark L. Reed (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).
P2V	*Poems, in Two Volumes, and Other Poems, 1800–1807*, ed. Jared Curtis (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).
PW	*The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).
RC	*The Ruined Cottage and The Pedlar*, ed. James Butler (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979).
SP	*The Salisbury Plain Poems of William Wordsworth*, ed. Stephen Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975). References will be to the first draft (1793–4) unless otherwise indicated in the text.
SSI	*Sonnet Series and Itinerary Poems, 1820–1845*, ed. Geoffrey Jackson (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
TP	*The Tuft of Primroses with Other Late Poems for The Recluse*, ed. Joseph F. Kishel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

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