INTRODUCTION

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Writing Place

Romantic Localities explores the ways in which Romantic-period writers of varying nationalities responded to its languages, landscapes (geographical and metaphorical), and literatures. It addresses the ways in which geographies affected British and European Romantic writers 'at home': the South Downs, the Lakes, the Scottish Highlands, the Swiss and Italian Alps, Venice, Rome and Greece; but also Europe's Others: the Orient, the South Seas. The current interest in the 'transnational' has focused new attention on the ways in which writers explore region and place in their work. More than simply providing a setting (whether cosily domestic and known, or exotically foreign and unknown), locality embeds within literary texts an exploration of identity and identities; it challenges readers with unexpected contrasts between 'home' and 'away'; it allows authors to formulate a sense of self and subjectivity that both rests on and expands definitions of the known. Europeans were confronted, in the eighteenth century, with an idea of the global that expanded cultural understandings of the constitution of the civilized and the savage, and in the literature of the late eighteenth century poets and novelists create what might be called an aesthetics of exploration as they use locale to investigate ideas of self, other, home, the comprehensible, the incommensurable.

The Romantic Period has long been associated with a special concentration on locale, with poets like Wordsworth and novelists like Scott seemingly singlehandedly recreating British locations as locales: places of interest and importance *as* places, and subsequently significant for their associations with their champions. And, as several essays in this volume show, such associative resonances continue to be worth studying, both for their historical value and for the continuing insights they provide into a national consciousness of the value of literature and its birthplaces. However, as this volume demonstrates, place itself,

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as a concept, becomes of special interest in this period. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Europe shakes itself up and settles itself down into the map that is more or less recognizable today. Countries become nations, and nations take on firm, if persistently contested, borders. Nation-building, of course, does not complete its project at this point – Italy, for instance, is not yet Italy – and borders themselves prove to be somewhat organic entities, as the Napoleonic wars rupture and re-mark territorial boundaries. This in itself, however, underscores the centrality of place and environ in the period. Within the space of a few decades, Europe mutated from a collection of varied nation-states to a coherent number of nations, to an extended reflection of Napoleonic empire-building, and back to individual and discrete nations. Britain, muffled from such physical encroachments on its borders, found itself complicating its established locations of centre and periphery: Scotland was no longer simply North Britain, Ireland resisted its analogous position as West Britain. Acts of inclusion and enclosure forced Britons to think about the parameters of landscape and territory, even as their counterparts on the Continent used locale and place, both near and far, as templates with which to stabilize, disrupt and problematize identities.

In an aesthetics of exploration, then, that grows from a cultural interest in, even preoccupation with, place, locality is both the endpoint and a means to an entirely different end. Writers explore place literally, through travels, habitation, emigration; they devise figurative geographies; they transform the one to the other. They do these things transnationally, meaning not only that migrations occur as ideas and texts as well as people cross borders, but also that there is a remarkable coalescence during the period around the notion that locale matters. Origin, destination, stopping points; home, exile, patriation; the familiar, the foreign, and who decides on such labels: the Europe of the Romantic period constantly journeys, continually arrives, consistently surveys, incessantly seeks out. What is particularly interesting, moreover, is the temporal flexibility of these movements. Linearity is more or less set aside. As authors travel and write about it, or write about others' travel, or contemplate not travelling, or write about writing about place, or visit representations of place, or assert the primacy of one place over another through and because of writing about it, *when* this happens becomes a mark of creative intangibility.

This collection demonstrates that the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witness a new development in ideas of place and locale. Of course, as many studies have shown, changes and improvements to the technology of travel did a great deal to enable this: roads became more easily passable, and carriage springs more flexibly bouncy.[1] Nascent colonial expansion did its part to open up to the cultural and creative imagination the plausibility of the foreign: an understanding of the international that did not feature dragons and creatures with their heads in their stomachs (which is not to say that misimaginings of the

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Other did not still occur, of course). More people travelled and came back; the Grand Tour made exposure to key sites in Europe and, latterly, the Middle East almost mandatory for the moneyed gentleman, who in turn imported souvenirs of his journeys and recreated aspects of foreign locales in his country house and its surrounding grounds. Place became about travel but it was also concerned with origin and destination, and about ways in which the local took on the tinge of the global.

A central question for this collection asks whether, in writing place, European writers also create it? The Lake District displayed the same geography, for instance, after it was transformed into a noted locale as the home of Wordsworth and his Lake Poet contemporaries (this is only the most obvious example), but its cultural mapping had entirely changed; in other words, it became a place to go to rather than simply a place to live. And its distinct locations themselves took on the flavour of their literary residents, becoming literary locales. Once place becomes locale, is it forevermore mediated? Can one simply continue to live in Grasmere, maintain an existence entirely unaffected by this new mapping? Or does the recreation of a location into a locale also mean a kind of repeopling, residents becoming 'locals' to distinguish themselves from a new kind of visitor? Indeed, an aesthetics of exploration might militate that travel become tourism: that movement from one place to another must be accompanied by the exploratory gaze and a subsequent literary artifact. This in turn raises another issue central to the Romantic period: whether it is possible, after all, simply to write place: that is, reflect it accurately through travel narratives, capture some kind of essence or genius through poetry, even represent it matter-of-factly through sketching, painting or more monumental recreations such as panoramas. Even photographs maintain an artificial frame: so is the place that one gleans through literature and other art ever an authentic rendering of location? The essays in this collection suggest that the nature of real places is reconstituted once written (about): that writing place is different to merely describing it (as background or setting), and that perhaps it is the very fixity of geography that allows for the mobility of imaginative locale-building.

The mutability of ideas about place, moreover, feeds into the aesthetic understanding of exploration. Place represented through writing changes according to genre, author and period (Mont Blanc, the Scottish Highlands, Tahiti). What remains constant in the period, however, is the concentration on actual locations, even if imaginatively conceived (Ossian's Scotland, for instance). There is no loss of the pathetic fallacy, of course, and locale can still function as a representation of an emotional state, but nonetheless place *as* place remains key. The fact of Mont Blanc is essential: while mountains per se can connote the requisite grandeur, certain specific mountains provide pathways towards imaginative states of being as well. For this reason, exploration, like place, is not merely

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literal, as writers chart an inner space that maps onto and arises from outer locale. They do so, interestingly, very *physically*: Romantic-period writers walk, stride, climb, delve, ride, sail and otherwise physically move about; rather than bemoaning their corporeal selves, they rely on solid flesh as enabling exploration. Even when the ultimate destination is an imagined or newly realized locale, their transport is in and of this world as well as that of dizzy rapture. This complex combination of types of place, space and conveyance provides the backdrop for the ideas discussed in this collection. If modes are aestheticized once they are examined *as* modes, then the explorations under examination here carry their practitioners beyond the boundaries ascribed to either literal, geographical place or imaginative, ecstatic space. Their concentration on locality is underpinned by explorations of mobility, mutability, sincerity and the real, and, as the essays in this volume show, their work questions what it means to wander, to stay put, and to move on; to be transported, mobile or mutable; and how place can lend its identity to an historical or mythical moment, even merging past and present, here and there.

The Temporality of Space

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When Isaac Newton postulated the existence of absolute space in his *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica* in 1687, this was necessary, as Albert Einstein explained in his foreword to Max Jammer's classic account of the history of theories of space in physics, *Concepts of Space*, 'to give the classical principle of inertia (and therewith the classical laws of motion) an exact meaning'.[2] No doubt, the idea of an absolute, immutable space was strongly motivated by neo-platonic thought and it had an undeniable theological appeal as well: the numberless goings-on of daily life, the movements of bodies, heavenly and mundane, could all ultimately be referred to a never-changing frame that, constituent of all relative movements, was yet itself totally unaffected by these.

But some sceptics remained unconvinced. Berkeley, Huygens and Leibniz came up with various objections, the most important of which was that the existence of absolute space (which for Newton was not just a theoretical construct, but an ontological reality) could never be verified by observation or experiment. The terrain was by no means easy, and the best minds of the eighteenth century found themselves grappling with the problem. For example, in the course of his lifetime Immanuel Kant held three different positions on the question: first he tried to reconcile Newton with Leibniz, though he clearly leaned to the latter's relational point of view;[3] he then fully endorsed Newton's concepts of absolute space and absolute time;[4] only to take up his own, very distinctive position in his final, critical phase: space and time are necessary *Anschauungsformen*, or intuitions, of human experience – we cannot experience anything but as in

space-and-time, but space and time cannot be *derived* from experience, rather, they are necessary and unavoidable preconditions of human experience. The 'real' nature of time and space remains outside the scope of reason and experience; as intuition, space is no property of 'things as such'.[5]

Interestingly enough, the unprecedented practical success of Newton's mechanics (for which one didn't need absolute space anyhow) let the fundamental objections against absolute space pale, until in the middle and towards the end of the nineteenth century mathematicians like Bernhard Riemann and physicists like Ernst Mach led a new attack upon what they regarded as merely a 'metaphyscial concept'. Jammer summarizes Mach:

> The very idea of an absolute space, that is, of an agent that acts itself but cannot be acted upon, is, in his view, contrary to scientific reasoning. Space as an active force, both for translational inertia in rectilinear motion and for centrifugal forces in rotational motion, has to be eliminated from a system of mechanics.[6]

'For me', says Mach, 'There is only relative motion'.[7] In Jammer's reading, Mach thereby opened up the way for the theory of relativity, in which mass, energy, motion, time and space are interrelated in such a way that space – far from being unaffected by what happens 'in' it – becomes itself a mutable, variable factor in an intricate field of forces. In Einstein's summing up: '[T]he subsequent development of the problems, proceeding in a roundabout way which no one then could possibly foresee, has shown that the resistance of Leibniz and Huygens, intuitively well founded but supported by inadequate arguments, was actually justified'.[8]

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This is not the time and place to engage with modern scientific concepts of space-time and with the idea of time as the fourth dimension, but it is an intriguing fact, we believe, and quite pertinent to the topic of Romantic localities and the writing of place, that the common conception of space (as opposed to philosophical and scientific theories of space) has always, or so it seems, ascribed an irreducible temporality to it, so that one could set up the bold thesis that, at least since the early modern age and in Western civilization, space has always been primarily imagined as having some temporal dimension. In direct contrast to Newton's idea of absolute space, our imagination inadvertently peoples space with objects, motion and change – the space we experience is inevitably Newton's 'relative space', it is the only kind of space that we know and have experience of.

Now, to think of space and time as being related in some fundamental way does not necessarily imply that the relationship between these two entities is a symmetrical one. It is a culturally established practice to see time in terms of space: whether we think of the running sand of an hourglass, or of the moving hands of a clock or watch, or of the course of a lifetime or the running river of time – we always translate the passage of time into 'movement in space': that's the way we

habitually think of time, and the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were clever in exploiting this spatial conception of time with its implied necessity and inevitability, as if historical developments followed natural laws. Prime examples are *The Progress of Poesy* by Thomas Gray (published 1757), James Bruce's *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* (1790), Anna Laetitia Barbauld's *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* (1812)[9] or Charlotte Smith's 'Beachy Head'.[10] Even most dictionary definitions of 'time' contain a spatial element, if only to illustrate 'metaphorically' how we imagine time – take, for example, this definition from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition: 'time – a facet of human consciousness felt both in psychic and physical experience, and an aspect of the observed environment metaphorically describable as a one way flow providing, together with space, the matrix of events'.[11]

Curiously enough, it doesn't seem to be quite so easy to define space in terms of time. Tellingly, the first sentence of the entry for 'space' in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* gives only *instances* of space, as if 'space as such' escaped definition, and time was only one aspect among others under which one could see space.[12] It is true that in bygone days, to give an idea of distance one would say, for example, that to travel from A to B would be a three days' ride on horseback, and astronomers measure immense distances in light-years. But apart from that, it seems to be difficult to 'illustrate' space with the passage of time, to imagine space as realized in time. One might think that not only for geologists at least the landscape of the Grand Canyon constituted a good example for space realized in time, but the more you think about it, the more you begin to wonder whether it's not yet another example of time spatialized, rather than space expressed in terms of time. The temporalization of space we spoke of above (compare with note 9) may be a powerful ideological or subversive manœuvre, but it seems to be carried out against a general asymmetry in the perception of time and space: if it comes more naturally to see time in terms of space than space in terms of time, then space seems to be the slightly more 'basic' concept, to which time can be referred or reduced, whereas the opposite move requires more imaginative strength – and even then easily tilts over into its opposite. In his monumental *Time and Western Man* (1927), Wyndham Lewis raged against the predominant 'time-mind' of Western civilization with its cult of time and accused it of being forgetful of its opposite, i.e. space, with, or so he claimed, disastrous cultural and political consequences for man and society. To be forgetful of place (and everything correlated with it, like spirit, art, visual and plastic intelligence) means to be forgetful of what is basic – as we are often forgetful of what is simply taken for granted.

But to go back to the claim that, maybe because for us space is somehow more basic than time, we, in a seemingly paradoxical way, find it hard to imagine any space that is not 'always already' permeated with temporality – since that is, after

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all, the way we imagine and experience time, as *spatialized* – so that any space we imagine is inevitably Newtonian 'relative space', or *place*: does it make sense to differentiate further between different kinds of temporalizations of space? It seems that at least two kinds of temporality of space can be distinguished, two forms in which temporality can be said to manifest itself in space: the first is when something occurs, something happens in a certain place – then we're speaking of a concrete event; the other is that a concrete space, or place, is seen like a still shot or freeze of a particular moment in time, saturated with a specific past, full of semiotic and symbolical potential. It is true that some locations can be powerfully charged with meaning without having any concrete temporal associations: the threshold or gate, the way, the river, an island, a house – these are places that certainly can only exist in time, but their meaning doesn't resonate with concrete historical 'filling'. This is different from locations that lend themselves, in ideological space, to be seen as crystallizing points of specific historical times: say, the Athens of Pericles, Imperial Rome, the Rhine of the Middle Ages, revolutionary Paris, Victorian London. As their shadow, these specific space-time units are invariably followed by their counterparts: ideas of spaces that are imagined to be timeless and a-historical (and are, of course, anything but): the Alps and the pole regions, the Orient, the South Seas. This volume is about how Europe writes place and its other, how it imagines and mirrors itself in a series of written transversals, as the subject experiences itself in and moves through a space that can only be imagined as 'relative', as *concrete place*, as *location* and *locality*.

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The Chronotope

We still lack a concept that economically and elegantly encapsulates what we have here circumscribed as a concrete space-time unit that aspires to or has achieved a paradigmatic status – 'historically charged meaningful place', if you will. Michail Bakhtin's *chronotope* is a likely candidate, one could say.[13] Here is Bakhtin's definition: 'We will give the name *chronotope* (literally, 'time space') to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature'.[14] In the chronotope, time and space are inseparably connected,[15] and the concrete way in which they are so fused in a fictional text is indicative of how that text conceives of its relationship to reality: 'A literary work's artistic unity in relationship to an actual reality is defined by its chronotope'.[16]

If that is so, then we can use typical chronotopoi to identify different types of 'text-world-relationships' in different kinds of novels in different epochs: for example, in classical antiquity, Bakhtin differentiates between three basic kinds of novels, depending on which kind of time-space unity they suggest or work with – these are 'the adventure novel of ordeal', 'the adventure novel of everyday

life', and 'biography and autobiography',[17] although Bakhtin says that in classical antiquity we do not yet find the latter in a fully fledged form. As he goes on to analyse various significant chronotopoi – as, e.g., the chronotopoi of the chivalric novel or the picaresque novel or various idyllic chronotopes in the novel in general,[18] two things stand out: in this 200-page essay Bakhtin focuses exclusively on fiction (and he insists categorically on the ontological difference between actual reality and reality as depicted in fiction)[19] and does not investigate poetry or travel writing, although one can see that the concept of chronotope could easily be applied to these genres as well – wherever we find a significant space-time unity that can be read as expressive of a certain way of being-in-the-world, we can speak of a chronotope. Secondly, Bakhtin is mostly interested in the novel of classical antiquity and in pre-realist forms of the novel, all the way up to Rabelais (the topic of his doctoral dissertation), but he has next to nothing to say about the realist novel of the modern age, although one should think that it is here, where a supposedly realist representation moves closer to what is commonly conceived of as 'reality', that the concept of chronotope could really show its differentiating power.

But be that as it may – also taking into account that we have meanwhile come to question 'the unity of the work', of which Bakhtin still speaks, as well as an 'actual reality', which he unquestioningly presupposes[20] – *chronotope* is still a powerful instrument, we would argue, in the analysis of any text that conspicuously displays a specific 'place-in-time' as a paradigm for relating itself to the world 'outside'. It can be such a powerful instrument for two distinct reasons: for one, it helps us to identify specific time-space ratios *within* a given chronotope, for, although Bakhtin declares (almost apodictically) that time is 'the dominant principle in the chronotope',[21] the ratios do, in fact, vary, and they vary significantly:

> In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, *space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history*. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope.[22]

In other words (and this idea is no longer a totally unfamiliar one), space becomes thematic to the degree that it is filled with time, and to the degree that it is mentioned at all, it becomes meaningful or symbolic. Once space is mentioned, it morphs into something that is symbolically charged; always silently assumed, it turns into something meaningful as soon as it is mentioned explicitly.[23]

The other reason why the concept of chronotope is so powerful and productive is that it has a reception-theory angle that allows us to identify historical layerings of chronotopes: for as the fictional world of a text becomes alive only

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in the interaction between text and reader,[24] it becomes obvious that the way in which a particular text devises and conceives its relationship *to the reader* can itself be seen as a chronotope, so that texts in general can be seen as historically differentiated models of engaging with text and world alike. But since by the nature of things, this text–reader relationship is itself historically variable, we can read historical texts from a double perspective – read them from the point of view of today (inevitably so) and also see what kind of relationship to reality they suggested in their own day. To read texts with the instrument of the chronotope means to be aware of the fact that historically chronotopoi are layered upon each other or form entire series of chronotopes, so that, as these chronotopes are superimposed upon each other – and the most recent stratum or layer of sedimentation is always the one that we as readers add –each text in the history of its reception becomes a palimpsest. These series are like the track record of attempts at world-making.[25]

When we turn to Romantic localities, it is impossible not to register the striking and pronounced historicity of the chronotopoi of Romanticism itself, not to note the way they were assembled and constructed, used and functionalized. To give but one pertinent example: arguably Munich's most Romantic landmark, the *Englischer Garten* is a unique and tellingly heterogeneous chronotope. Planned by Friedrich Ludwig von Sckell but realized under the supervision of the American advisor to the Bavarian Elector, Benjamin Thompson from Massachusetts (from 1792 on 'Reichsgraf von Rumford' or 'Count Rumford'), the *Englischer Garten* was decreed to be open to the public in August 1789: a true people's park – something unprecedented, because publicly accessible English gardens were then unheard of. (Munich's *Englischer Garten* is still one of the world's largest public parks, and it should be mentioned in passing that its construction was also a means to combat large-scale unemployment and juvenile crime and to give veterans something useful to do.) Considering that the concept of an English garden itself derives from oriental landscape gardening, it is intriguing, we believe, that from its very beginning (and following the example of Kew Gardens) the *Englischer Garten* was adorned with a Chinese pagoda, or *Chinesischer Turm*, and later with a Greek temple, or Monopteros (suggested in 1807, but completed only in 1836). Assembling heterogeneous chronotopoi, the *Englischer Garten* itself gives an example of how traditions are constructed by tapping into the semiotic reservoir of specific locations that either have (the Greek temple) or don't seem to have (the Chinese pagoda) a historicity of their own – or that are transferred topoi from a different culture that itself has assembled chronotopes to construct a 'new' one, with a fake historicity – the English garden, for instance. To write place invariably means to be involved in a meaning construction that unavoidably designs space as filled with time, objects, motion and events, and as experienced by subjects, although inevitably the way to make

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sense of it all, by marking out certain space-time units as meaningful and symbolically charged, is to take recourse to former chronotopoi, or attempts at worldmaking – if only to make it slightly different, to make it new.

Here and Now

The essays in this collection, by a group of geographically diverse scholars, investigate poetry, fiction, travel narratives and historical and scientific texts. Essays examine versions of 'home' and 'abroad', and issues of 'now' and 'the past'. Stefanie Fricke's 'Into the Woods: Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest in the Romantic Imagination' explores fascinating Romantic appropriations of the traditional chronotope (and heterotopia) of 'Sherwood Forest in the Middle Ages', as she can show that these appropriations evidently served different purposes and end in constructing a past, in modifying or subverting a tradition.[26] In '"How Bursts the Landscape on my Sight!": Pedestrian Excursions into the Romantic Landscape', Felicitas Menhard analyses the varying relationships between the mode of pedestrian travel and poetic explorations of the Romantic landscape. Looking at peripatetic texts by William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and, by way of contrast, Thomas Hardy, she examines discourses of movement, process and discovery and establishes significant parallels between a corporeal pedestrianism and a textual pedestrianism. Jacqueline Labbe also concentrates on the interplay between the corporeal and the textual. In 'At the Intersection of Artifice and Reality', she considers the mechanics and theoretics of writing and/or composing locality poems and argues that for Wordsworth and Charlotte Smith, the act of writing poetry, once literalized in titles, allows for an exploration of 'a poetics of spatial and compositional geographies'. Tom Furniss's essay must be one of the most intriguing in our collection: '"Plum-Pudding Stone" and the Romantic Sublime: The Landscape and Geology of the Trossachs in *The Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791–9)' offers a brilliant case study in how the writing of place and locality even taps geological discourse and interestingly merges it with the discourse of the sublime and the picturesque to put a specific landscape on the national and ideological map. Placing the local landscape of the Trossachs at the epicentre of a virulent geological controversy, James Robertson simultaneously put his region at the epicentre of Romantic Scotland so that, in Furniss's words, 'the Romantic "discovery of Scotland" was intimately related to the geological "discovery of the earth"' – an illuminating instance of how, by way of metonymy, geological 'deep time' was linked to ideas of pristine cultural conditions.

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Neatly illuminating the idea that writing place allows for multiple interpretations of that place, Kristin Ott and Nicola Watson show an alternative means of discovering Scotland. Ott introduces the notion of the literary tourist, for

whom Scotland was meaningful not because of its geography but because of the way its geography was written by Macpherson and Burns. As Ott notes in 'Sublime Landscapes and Ancient Traditions: Eighteenth-Century Literary Tourism in Scotland', 'in Scotland tourism was book-based from the beginning', while Watson discusses in 'Readers of Romantic Locality: Tourists, Loch Katrine and *The Lady of the Lake*' how a specific Scottish landscape feature, Loch Katrine, seemingly sprang into visible being as a result of Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*. Both Ott and Watson explore the interface between the real and the fictive. For Ott, the plausibility of Ossian and the authenticity of Burns overwrite an earlier vision of Scotland as primitive and unpleasantly rugged, and effectively bury the landscape under reams of interpretation. However, for Watson, the interplay between text and space is time-specific: location becomes locale just at the moment that Scott's poem was celebrated; with the loss of the visibility of the poem, so too Loch Katrine reduces to 'a rather pretty, rather out-of-the-way place'. As noted earlier in this introduction, in Britain Scotland is matched, probably, only by the Lake District as a distinctly Romantic locality. As Polly Atkin discusses in 'Paradox Inn: Home and Passing Through at Grasmere', the Wordsworth effect is perhaps even more pervasive than the idea of 'Scotland', and it centres on Grasmere and Dove Cottage. Atkin shows with aplomb that the paradox resident at this location was its simultaneous identity as a place to inhabit and a place to 'pass through'. For Wordsworth, rootlessness was staved off, and homecoming fenced in, through residence in Dove Cottage, yet the underlying impermanence that besets the renter found play in his poems of the period with their features of loss, going away and belated return. How to make permanent one's place in a locale, and the risks this brings, particularly for the women of the Lake Poets' circle, is associated with the seemingly benign fashion for autographs in Samantha Matthews's '"O all pervading ALBUM!" Place and Displacement in Romantic Albums and Album Poetry'. Matthews demonstrates the intriguing mixed identity of the album as a means to fix in time encounters and visits, and as an embodiment of a kind of repressed peripatetic desire. The album compresses geographical locale along with specimens of local flowers.

In 'Inspiration, Toleration and Relocation in Ann Radcliffe's *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794, through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany* (1795)', Angela Wright roams further afield, investigating how Radcliffe uses the language and texts of 'home' – in this case, Shakespeare and England – not to point out the foreignness of her destinations but rather to defamiliarize the comforts of home. Cannily overturning the arguments that Radcliffe critiqued Europe through references to a superior Britain, Wright establishes that Radcliffe's journey was as much away from assumptions of modern England's preferability as it was towards a Europe in the process of remaking itself, partly (and surprisingly) in the image of a lost but mourned Shakespearian Eng-

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land. The retrievability – or otherwise – of the lost past is also the subject of Sophie Thomas's 'The Location of Vacancy: Pompeii and the Panorama'. Locale becomes history when Pompeii is excavated and then recreated through popular panoramas in London. As Thomas shows, however, history is not always reassuringly past; the panorama focalizes the eerie hyper-reality of Pompeii, both there (visible, whole, available to touch), and always already on the verge of dissipating, a hollow, 'vacant' rendition of meaning. This Romantic locality threatens to collapse on itself. And, as Douglas Kneale argues in 'Italy Visited and Revisited: Wordsworth's "Magnificent Debt"', sometimes it is only by romanticizing localities that such collapse can be avoided. Kneale reads Wordsworth's poems about Italy as reflective of a desire to inhabit both his own past and present, and to import the significance of Milton to his future. Italy becomes a fertile locale, full of significance and fruitfulness. Kneale's sensitive close reading illuminates how a poet whose own work made one locale Romantic finds in another a way to ground his Romantic identity.

Rolf Lessenich's 'Italy as a Romantic Location in the Poetry of the Original English Della Cruscan' offers a stunning *tour de force* in comparative literary analysis. Spanning one hundred years, Lessenich's polymathic reading places the Della Cruscans in a wide historical and political context and can show that English views of Italy were at least as revealing about Italy as they were about the English poets 'writing Italy'. James Vigus's essay 'Henry Crabb Robinson's Initiation into "the Mysteries of the New School": A Romantic Journey' can, in a way, be linked both to Felicitas Menhard's and Angela Wright's contributions, because it is about the peripatetic exploration of space (this time foreign, as Robinson 'walked through, stayed in, and commented on almost every Romantic locality in [Germany]'), but at the same time it is also about Robinson's outstanding role as a go-between, a mediator of German philosophy and religious thought in Britain. Weaving the biographical into the philosophical and relating the latter to the topographical, Vigus can demonstrate that Robinson's tour was also an attempt at creating a space, a 'Society in Society', in which philosophical understanding, artistic beauty and religious toleration could flourish and in which an idea of friendship could be realized that conformed to the highest ideals of both religion and philosophy. With Rosa Karl's 'Hollow Skies, Hupaithric Temples and Pythagoreans: Shelley's Dim Crotonian Truths' we more fully move into imaginary spaces, although the whole drift of this collection is to prove time and again, in concrete instances, that in writing place and space the point is exactly that the line between the real and the imaginary cannot be drawn, as the real is fed into the imaginary and transformed into a chronotope in its own right. In Karl's powerful close reading of P. B. Shelley's *Laon and Cythna*, these transformational processes themselves become thematic and the creation of utopian and dystopian places and spaces in the text is read as an allegory of the ways of the

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imagination and as a model of a text–reader relationship that opens up these spaces.

Arguably, no region outside Europe has been more thoroughly shown to be a site for European projections and fantasies than the Orient. In her essay '"An Imaginary Line Drawn through Waste and Wilderness": Scott's *The Talisman*' Silvia Mergenthal does not deny this – rather, she questions the established reading of Scott's novel as an unduly simplistic one and asks whether it does, in fact, 'obsessively, even aggressively' 're-inscribe binary oppositions in the face of their inherent instabilities, or whether it accepts, perhaps even embraces, unpredictability and uncertainty'. Her essay is a strong demonstration that especially when alterity is put to domestic uses and when imaginary spaces are used to stage and dramatize differences and ambiguities, things aren't always that clear-cut and it is sometimes the other that returns in the guise of its opposite, and the projecting civilization's 'own' that is being altered. Finally, Christoph Bode's piece on Georg Forster's *A Voyage Round the World* is about how Forster engaged with and powerfully redefined Europe's discourse on the South Seas, but like Forster's monumental account of Captain Cook's second voyage it is also an exploration of how an aesthetics and an epistemology of 'viewpoint-in-motion' radically undercuts established assumptions and seeming certainties: embracing subjectivism as a necessary condition of knowledge and experience, Forster's *Voyage* is read as the greatest *Romantic* account of a voyage of exploration we have, because it conspicuously displays the fact that writing place invariably records a subjective scanning and a transversal crossing of 'relative space', thereby doubling as an imaginary or real movement of the subject in space in the dynamics of the text. Therefore, to encounter Romantic localities leaves no one unchanged. May the perusal of this volume offer the same experience to the reader.

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