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Romanticism, Blake, and the Politics of Nature (Flyer)

Kevin Hutchings

University of Northern British Columbia



Thomas Cole (1801-1848). View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm - The Oxbow. 1836. Oil on canvas, 51 1/2 x 76 in. (130.8 x 193 cm). Gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1908 (08.228). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. Photo Credit: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY



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Romanticism, Blake, and the Politics of Nature

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Because politics is a distinctly human activity, we often think of nature as something that exists apart from the political realm. However, in an era of revolutionary turmoil, William Blake, who championed “England’s green and pleasant land” against industrialism’s “dark Satanic Mills,” understood better than any other Romantic poet that nature was subject to myriad political uses. By showing how cultural institutions invoke nature to “naturalize” their authority, Blake reveals that nature can be thoroughly political. Join author and musician Kevin Hutchings as he explores the politics of Blake’s visionary ecology in poetry, painting, and song.

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