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Nostalgia for the Wild: Emotion, Reason, Nature and Culture in *Idle Days in Patagonia* (1893)
by William H. Hudson

Hudson - nature - Patagonia - travel writing - culture - emotion - animism

Abstract: This work develops the importance of the Patagonian nature as a trigger for intuitions and deep emotions in *Idle days in Patagonia* by William H. Hudson. Critics have given considerable attention to the centrality of nature in his work as a product of his affiliation with nineteenth-century romanticism, his transcendentalist mysticism, as well as his Americanism. Instead, I approach him from his exploration of mental processes through the encounter with a virgin and challenging nature that will act as triggers of emotions, which, according to his perception, are diminished in modern society. In this sense, I propose that Hudson opposes nature and culture as entities in conflict, starting from projecting the tension in the mind's dual process: emotion and reason. The Patagonian desert and the undomesticated nature provide a sense of harmony and, in turn, facilitate the encounter with essential intuitions, which the author characterizes with the name of animism. Finally, it is outlined how the author detaches from his contemporary writers by opposing the dominant idea of civilization and barbarism, while also sketching how his vision of nature is closer to current authors.

Patricio Robles is a Ph.D. candidate in Hispanic Studies from the University of British Columbia. His research focuses on perceptions about nature in writings on South American cone's geographies: Pampa and Patagonia. His approach starts from the intersection between affective theory and eco-criticism, also delving into other fields such as anthropology and history. In addition to those mentioned above, his areas of interest also include 19th century and contemporary

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