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“natural” worlds (clouds and the Cloud) Lane renders a more capacious understanding of human detritus with which to contend. This proliferation of natural and cultural layers is a refiguration of the apocalyptic rhetoric often employed in discussions of the Anthropocene. The world, Lane claims, “does not end but spreads, from many sources like ripples” (42). To sing the new epoch and its blues requires Lane’s poetics of stratigraphy, an ear to the pleasures and sorrows of tracing the spreading world.

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***Ecology without Culture: Aesthetics for a Toxic World.* By Christine L. Marran. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2017. 182 pp. Cloth \$100.00. Paper \$25.00.**

The title of Christine Marran’s *Ecology without Culture* will surely sound familiar to many ecocritics. In a nod to Timothy Morton’s *Ecology without Nature* (2007), Marran’s book reverses Morton’s terms by arguing that literary and visual images of the material, ecological world are regularly mobilized to uphold cultural claims and to perform the work of imagining the nation and ethnic communities (11). It is therefore not so much nature as it is *culture* that counteracts ecological thinking, Marran suggests. To exemplify this, the book opens with a succinct but convincing analysis of the concept of the “biotope”: a material-semiotic figure that represents the biological world. Marran shows how ethnic environmentalists enlist biotopes to reiterate or reinforce images of naturally homogeneous as well as decidedly anthropocentric communities, thus limiting possibilities for engagement with ecological issues across species and scales (6).

Rather than simply criticizing such enlistments, however, Marran aims to engage in the more affirmative practice of outlining what an inclusive ecological imaginary might look like, especially one that resists co-option into narratives of nation and *ethnos*. More specifically, she zooms in on literary and visual texts concerned with toxicity in Japan (although her archive also includes writing from the USA, Taiwan, and other countries). It is here that I would suggest *Ecology*

without Culture does its most important work for the project of ecocriticism, which continues to struggle with a strong preference for Anglophone texts and which sometimes still manifests an “ethics-of-place” that pushes geopolitical structures into the background. Marran impressively navigates the specific cultural-historic location of her texts while also showing that “no consequential question . . . to which Japan is the answer” must follow from this (24). Thus, *Ecology without Culture* contributes to a wider visibility of non-Anglophone writing in ecocriticism, while simultaneously remaining true to the conceptual power of toxicity, which blurs not only boundaries across bodies and species, but also nations and cultures.

Throughout the book, Marran provides her readers with careful considerations of the work of Tsuchimoto Noriaki, Ishimure Michiko, and Ariyoshi Sawako. While the last two chapters identify and develop contemporary ecocritical concerns—that of the “domestic turn” and the issue of thinking and writing scale in the Anthropocene—it is the first two chapters that really shine. The second chapter is a beautiful reconsideration of how Rob Nixon’s concept of slow violence might play out in film, through a nuanced close reading of Tsuchimoto’s documentary films, while the first chapter makes a convincing case for new modes of “obligate storytelling” that “account for human life in and through relationships with the more-than-human-world” in the face of toxic catastrophes (28). There is a rich proliferation of ideas here, so much so that, as a reader, the ways in which individual chapters spoke to the book’s overarching argument as outlined in the introduction did not always feel intuitive. Given this, I could not help but find myself wishing for a concluding chapter to tie the many intriguing strands of *Ecology without Culture* together. As it stands, the open-endedness of this timely contribution and the questions Marran asks about nature, culture, and nationalism within ecocriticism offer the inquisitive reader plenty of material to build upon.

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