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## Introduction

*Romantik* has now reached its sixth volume and, as of this issue, we will be collaborating with a new publisher: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. This well-renowned publishing house was founded in 1735, by Abraham Vandenhoeck in connection with the establishment of the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen. Thus, the publisher was already prolific as a distributor of academic texts during the romantic period, with which the journal is concerned. We are happy that *Romantik* will now be hosted by the Unipress branch of Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, which boasts a portfolio of quality academic texts distributed worldwide. We are very much looking forward to this new collaboration and the possibilities this opens up for expanding our readership even further. Another piece of news is that the journal will be available as open access on the day of publication. This is a turning point for the journal and its expanding readership, as we can look back on five years of productive collaboration with Aarhus University Press, to whom we wish to extend our thanks. To mark the transition, we have included the full list of the articles published in the five volumes up until now at the back of this issue. Because of the change of publisher, the layout of the journal has also changed. We hope you will like the new format – both as digital publication and in hard copy (available to members of the Nordic Association for Romantic Studies, and on demand).

To mark the transition, it makes sense to take stock of what has been achieved and what lies ahead. Over the years, *Romantik* has published cutting-edge articles on various national developments and the exchanges between them – for which reason we flag up the plural of ‘romanticisms’ in the title. At present, we stand before a Europe that must find its feet after Brexit. This has led to renewed discussion of shared European values and the interchange of both commercial and cultural capital. Today, it is not unlikely for readers to pick up a novel from another continent, but, in the romantic period, such globalised imports were less usual. Goethe’s prophetic idea of *Weltliteratur*, which would signal the end of parochial literatures and the beginning of a new epoch of global intellectual reciprocation, remained a distant dream. In fact, it still is. When you examine what

is translated into English, figures available from Literature Across Frontiers (report 2015) show that only 1.5 % of all books published in the UK are translations. In Germany, it is 12.28 %, in France 15.9 %, and in Italy, translated fiction makes up 19.7 % of the market. Yet, the romantic period still saw an unprecedented shift towards popular works finding translation from one national language into several other European languages. Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*) from 1774 is an example of a text which became a European craze. In some places, such as Denmark, translation was not immediate; the theological faculty at the University of Copenhagen objected to the novel (effectively delaying translation until 1820), but this was of little consequence, as Danish writers had no problem reading German. It was not only writers of minority languages who would have to read foreign literature in the original; however, there was also an increased investment in the peripheries – exemplified in Byron learning Armenian, and several German, French and British scholars grappling with Icelandic to read the Eddas.

If a work was translated, it was because it was considered commercially viable and because it was seen to endow the target language with something of value that was not available at home. There was a 'hidden' market for texts which were transmitted through excerpts printed in journals and literary magazines. This was a significant conduit for exchange through which European readers devoured a diverse diet of readings. Goethe's *Werther* is a case in point, as it included extensive German excerpts of another European vogue: the Ossian poetry which, in turn, was (supposedly) a Gaelic tradition translated into English.

Among the agendas that *Romantik* has been instrumental in promoting, is the existence of various romanticisms within and beyond the major languages of Europe, as well as the exchanges that can be found between them. Despite the many common reference points available to European romanticisms, the movements were never monochrome; they differed in both their essentials and their particulars, as is clear from the articles published in *Romantik* over the years. Early in the academic study of European romantic movements, this plurality was taken up as a problem. In order to salvage the concept of 'Romanticism', which threatened to come apart at the seams, the American historian A. O. Lovejoy proposed (as long ago as 1924) that there was a need to discriminate various types of romantic thinking to maintain 'Romanticism' as a conceptual category. Much critical water has flown under the bridge since Lovejoy made his now famous intervention, and most scholars are now willing to accept a more elastic definition of 'Romanticism'. Lovejoy was, of course, writing before the romantic canon was fundamentally transformed to include the voices of women, different ethnicities, social classes, and several other developments that have expanded the scope of what we understand as 'romantic' today.

An ongoing project of relevance to comparative romantic studies is the work on a new edition of Georg Brandes' *Hovedstrømninger i det 19. Aarhundredes Litteratur* (published in English as *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature*), published between 1872 and 1890. Brandes was a firebrand, who had many important connections and correspondents across Europe. *Main Currents* was opinionated and argumentative in its approach, but it was also a pioneering work in comparative and international literary studies, focusing on romantic writers. Its impact was significant at the time, and it has been translated into ten languages. Brandes focused on the period of romantic developments in France, Germany, and Britain, but he included several references to Scandinavian developments as well. Supported by the Carlsberg Foundation, a project will publish a multilingual, digital edition of Brandes' *Main Currents* with annotations on its genesis, content, and reception. In the fourth volume, Brandes turned to British 'Naturalism' (his name for anglophone romanticism), musing on how Britain was opened up to a romantic mode of thinking. The volume begins with a reference to the German author Gottfried August Bürger's poem 'Leonore' (1774). This is an imitation of a traditional ballad, narrating the fate of a young woman awaiting the return of her lover from the wars. The ballad, replete with the visitation of a ghost, was translated into English independently no less than five times in just a few months in 1796. Walter Scott's version 'William and Helen' became the Scottish writer's first publication and a roaring success, which made him 'realise that he was a poet', as Brandes pointed out. It was the case, (as Brandes also mentions) that Bürger published his poem after the literary antiquarian Thomas Percy had published *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). This was a collection of original ballads, which garnered attention across Europe. In the third volume of the anthology, we find the traditional ballad 'Sweet William's Ghost', from which – as was generally recognised at the time – Bürger took his inspiration for 'Leonora'. What this example illustrates is that the circulation of texts and ideas was a prerequisite for the development of romantic writing in Europe. Research into the distribution, dissemination, and mutual influences across nations is far from exhausted.

Beyond relations between texts, another aspect central to *Romantik* is the focus on art history. Over the years, several pieces on romantic-period art and its European scope have been published in the journal. It has been the journal's aim, from the very beginning, to bring into dialogue articles on literary developments and studies of visual culture in order to create a dynamic scholarly environment that is often missing in other journals devoted to the study of romanticism. On the cover of *Romantik* 4, was the beautiful and haunting painting, by the Norwegian painter Peder Balke, entitled *Fyr på den norske kyst* [Lighthouse on the Norwegian coast] (1855). The picture served as an illustration at an international exhibition of Balke's work in London. Although Balke was not entirely ignored in

his own lifetime (for instance, in 1846, he sold 30 paintings to Louis Philippe I of France for the Versailles), modern recognition has been somewhat intermittent at best. However, from November 2014 to April 2015, The National Gallery in London organised the greatest display of Balke's work in the UK to date, with over 50 paintings, borrowed from public and private collections. Since then, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has shown an exhibition, which ran from April to July 2017. The journal will continue to follow the recovery and reappraisal of romantic art.

If we turn to the articles in the present number of the journal, they – in various ways – deal with different modes of exchange. The opening article, by Alderik Blom, concerns the celebrated philologist Rasmus Rask and the connections he established with scholars in St Petersburg, for whom he provided new knowledge of Old Norse literature. This exemplifies and expands our knowledge of how romantic-period scholars laboured to recover the past as important for an understanding of the present. Rask's studies fed into a nexus of 'National Romanticism', which was underway in Russia, and the article presents new research into the extent, nature, and impact of Rask's ideas in Russia. Blom's article is the result of extensive archival research that will illuminate the transmission and exchanges of ideas across Europe during the period, when the urge to retrofit nationalist 'traditions' to nations were at their height.

Cassandra Falke discusses the exchanges between writer and audience. In her article, Falke trains the lens on the poet, whose fame reached to all corners of Europe, Lord Byron. The article investigates the notion of 'sympathy' as a central concept in the analysis of Byron's appeal. The fact that Byron cranked out verses to a popular readership, pandering to the public's perennial hunger for sensationalism, has often been held against him. Focusing on the bestselling poem *The Corsair* (1814), Falke examines Byron's command of readerly sympathy as a source of his fame. This leads to a reassessment of one of the most intriguing complexities involved in understanding Byron's phenomenal success. How did he manage to manipulate sympathy for the poem's main character Conrad? Even though this character is an unruly and ruthless Aegean pirate, Byron succeeded in soliciting the public's approval and admiration.

Morton Paley provides an interesting art-historical article on George Romney, one of the most successful British portraitist of the day, perhaps only surpassed in fame by Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough. Romney was primarily known as a portrait painter and painted many leading society figures. The article examines the now lost painting *The Death of General Wolfe*, which Romney exhibited in 1763. Major General James Wolfe (1727–1759) was an officer in the British Army, who became a national hero, celebrated for his victory over the French at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in Quebec in 1759. Wolfe became the subject of several paintings, the most famous of which is Benjamin West's

version of *The Death of General Wolfe* from 1770. Paley presents us with a masterly tracing of Romney's earlier painting through the records and resources that have been left to us. The article provides not only new information on what the painting may have looked like, but also on the controversy it caused, as well as its afterlife in the works of Romney's successors.

Peter Henning's article addresses the exchanges between reality and non-reality, place, and non-place. Seizing on a letter from the English poet John Keats to his friend, the painter John Hamilton Reynolds, Henning analyses Keats's recurrent struggle with the notion of *Eros*. In the letter, the young poet contrasts two different modes of subjectivity, symbolised by the flower and the bee. Henning unravels the literary and psychological significance of the bee motif through an impressive range of sources (from Varro to Shakespeare and Milton) to arrive at a new analysis of the conflicted role the motif plays in Keats's poetry. The letter to Reynolds is shown to present an ambiguous discourse of *Eros*, which is configured as a utopian textual space. Henning opens a discussion of Keats's poetry, as this can be qualified and reassessed by including information from paratexts.

The final article is a critical intervention into the discussion of romantic-era translation. Helena Bergmann focuses on the semi-autobiographical epistolary novel *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (1796) by the radical writer Mary Hays who, in recent years, has come to be recognised as a feminist pioneer. The English original of Hays's novel garnered a mixed reception, and mostly hostile reactions from conservative detractors. But, in French translation, it made a splash. What the translator Pauline de Meulan had done, was to extend and expand the scope of the work by adding plot elements and eclectically introducing characters from other British works. Bergmann investigates the way the resourceful adaptation works, how the French version expunged the most radical and controversial elements, and modified characters and genre to effectively create a palimpsest. Bergmann invites us to reconsider how ideological codes are recontextualised and acculturated in the romantic-period transmissions of texts.

The present issue also contains a number of reviews of new works of scholarship. This includes new publications on Hans Christian Andersen, on romantic irony in the Swedish writer P. D. A. Atterbom, on canonisation and commemorative Cults of Writers in Europe in the nineteenth century, and a new work on print culture and optical play in literary imagination. We also have a review on a recent dissertation on national romanticism in Danish landscape painting, and a report from a panel organised by three of the editors of *Romantik*, at the 2017 'Romanticism takes to the Hills' conference at Edge Hill University, UK, where they presented aspects of their current work on romanticism in Denmark.

Welcome to *Romantik*.

Robert W. Rix, on behalf of the editors