

Romantik

This fourth volume of *Romantik* marks a point in the journal's short history, where it can be said to have become established as both a regular and salient feature of the critical landscape. When one considers the attention the journal has received, the rising number of subscriptions and not least the large number of downloads of articles from the open access versions, the journal has made remarkable progress since its inaugural issue in 2012. When it comes to submissions, we are grateful that researchers worldwide now consider *Romantik* to be a significant channel for publishing frontier research.

When reflecting on romantic studies, which the journal aims to promote, it is clearly not a settled field. Taking stock of 'the state of the art' will show a series of different (and often contradictory) refractions of the discipline. There is an enduring interest in revising traditional and canonical romanticism, while others explore new spaces inhabited by the ignored or peripheral. Since the name 'Romanticism' was introduced as a denomination for literature and art produced in the decades around and after 1800, it has been a slippery term. The name partly postdates the movement it attempts to describe, and, in several countries, romantic works were produced long afterwards. For this reason, there has been an ongoing debate over what constitutes 'Romanticism', and whether this name could be with a capital letter and in the singular. In fact, some would argue, the 'romantic' in literature, arts, philosophy and science has been reworked and renegotiated so many times that the definition has been stretched to the point of breaking.

This is nothing new, of course. In 1924, the American historian Arthur O. Lovejoy observed in his 'On the Discrimination of Romanticisms' that the term had come to mean so much and so many different things that it had become virtually unusable as a singular definition. Thus, only a use of the term in the plural, *romanticisms*, would save it. The subtitle of the present journal shows agreement with Lovejoy's observations on plurality. We should remember that Lovejoy wrote several decades before the staggering proliferation of feminist, new historical, and minority studies, which have further expanded our sense of what qualifies as 'romantic'. To this must be added a now broader palette of national romanticisms (beyond the German, French, and English versions) which this journal has helped make available for critical view. Lovejoy foresaw the diversity of criticism that we accept as a condition of romantic studies today.

FOREWORD

Romantik sees an advantage in this diversity. We do not imagine a progression towards a final consensus. Instead, the journal aims to facilitate a dynamic vision of a widening horizon. That is to say, we need to better understand literary and artistic images already familiar, while also allow new images to appear before our sight perhaps for the first time. The research articles the editors have been able to accept for this issue are a good indication of how a challenging and multifaceted vision of romantic studies looks today. Not least, the geographies covered in this issue show a stimulating breadth: one article raises global issues (East vs. West), another trains the lens on the European network of romantic painting in Rome, yet another discusses the formation of a national tradition in the very periphery of Europe (Faroe Islands), and there is also a novel examination of the regional romanticism of Brighton. We are pleased to provide such a multiplicity of contexts, which also reach across the literature/art history divide. But, importantly, it is the aim of the journal to juxtapose the various local, national, and transnational romanticisms, because we believe that the connections and disconnections between them mean something. Our commitment is to an ongoing dialogue between romanticisms. This dialogue is our appeal to the tribunal of romantic studies. Welcome to *Romantik*.

The Editors