

# Romantik

02

JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF ROMANTICISMS

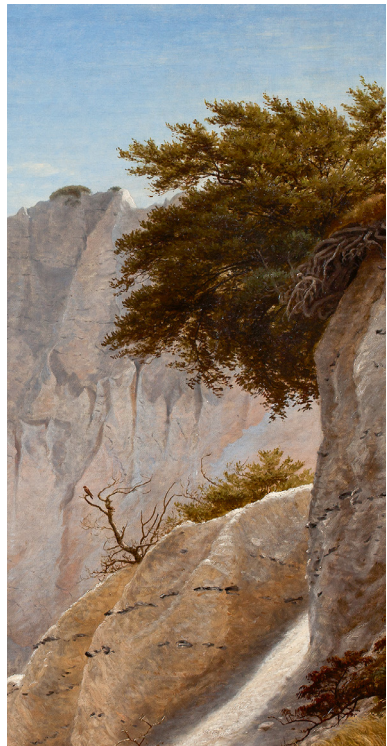




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# Romantik

The themes outlined in the articles of the present edition of *Romantik* are truly transnational. Two of these articles were first heard as papers at a one-day conference entitled ‘Disseminating Romanticism: European Connections and Regional Disconnections’, kindly sponsored by the Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University, Denmark. The theme of the conference was timely. It is ironic that in our globalized world, the discipline of Romantic Studies is often disconnected from the cosmopolitan milieu in which the Romantics moved. The standard myth of the Romantic genius isolates the artist as both singular and solitary. But the writers and painters of the period were part of various communities and networks; they corresponded across national borders, and their productions were influenced by international currents. We need a greater focus on the channels of dissemination in terms of the import/export of books, the exchange of letters and personal contacts. What was the effect of technological advances (transport, printing, postal service, etc.) on the development of connections and the dissemination of Romanticism? To what extent were particular regional Romanticisms shaped by their emulation of and competition with national and international currents?

When training the lens on how ideas and aesthetic models were transmitted, it may be rewarding to gauge what barriers were in place to prevent the spread of Romanticism – censorship (as was the case in Spain and Portugal), *national* antagonism, publishers’ commercial considerations, etc. Factors like these had an enormous impact on how Romanticism morphed into different shapes and forms in various countries. The lack of dedicated focus on such issues is partly a problem with academic institutions in various countries, which tend to emphasise a national tradition and thereby place limits on the scope of investigation. However, it makes sense to look at different yet similar Romanticisms and bring these into productive dialogue with one another. In this way, we hope to begin a possible remapping of the Romantic topography in Europe and beyond.

If we on one level are interested in international developments – its linkages – perhaps we have also reached the stage where we need to re-calibrate our ideas of Romanticism in order to more accurately register *regional* developments. Sometimes the nation state is not the most meaningful category to use. Rather, we may investigate the internal fissures of *domestic* oppositions, antipathies, and competi-