INTRODUCTION

Mapping Relations in World Literature: The German Romantic-Latin American Connection

Joanna Neilly and Jenny Haase

In the ever-proliferating debates about the definition, status, and intent of 'world literature' as both a theoretical category and a creative practice, the era of post-postcolonialism throws up problems precisely because even accounts of former colonies 'writing back' or 'resisting' nonetheless entrench centre-periphery models. As Shu-mei Shih asserts, whether European and North American literature represents the benchmark against which other literatures are judged, or whether it is side-lined in well-meaning efforts to amplify the value of literatures from elsewhere, the result is paradoxically the same. In its privileged presence at the expense of other cultures, as in its conspicuous absence from the category of [the rest of] the 'world', Western culture takes on a universal value as either the prototype or the invisible yet implied centre that sets the standard.[1] Inclusion of the West as a constituent part of world literature, but in a less hierarchical relation, is a suggested remedy.[2]

Efforts to think beyond this two-tier world literature have informed critical interventions of the last decade or so, with two approaches in particular gaining traction: relationality and worlding. Relationality has of course long been a key factor in comparatist efforts, not to say an obviously necessary one. But the relations proposed for a new type of world literature scholarship include associations traditionally occluded by world systems approaches that foreground capitalist power structures. While such power structures undeniably mark both the conditions of production and forms of expression, as certain themes and aesthetic values are prioritized on the global literary market, there is nonetheless scope for different mappings of literary relations. These arise from attention to similar forms of literature that may emerge synchronically in different parts of the world, perhaps in response to a given global phenomenon or to comparable political or economic conditions in far-removed localities, but emphatically not as part of a teleological spread of Western influence in a civilizing mission.[3]

Despite the standard understanding of synchronicity, these non-teleologically related literary forms need not emerge at the same time, but rather in response to similar circumstances in different times or spaces. Ning Ma's 2017 study *The Age of Silver* proposes pluricentral beginnings of realism, with examples from late sixteenth-century China, early seventeenth-century Spain, late seventeenth-century Japan and early eighteenth-century Britain. This

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[1] Shu-mei Shih, 'World Studies and Relational Comparison', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 130:2 (2015), 430-48 (p. 431).

[2] Ibid., p. 431.

[3] Shu-mei Shih talks of 'literary arcs linking multiple nodes' (p. 434). Alexander Beecroft proposes 'literary ecologies', making use of an analogy from natural history: the biome. Biomes are types of environments that share climatic and landscape conditions, such as rainforests or deserts, and which exist independently in different continents, so that 'distinct and characteristic types of adaptive features [are] found in plants and animals that may not be genetically related to each other'. Beecroft proposes that determining factors in literary production (the 'climate', as it were) such as cultural politics, economic situations, the status of local or standardized languages, etc., may likewise produce similar effects in literatures of otherwise unrelated geographical locations. See Beecroft, *An Ecology of World Literature From Antiquity to the Present Day* (London/New York: Verso, 2015), p. 23 and pp. 25-27.

transcultural phenomenon is linked to the global silver trade and its impact in these far-flung regions; the study thus 'challenges the widespread understanding of the "rise of the novel" as a uniquely European phenomenon'.[4] The title of Chapter One, 'Global Silver, Local Novels' gives a taste of the overall approach, which reflects Shih's preference for identifying 'horizontal' connections in world literature; that is, connections observed from apparent parallels between seemingly unrelated literatures.[5]

Horizontal connections prompt us to identify a new type of relationality, in which cultural production is not fully constricted by the logics of empire and capitalism. Emily Sun is motivated by the same approach. The relation she outlines between geographically and temporally distant literary moments – Romantic-era England and, just over one hundred years on, Republican China – provides 'a complex perspective on the global legacy of conceptions of literature developed in the European Enlightenment and Romanticism as this legacy is activated across linguistic and cultural boundaries and interacts with local textual traditions and social systems'.[6] Importantly, Sun focuses less on chronologically determined influence and impact than on analogous literary practices that articulate modernity in these specific cases, so that an aesthetic relation becomes clear.

Our current volume, analysing various literary-cultural kinships of early nineteenth-century Germany and (predominantly) twenty-first-century Latin America, shares this non-teleological perspective as one important approach. We are encouraged in this effort by recent work on the echoes and transformations of British Romanticism in Latin America in a volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis*, which not only operates along a 'horizon' of world literature, but also reinvigorates Romantic studies as a transnational discipline.[7] Even more recently, Ottmar Ette's volume *Romantik zwischen zwei Welten* expands transnational Romantic studies by considering the correlations between Romantic discourses in Europe and the Americas. Ette explores Romantic literatures on both sides of the Atlantic in relation to their 'transatlantisches Bedingungsverhältnis' [transatlantic mutual dependency] and reflecting their 'inter- und transkulturelle Polylogstrukturen' [polylogic inter- and transcultural structures], thus making the argument that national Romanticisms are in fact inherently transnational and transcultural in their formation, themes, and circulation.[8] Defying the dichotomy between national literatures and world literature, and rejecting any monocultural idea of Romanticism, he identifies and explores the basis of our contemporary system of 'literatures of the world' in the epistemological and aesthetic developments of the nineteenth century, understood as a period of specially accelerated globalization.

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[4] Ning Ma, *The Age of Silver: The Rise of the Novel East and West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 6.
[5] See Shih, particularly pp. 432-34. See also Walter D. Mignolo, *Global Histories, Local Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).
[6] Emily Sun, *On the Horizon of World Literature: Forms of Modernity in Romantic England and Republican China* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2021), p. 22.
[7] See the July 2020 volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis*, 'Latin American Afterlives', https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/latinam [accessed 18 August 2022].
[8] Ottmar Ette, *Romantik zwischen zwei Welten: Potsdamer Vorlesungen zu den Hauptwerken der romanischen Literaturen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), p. VI and p. 64

Horizontal relationality allows us to chart new and sometimes unexpected 'constellations' (Benjamin) on alternative maps of world literature.[9] The concept of worlding can be brought into productive interplay with this theoretical innovation, as a second approach that avoids the well-trodden path of influence and reception by rejecting the logic of one-way cultural transmission from the old imperial centres. In relation to literature, worlding is generally understood as literature's generative function in creating worlds. These worlds may have a greater or a lesser relation to the material world of our lived reality, but they are nonetheless conceived independently of – or at least in a critical relation to – the capitalist market forces that shape cultural production, even if they are marked by them. Worlding, then, is when literature brings into being a world not inescapably the product of globalization; literature thus becomes the self-constituting subject of its own world rather than the corollary of the capitalist world system. Even if the capitalist trap remains, the ability to imagine potential alternatives is a powerful force for literary worlding.

Theoretical contributions by Eric Hayot and Pheng Cheah emphasize this phenomenon.[10] Both critics turn their attention away from the spatial imagination and measuring of the world – or, perhaps more aptly here, the globe – to focus instead on temporality. This means that the world, alternatively imagined, is something that unfolds over time in an act of self-actualization. To put a Romantic spin on this, the 'worlded' world is dynamic and eternally becoming. We can turn here to Richard Eldridge's characterization of the Romantic condition as 'human immigrancy', according to which the Romantic subject finds itself

> always in media res, between nothingness and at-homeness with oneself, others, and the world […] this condition is experienced as a continuing plight within which one comes to voice and judgment, rather than as an object of knowledge that voice and judgment might master.[11]

The typical Romantic themes of wandering, self-loss, alienation, and longing here transform into a philosophical quest actively to create self-knowledge, to determine selfhood rather than acquiesce to any externally imposed meaning of it. This quest is on a par with the ambition to 'world' the world, because it takes on an aesthetic as well as a philosophical significance. For the early German Romantics, such a search for knowledge is not simply an exploration of individual selfhood, but a programmatic desire to reimagine the possibilities of literature as a generative force. If the self grounds the self, fiction is similarly the ground for new theories of fiction.[12] Literature becomes the space in which alternative narrative worlds disrupt

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[9] 'Nicht so ist es, daß das Vergangene sein Licht auf das Gegenwärtige oder das Gegenwärtige sein Licht auf das Vergangene wirft, sondern das Bild ist dasjenige, worin das Gewesene mit dem Jetzt blitzhaft zu einer Konstellation zusammentritt.' [It is not the case that the past throws its light on the present, or the present its light on the past: the image is rather one where that which has been collides suddenly with the here and now, to form a constellation]. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, vol. 5, (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1980), p. 576. Trans. here by Joanna Neilly.

[10] Eric Hayot, *On Literary Worlds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Pheng Cheah, *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2016).

[11] Richard Eldridge, *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 230.

[12] See Anthony Phelan's chapter in the present volume for a discussion of how Romantic fiction constitutes its own theory.

teleological progression, formal expectations of genre, and narrative certainty. Two novels, Friedrich Schlegel's radically experimental *Lucinde* (1799) and Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1800-02) stand out as cases in point.[13] Although Cheah writes about a new way of conceptualizing specifically postcolonial literature, the following assertion is strikingly reminiscent of the German Romantic project: '[t]he ontological equivocation that sets off the worlding force of temporalization is structural to the experience of literature'.[14]

Cheah insists that literature must not be viewed solely as a reactive commentator on the 'spatialized world' rationally ordered by conquest and empire. Rather, '[literature's] formal structures enact the opening of a world'; this recalls Shih's claim that 'world literary cartographies' might disrupt known cartographies in the usual sense.[15] A temporalization of world literature refuses to reduce the world to a globe already charted and fixed by empire, and thus ineluctably governed by neo-colonial capitalism. It instead insists on literature's disruption to this persistent normative force, and its potential therefore to bring about a new future in which we view the world differently. Such critical literature may also include ideas about temporality that differ from, and resist, Western narratives of teleological progress, so that literature's 'temporalization' has a dual meaning.[16]

Our proposed connection between German Romanticism and 'worlding' literature of the post-postcolonial era adds a new horizontal relation to theories of world literature. To illuminate this connection further it is useful to return to Hayot. In keeping with his own preference for loosening the hold of teleology, Hayot thinks of literary modes, over and above literary movements marked by chronological periodization. Although 'aesthetic worldedness' denotes world creation independent of the world system, it is also 'the form of the relation a work establishes between the world inside and the world outside the work.'[17] For Hayot this relation, in the modern era, takes one of three modes: Realism, Romanticism, or Modernism, which do not necessarily conform to the generally accepted timeframes of those designations as literary movements. Romanticism is instead a way of relating to the outside world that might include its radical reimagination. This contrasts with the Realist mode, which reproduces the normative rules of external reality, as they are generally held: 'where Realism is world-affirming, Romanticism is world-creating'.[18] This is not a fundamental rejection of the world as it exists, but a presentation of alternatives that in their very possibility show up the extent to which 'the world is a work', suggesting that it can still be (re-)made.[19]

Often in Romantic-era fiction this intervention in dominant worldviews takes the form of a playful reorganization of temporality. This includes a deconstruction of readerly expectations of narrative progression. Theresa M. Kelley argues that Romantic writers tend to disrupt

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[13] For a fuller account see Anthony Phelan, 'Prose Fiction of the German Romantics', in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. by Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 41-65.
[14] Cheah, p. 210.
[15] Cheah, p. 11 and Shih, p. 434.
[16] Cheah, p. 12.
[17] Hayot, p. 45.
[18] Hayot, p. 128. Modernism, by contrast, is a 'world-denying' mode which, if carried to its logical extreme, 'would have to assert a total ontological rejection of the normative world-view of its era' (p. 131 and p. 132).
[19] Hayot, p. 129.

conceptions of progressive, historical time by focussing instead on contingency, not least thanks to the world-remaking force of the French Revolution as an event that broke up history. They accordingly 'invented ways to register, direct, recognize and mythologize readings of their own time(s) that unseat chronological predictability.'[20] This is strongly characteristic of the German tradition of Romantic writing. *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*'s title suggests an historical narrative about a fabled thirteenth-century Minnesänger, but the novel is nothing of the sort. It begins and ends in the realm of dream; this becomes as viable a world as the medieval social world in which Heinrich initially moves, as the novel breaks apart distinctions between past, present, and future. Its formal as well as temporal dislocation is an outright and acknowledged rejection of the progressive logic of the Bildungsroman which, in Novalis's view, ended by acquiescing to the market.[21] Here, as early as 1800, we have an example of the 'worlding' outlined above. Novalis includes the subaltern Zulima, a Muslim girl captured by Crusading knights, and the narrative amplifies her voice as one seeking to remake the history of Christian-Islamic encounters in a more conciliatory mode. Zulima's appearance in the narrative, importantly a chance encounter when Heinrich makes an unplanned exit from the knights' castle, interrupts and challenges his growing enthusiasm for the Crusades, reversing one potential and progressively logical narrative trajectory. This suggests how narrative reworlding in the Romantic mode might be more than merely tangential to real-world geopolitical concerns, marking its relation to the above theories of world literature.[22]

As the brief theoretical overview and example above suggest, the potentially transformative act of worlding is by no means a break from reality. It includes an awareness of, and relationship to, the world as seen through the lens of global power relations and the real-life economic conditions that shape the circulation of literature, but undercuts the idea that this is the only possible reality. We suggest that such disruptive worlding is one horizontal relation between German Romanticism and recent Latin American fiction. This idea solidifies through several of the following chapters, which delineate the aesthetic affinities of these seemingly distanced categories and reveal how radical rethinking of the possibilities of narrative, and the relation this bears to dominant market conditions or cultural norms, become markers of both German Romantic and current Latin American literature.

Why Latin America above other regions? First, despite our broadly theoretical approach, we are sensitive to the significant and yet often overlooked historical links between nineteenth-century Germany and Latin American nations, not least via manifestations of informal empire in the century before a unified Germany acquired colonies of its own. The expression of these links as an assimilation and subsequent rethinking of German Romanticism in the Latin

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[20] Theresa M. Kelley, 'Romantic Temporality, Contingency, and Mary Shelley', *English Literary History*, 75:3 (2008), 625-52 (p. 635).

[21] See Novalis's pointed critique of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* [*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*] (1795-6) in Novalis, *Schriften: Die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, ed. by Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, 4 vols (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), IV: *Tagebücher, Briefwechsel, Zeitgenössische Zeugnisse*, ed. by Richard Samuel with Hans-Joachim Mähl and Gerhard Schulz, p. 323.

[22] See also James R. Hodkinson, *Women and Writing in the Works of Novalis: Transformation Beyond Measure?* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2007), pp. 185-85, for a discussion of this episode in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*.

American cultural context are meticulously outlined in Carol Tully's opening chapter.[23] Meanwhile a major protagonist in the contemporary cultural imagination of Romantic-era exploration in the New World is the Prussian Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). His recently revived popular reception and cross-genre appeal is perhaps best demonstrated by *The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt* (2019), an English-language graphic novel co-created by Lillian Melcher and Andrea Wulf, the latter of whom had already achieved bestseller status with her 2015 Humboldt biography, *The Invention of Nature.* Humboldt's lesser-studied ambivalent reception by Latin American authors and artists is the focus of Karolina Watroba's chapter, which brings a new dimension to the standard view of Humboldt as a liberal critic of imperialism. Humboldt encouraged, promoted and in some cases helped facilitate further scientific and artistic exploration of the sub-continent by younger professional travellers. This expanded Romantic-era German and European curiosity about the region, and the resulting marketization of particular Latin American images to a domestic European audience forms part of the subject of Joanna Neilly's chapter.

But to return to our theoretical dimension: contemporary Latin American writers of a cultural critical bent are intensely aware of the real-world market forces, in large part a hangover from imperialist capitalism, that constitute the economic and geo-political situation in which their works are received in the Global North. In other words, the world system that generally determines the global success or otherwise of their work is the world to which their alternative imaginaries might form a particular relation, in the above-defined process of Romantic 'worlding'. Latin American literature has enjoyed an ambiguously privileged status on the European market as a type of 'world literature' that is generally received in a reduced and exoticized form. Following the Boom of the 1960s and 70s, a certain perception of the region's literature retains a stubborn hold as the most marketable version thereof, even though the idea of what constitutes Argentinian, Chilean, Peruvian, or Mexican literature, and so on, in their domestic markets, may be rather different. Gesine Müller has explored this phenomenon to demonstrate how Latin American literature achieved the status of world literature among German audiences only if it met specific expectations of genre and theme (infusing familiar European forms with exotic content, and foregrounding the search for modern Latin American identity whilst also including folklore and myth).[24] As Mariano Siskind notes, this type-casting of Latin American literature is not confined to the popular market. The representative status of Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* [*One Hundred Years of Solitude*] (1967) remains high on U.S. university 'world literature' curricula, on which this single novel can be taken to express the 'Latin American historical experience' via its 'magical realist genealogical allegory'.[25]

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[23] See also Thomas Schoonover, *Germany in Central America: Competitive Imperialism, 1821-1929* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1998) and H. Glenn Penny's extensively informative review article, 'Latin American Connections: Recent Work on German Interactions with Latin America', *Central European History*, 46:2 (2013), 362-94.

[24] Gesine Müller, 'Literaturen der Amerikas und ihre Rezeption in Deutschland. Weltliteratur als globales Verflechtungsprinzip', in *Verlag Macht Weltliteratur: Lateinamerikanisch-deutsche Kulturtransfers zwischen internationalem Literaturbetrieb und Übersetzungspolitik*, ed. by Gesine Müller (Berlin: Walter Frey, 2014), pp. 17-32. See also Gesine Müller, *How is World Literature Made? The Global Circulations of Latin American Literatures*, trans. by Marie Deer (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2022).

[25] Mariano Siskind, 'The Globalization of the Novel and the Novelization of the Global. A Critique of World Literature', *Comparative Literature*, 62:4 (2010), 336-60 (p. 354).

The institutionalization of Latin American culture on a global market therefore answers to its relatively fixed, or at least slow-moving, constructions by the external U.S. and European markets to which it must appeal if it is to achieve global success. Even as the parameters of these market expectations are slowly changing, essentialization remains an issue. Magic realism is no longer necessarily the main marker of (imagined) Latin American identity, as new expectations of supposedly authentic regional topics may include the predominance of urban and political violence, narcoculture, or femicide. Recent research shows that a tendency to essentialize prevails both on the literary market and within the academy, that is, the two main levers for the institutionalization of literature in popular and intellectual contexts.[26] Close analysis by Héctor Hoyos, Elisa Sotgiu and Gesine Müller has revealed how Western publishers and Western academia are, perhaps surprisingly, complicit in a reduction of Latin American culture to key tropes or aesthetic approaches. Hoyos's suggestive title, *Beyond Bolaño: The Global Latin American Novel* (2015), implies that single representative authors are being identified for a new generation of globally marketable Latin American culture. Roberto Bolaño, like select predecessors of the Boom, has 'in many circles […] come to represent the entirety of contemporary Latin American literature.'[27] Sotgiu outlines the complex market dynamics that have made this the case: Bolaño attracts an academic readership in the U.S. and Europe primarily by seeming to work against popular culture via his formal innovations and his criticism of the institutionalization of literature; paradoxically this admits him to the very institutions with the power to canonize. Meanwhile, and apparently contradictorily, he openly courts the market and appeals to a popular readership, for example, via homages to genre fiction and indeed in his seeming rejection of highbrow academic posturing, one of many themes in the novel *2666*. Gesine Müller relates such strategies specifically to the German market for Latin American literature. Her work reveals – via the example of the major German publisher Suhrkamp's Latin America section – the politics of editorial selection and circulation processes, and their impact on the market for 'world literature'. At the same time, she unveils the 'resistant potential of the material', advocating for a recognition of those works that fail to fit into the dominant categories of the global market.[28] In this volume, Jenny Haase's chapter considers two different authors (Andrés Neuman and Mathias Énard) who, like Bolaño, thematize and critique academic discussions of world literature in salons and in universities. Yet the ongoing self-reflection that marks academic discourses of world literature, as critics increasingly take the discipline to task, means that such a stance is paradoxically a sure way to achieve legitimation by the (Western) academy, and the academy is a significant institutional mediator of the 'global novelist'.[29]

But as Adrian Daub's and Anthony Phelan's chapters in this volume argue, Bolaño's fiction undercuts the apparently inescapable logic of the global market by proposing axes of world literature that are at times almost maddeningly obscure. One such axis includes German Romantic writers normally overlooked in the countless discussions of world literature that place Goethe at the inauguration of the field. To borrow Tully's phrase, the German

[26] See for example Elisa Sotgiu, 'Woes of the True Global Novelist. Elena Ferrante and Roberto Bolaño in the International Literary Field', *Journal of World Literature*, 7 (2022), 274-97.
[27] Héctor Hoyos, *Beyond Bolaño: The Global Latin American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 7.
[28] See Müller, *How is World Literature Made?*, p. 156.
[29] See Sotgiu, especially pp. 287-89.

Romantics have long gone 'under the radar' with regard to their impact in Latin America, overshadowed not only by Goethe but in particular by the impact of Nazi history and the Holocaust in studies of German cultural influence in the region.[30] Yet in addition to their actual cultural presence, which includes translation, reception, and influence in various Latin American cultural spheres, the Romantics hold an aesthetic importance for what Daub here names a 'minor world literature' that is 'independent of the flows of capital and sovereign power'. Bolaño emerges, not as the only proponent of this literary remapping of world relations, but, more productively, as a 'port of entry into a bigger [Latin American] corpus.'[31]

Keeping in mind the concept of the aesthetic world as a form of relation between the intra- and the extra-textual world, we can start to identify a model of Latin American literature as a Romantically-inflected criticism (in Hayot's mode): a radical reimagination of the conditions and expressions of world literature. Alexander Beecroft offers a positive vision for the future of a world literature that is aesthetically innovative and yet simultaneously intensely aware of market conditions, arguing that authorial knowledge of, and appeal to, the market need not exclude a different vision of its operation.[32] Beecroft's 'plot of globalization', for which he takes novels by Bolaño and the Indian writer Amitav Ghosh as instructive examples, employs complex multi-strand narration to re-order a world in which 'earlier core-periphery models no longer offer completely satisfying explanations for the economic and political exploitation that nonetheless remains in place'.[33] By refusing to offer up a tried and tested '[combination of] exotic content with conventional form', that is, the apparently authentic yet European-friendly literary product also identified by Müller, the 'plot of globalization' escapes being 'robbed, by its commodification, of the capacity significantly to alter its readers' thinking.'[34] As with the German writers of the historically defined Romantic era, the disruption of readerly expectations, mostly via narrative innovation including polyphony and fragmentation, is central in developing readers' abilities to imagine the world differently.

The above is succinctly summarized in Hoyos's take on 'the global Latin American novel': 'Novels not only react to conflicting visions of the global, they articulate their own.'[35] This aligns with Suh-Reen Han's broad definition of a 'Romantic consciousness' as a critical rection *to* modernity that is also *of* modernity.[36] While potentially frustratingly capacious, this definition also opens up Romanticism's 'instantiation in multiple forms, circumstances, and articulations of modernity'.[37] The critical impetus of Romanticism as a *mode* lies in its reaction to dominant worldviews of its contemporary era. In its historical context,

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[30] See for example: Hoyos's chapter, 'Nazi Tales from the Americas at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century', in *Beyond Bolaño*, pp. 33-64; Robert Kelz, *Competing Germanies: Nazi, Antifascist, and Jewish Theater in German Argentina* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2020); and Edna Aizenberg, *On the Edge of the Holocaust: The Shoah in Latin American Literature and Culture* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2016).
[31] Hoyos, p. 7.
[32] Beecroft, especially pp. 279-95.
[33] Beecroft, p, 283.
[34] Beecroft, p. 289 and 287; see also Müller, 'Literaturen der Amerikas und ihre Rezeption in Deutschland', p. 124.
[35] Hoyos, p. 25.
[36] See Suh-Reen Han's introduction to the December 2016 volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis*, 'English Romanticism in East Asia', https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/eastasia/praxis.2016.eastasia.intro.html [accessed 24 August 2022].
[37] Suh-Reen Han [accessed 24 August 2022].

Romanticism emerges as a type of 'ethical thinking' that embraces uncertainty or 'immigrancy' when faced with the Enlightenment's philosophical imperative for a priori knowledge: Romanticism is a process of unfixing normative definitions.[38] If we view one important strand of Romanticism as a critical, philosophical, and aesthetic resistance to dominant paradigms, we can reasonably conclude that '[as] long as modernity retains the capability of self-reflection, Romanticism will continue to be a valid form of cultural critique beyond spatial and temporal boundaries.'[39] Modernity, in the case of our present volume, is above all the contemporary experience of globalization or, more narrowly defined, the economic, political, and social fields of influence and exchange that mark literature's global circulation.

The following chapters remain mindful of nineteenth-century Germany's informal imperial entanglements in Latin America (Tully, Watroba, Neilly), the echoes of neo-colonialism which still mark European-Latin American cultural relations (Watroba, Neilly, Daub, Forttes Zalaquett, Haase), the further contamination of these relations by the post-war flight of many Nazis to South America (Daub, Phelan), and the persistent infiltration by global capitalism into even the most optimistically resistant aesthetic enterprises (Forttes Zalaquett, Haase). We are not suggesting a literary relation that is purely theoretical or based solely on nebulous affinities. Indeed, many of the Latin American novelists and artists we examine include and sometimes focus primarily on Germans, and particularly travelling German artists, literary practitioners, translators, scientists or cultural critics, with a spotlight on the nineteenth century. Taken together, they are proof of a prominent if critically overlooked interest within the Latin American cultural sphere in this transnational, trans-period connection. The range of writers and artists imaginatively engaging in this lesser-told history of exchange and influence include: the Venezuelan poet José Antonio Ramos Sucre (1890-1930); the French-Colombian visual artist José Alejandro Restrepo (b. 1959); the Argentinian authors César Aira (b. 1949) and Andrés Neuman (b. 1977); the Chilean authors Carlos Franz (b. 1959) and Roberto Bolaño (1953-2003); the Mexican author Jorge Volpi (b. 1968) and, although not considered in this volume, the Mexican-Peruvian author Mario Bellatin, whose 2002 novel *Jacobo el mutante* [*Jacob the Mutant*] presents a fictional historiography of a real-life work by the Austrian writer Joseph Roth in an innovative fragmentary narrative reminiscent of the most radical Romantic form. Meanwhile the acknowledged affinities between Argentinian authors Mariana Enríquez (b. 1973) and Samanta Schweblin (b. 1978) and Edgar Allan Poe can be read as part of a transnational tradition in the uncanny which stretches back to the inspiration Poe found in the German Romantic writer E.T.A. Hoffmann.

The historical overview working in tandem with our theories of affinity, and perhaps explaining some of the above-named connections, is provided in the opening chapter. Tully outlines the long history of material connections between Spanish, German, and Latin American literatures via translation, the literary periodicals that exploded on Latin American markets post-independence, and a developing Latin American strain of critical engagement with German literature and culture throughout the nineteenth and early-to-mid-twentieth centuries. Tully's tracing of the stages in this history, from initial reception and translation of German works in Latin America to a higher level of critical absorption and appraisal, does the important work of uncovering the material operation of a world literary network that

[38] Eldridge, p. 101.
[39] Suh-Reen Han [accessed 24 August 2022].

exists ‘under the radar’. Importantly, she also draws attention to the longer tradition of two-way cultural exchange: German Romanticism took much inspiration from Golden Age Spain. This points to Hispanic roots as one shared cultural model in Romantic Germany and post-independence Latin America, even as the latter essentially attempted to break free from the influence of the former colonizing power and turned more towards alternative European cultural models, including French Romanticism. The persistent side-lining of Spanish cultural influence in North-Western European constructions of the canon is pointed out by the Spanish merchant Álvaro in Andrés Neuman’s novel *El viajero del siglo* [*Traveller of the Century*] (2009), as Haase’s chapter acknowledges. Tully’s apt reminder opens up the question of the origins of German Romanticism beyond the narrowly national, a problem also taken up by Watroba’s provocative suggestion, via Mary Louise Pratt, that Romanticism originated in the Caribbean. Questions of canonicity and origin thus underlie our investigations, which Tully sets up by revealing the alternative German Romantic canon as it was historically perceived and reconstructed in Latin America. This thread runs through our book, as Neilly considers a German Romantic painter practically unheard of today in Europe but upheld as a foundational artist of the movement in Latin America, and Daub and Phelan draw attention to the lesser-known German authors who unfix our imagination of the canon in novels by Neuman, Bolaño, and Volpi.

Romantic-era exploration, Romantic theories of translation and literature, Romantic forms and modes (the fragment, the Gothic), and typical Romantic figures and themes (the wanderer, the landscape artist, the female muse, myth) loom large across the volume. Complementing Tully’s approach, Gesine Müller proposes analogies between German Romantic and twentieth- and twenty-first-century Latin American authors along literary-theoretical and historical lines. Müller takes up the chronological thread where Tully leaves off, to examine the Boom writers’ programmatic affinities to German Romantics including Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis who sought a collective identity in myth, and Achim von Arnim who attempted literary interventions in the political sphere. Taking as her subject the cultural expression of self-determination, Müller argues that ‘the Romantics and the authors of the Latin American Boom meet in the abstract nature of their notions of the people, from which they derive their ethical drive’ – with ethics linked to desires for autonomy in political situations which otherwise denied it. Experiences and cultural memory of foreign occupation, belated literary recognition, and a search for a shared cultural identity link the Boom writers and the German Romantics. Müller’s approach provides another instance of the ‘relational comparison’ also advocated by Shu-mei Shih, Ning Ma, and Emily Sun. Our two opening chapters therefore set up the volume overall, which toggles between historical interconnection and aesthetic relationality. While German Romanticism is historically an inspiration for and in some specific cases antecedent to Latin American literature, it is also, more radically, a vehicle for cultural criticism and aesthetic resistance. German Romanticism may often be a justified object of criticism, in so far as it participated in the Age of Exploration that exoticized Latin America for European observers. But it is also an aesthetic mode with which to form new cultural identities and constellations, independent of a market still in many ways operating along imperial lines. This tension between Romanticism’s entanglement in colonial-era ambition, and its aesthetic of resistance, is of significance for our investigations.

The remainder of our chapters are thus united in their exploration of how twentieth-century and, predominantly, contemporary Latin American authors and artists develop a relationship to German Romanticism that critically reframes our imagination of transnational exchange – both of capital and of culture. Watroba brings this criticism to origin stories that determine Western constructions of Romanticism and its heroes, most notably the Prussian explorer and botanist Alexander von Humboldt. If Humboldt was an acknowledged critic of empire and a scientific and artistic pioneer with the epic ambition to rethink the world, Watroba reminds us that imperial structures were nonetheless essential to his rise. Her chapter scrutinizes not so much Humboldt's unquestionable achievements, but how these achievements were channelled to European audiences who vicariously participate in a still imperial gaze. José Antonio Ramos Sucre and José Alejandro Restrepo radically reframe Humboldt's South American adventures and his scientific pronouncements in a formally experimental essay and an art installation respectively. Watroba's close analysis of these sources reveals how dependence on Humboldt as the mediator of knowledge about Latin America is a 'cultural problem' because it operates according to the logic of 'epistemic inequality' that was crystallized in the Age of Empire, even if Humboldt himself was no supporter of imperial projects.

Neilly follows with an examination of one of Humboldt's many protégés, the German landscape artist Johann Moritz Rugendas who travelled to Latin America 'in Humboldt's shadow' in the 1820s, 30s and 40s. Her chapter proposes a link between Rugendas and the fictional landscape painters of the German Romantic literary canon who express a growing cultural anxiety about the marketization of aesthetic creativity. This dilemma is even more fraught in the recently post-independence context of 1830s Latin American nations, when the adventures of explorers like Rugendas became fodder for a European market hungry for exotic imagery. Rugendas' hybrid brand of Romanticism, forged as much by contact with Latin America as by the dominant influence of Caspar David Friedrich, may partly explain his continued pre-eminence in the sub-continent today even as Germany has long forgotten him. Nevertheless, this nuance is lost when his life and work are marketed as an adventure in the genre of frontier fiction. Neilly considers two very different retellings of Rugendas' life in contemporary fiction by Carlos Franz and César Aira. Tracing the translation and circulation of Franz's novel in Germany, Neilly identifies a highly marketable world literature that uncritically accepts commodification, but Aira's work provides relief in the Romantic mode via a fragmentary, disruptive narrative that challenges the reader to rethink their participation in neo-colonial cultural consumption.

Catalina Forttes Zalaquett turns to a different sort of genre fiction: the Gothic, and its contemporary reframing by Mariana Énriquez and Samanta Schweblin in their neo-fantastic narratives. While several contributors (Watroba, Neilly, Daub, Phelan, Haase) reflect on the circulation and commodification of literature and culture, Forttes Zalaquett homes in on a more tangible problem: the commodification and exploitation of bodies and finite environmental resources by a global capitalist market that continues to extract labour and wealth from formerly colonial countries. Schweblin foregrounds Argentina's environmental crisis, occasioned by the overproduction of soya bean crop for a global supply chain, while Énriquez invents a dark Order whose impenetrable magic workings exploit human labour. If this is reminiscent of the secret societies and malevolent conspiracies from the best of the German Gothic, it is also a comment on the incomprehensible capitalist systems which seek

to obscure their own workings so as to circumvent critical or political resistance.[40] Forttes Zalaquett's focus on the harm these systems inflict on family relationships, and particularly on mothers whose labour of care is overlooked and undervalued in a profit-oriented economy, provides the innovative link to the Gothic tradition, in which mothers were likewise often effaced. As the chapter shows, Schweblin and Énriquez update the nineteenth-century Gothic to reflect contemporary feminist concerns around motherhood and its cultural perception. In keeping with the radical destabilizing potential of Romantic modes, the Gothic and magic, for both authors, become ways of escaping from the logic of the capitalist market; this is tied to the subversive potential of magic realism which likewise forms a part of the authors' literary heritage.

The same chapter also proposes a transatlantic literary network of Gothic influence and exchange, stretching back from Schweblin and Énriquez's neo-fantastic, via Julio Cortázar's 1956 translations of Edgar Allan Poe, to Poe's influential predecessor E.T.A. Hoffmann. This 'bibliomigrancy', to borrow B. Venkat Mani's term – the channels via which literature circulates globally – in turn itself becomes an object of enquiry for both Daub and Phelan.[41] While Tully's opening chapter historicizes the reimagination of the German Romantic canon as perceived by non-European observers, Daub sheds light on the purposely radical reframing of the world literary canon to reveal a double-edged German world literature. Focussing on Bolaño and Volpi, Daub reveals these authors' uses of Germanness as a resource to be extracted: an original and provocative reversal of the colonial and neo-colonial extraction of profit from Latin America to Europe examined by Forttes Zalaquett. Bolaño's seemingly superficial and random name-dropping of German literary sources in fact provides a version of world literature less dependent on the popular market than the Anglo-American dominant, suggesting one alternative to the Anglophone stranglehold on global literary circulation. Nonetheless, if German culture, relatively speaking, has fewer specific colonial associations in Latin America, Daub uncovers, in his examination of both Bolaño and Volpi, a more contaminated German world literature which circulated alongside the trauma of Nazi-era violence. This is exemplified in the titular figure of Volpi's *En busca de Klingsor* [*In search of Klingsor*] (1999), whom Daub splits into two antagonistic representatives of world literature, or two sides of Romanticism. Is he the Wagnerian villain, further tarnished in the wake of the Third Reich, or Novalis's myth-making Klingsohr from *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*? As Daub argues, 'the German literary canon activates […] different synapses of world literary networks', which are employed to a range of critical ends.

As Phelan notes, Argentinian author Andrés Neuman likewise identifies two strands of German Romanticism: the conservative or 'regressive' turn to the Middle Ages in the context of nationalism, and the formally experimental current that anticipates postmodernism.[42]

[40] Examples from the German tradition include Friedrich Schiller's *Der Geisterseher* [*The Ghost-Seer*] (1787-89) and E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Die Elixiere des Teufels* [*The Devil's Elixirs*] (1815).
[41] B. Venkat Mani, *Recoding World Literature: Libraries, Print Culture, and Germany's Pact with Books* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), p. 3.
[42] For a discussion of the affinities between Romanticism and Postmodernism (mainly in the British context) see *Romanticism and Postmodernism*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); for the German case see, for example, Gerhard Kaiser, *Literarische Romantik* (Göttingen: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), p. 116; and Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 1-5.The seminal text for postmodern treatments of early (Jena) Romanticism in particular remains Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy's *L'Absolu*

Neuman favours the latter, and Phelan's chapter reveals the affinities between his 2009 novel *El viajero del siglo* [*Traveller of the Century*] and the German pioneers of such experimentalism. It shows how Neuman's use of historical detail and Romantic associations at the level of content are purposely stereotypical, the better to later undercut and complicate the expected trajectory of an historical novel by recapitulating Romanticism's 'novel disruptions', that is, the suspension of linear development that unsettles the very construction of the novel itself as literary genre. Neuman thus continues in the Romantic tradition of the novel as self-theorizing and self-constituting. Romanticism emerges again as a way of rethinking narrative possibilities, not as an historical movement to be falsely revived. Phelan couples Neuman with Bolaño, a writer who makes readers acutely aware, as did the German Romantics, of literature's own fictional status. Never proposing a straightforward historical relation of influence and reception, Bolaño nevertheless acknowledges the dependency of literature on prior texts, something which unsettles the designation of world literary status to apparently singular figures.

Jenny Haase, meanwhile, reads Neuman's imaginative metanarrative of a nineteenth-century German literary cosmos alongside the work of one of today's most prominent French authors, Mathias Énard (b. 1972). Considering *El viajero del siglo* in conversation with Énard's Goncourt Prize winning novel *Boussole* [*Compass*] (2015), Haase's chapter further illuminates the rich intertextual, transnational network addressed throughout the volume. She extends this to include (via Énard) French, Francophone, African, and Asian literatures, thus placing our German Romantic-Latin American 'horizon' as one embedded in, and related to, other global literary connections. Both Neuman and Énard challenge national philological perspectives through their own biographies,[43] through their choice of intercultural themes, through an intertextual web of references to countless literatures of the world, and through their global marketing and reception. In both novels, references to the German Romantic tradition are the starting point for metaliterary reflections – both idealizing and self-critical – on an imagined transcultural, dynamic, and pluralistic world literature. Both authors acknowledge Goethe, but place a particular emphasis on Wilhelm Müller's song cycle *Die Winterreise* [*The Winter Journey*] (1824). Müller's work, and its setting by Schubert, gain a central role in the treatment of themes such as cultural alterity and various recent political events and concerns (e.g., the role and status of the European Union, neoliberalism, the Arab Spring). To a certain degree the two novels complement and reflect one another: where Neuman reframes the gaze towards nineteenth-century Europe and its literature from a marginalized Hispanic perspective, Énard reimagines the relationship between Occident and Orient by displacing its construction away from the Parisian centre (recalling how France, alongside Britain, takes centre stage in Edward Said's account of Orientalism). Estrangement and alienation, marked by obvious associations with Romantic models, are important

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littéraire. Théorie de la littérature du romantisme allemand (1978): see Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, trans. by Philip Barnard and Cheryl Lester (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[43] Neuman, born in Buenos Aires, has lived since the age of fourteen in Granada; Énard has spent many years in countries of the Middle East and in Barcelona.

aesthetic strategies which also find expression in the treatment of language as a theme. The discrepancy between Neuman's Spanish-language narrative and the dialogues in the novel's German-speaking salon about German philosophy and literature produce a critically productive dissonance, as does Énard's similar device of having the Austrian narrator comment, in French, on Orientalism from a metareflexive, post-postcolonial perspective. Linguistic border-crossing initially unsettles the reader, the better to illustrate how differing modes of linguistic expression and translation are part of world literature's multi-faceted conception: there is no single language even in a single work.

This sense of foreignness in the self and the related thematic engagement with language are at the heart of Neuman's acceptance speech, delivered at the Alfaguara Prize ceremony in Madrid on 26th May 2009, and reproduced here by Lauren Dooley and Rebecca De Souza for the first time in English as a fitting conclusion to our volume. Neuman describes the Spanish of his novel as 'a Spanish from everywhere and from nowhere' and relates this linguistic rootlessness to the restless situation of the emigrant. Alongside these observations, he emphasizes the significance of translation, with reference to the passionate relationship between his protagonists Hans and Sophie, which is in turn directly linked to a discourse about a new world literature, tasked with decentring the Western-European canon. Highly relevant to the critical discussions of Eurocentric world literature models outlined above, Neuman's speech plainly rejects exoticizing, essentializing conceptions of Latin American literature as defined by themes of regional identity. Instead he refers to dynamic developments in literature by Spanish American authors of recent decades who project 'a foreign gaze onto places that are theoretically their own'. Spanish American literature takes its place among other literatures, participating in a process of literary worlding as 'Spanish-language literature can aspire […] to symbolize any space; to be a metonymy for the world'. Neuman is equally critical of restrictive genre taxonomies, tackling the apparent boundaries between historical novels, contemporary themes, and science fiction. Here, again, the (early) German Romantics emerge as a model; in Neuman's words, they were 'the narrative avant-garde of their time'. Our volume presents a contemporary, Romantically-inflected mode of world literature as one that is in a state of eternal becoming; a generative force that critiques and reworks the conditions of literature's possibility. Neuman's description of the Jena Romantics and their ongoing relevance for Latin American and world literature sums this up beautifully: they were 'the secret source of modern, post-modern, and future literature'.