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**BYRON, KINGLAKE'S EOTHEN
AND THE "SELF" OF THE TRAVEL WRITER**

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Abstract: *Travel writing is a well-defined mode emerging from Romanticism and coming into its own with the explorers of the nineteenth century. In travel writing in English, Lord Byron's poems of travel and adventure - Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812-1818), Don Juan (1819-1828) and Alexander Kingslake's Eothen (1838) were two landmarks of style, as well as great commercial successes. It was Eothen which first explicitly posed the question of the travel writer's "self" which Byron had raised implicitly. On the face of it the object of travel writing is to give a full picture, from first-hand observation, of the lands and places which the traveller passes through, their topography, their inhabitants, and – if the writer feels competent – their society, customs, and politics. Granted the writer's basic ability to convey meaning, the effectiveness of her or his account ought in theory to depend on exteriorizing the subject matter to a maximum, and subduing individual reflections (which risk interfering with the clarity of the picture) to a minimum. In practice this happens rather seldom. Bolstered by the performance of travel per se, the traveller's self is irresistibly drawn into a process of analysis and interpretation. Travel writing thus firmly connects with other modes of modern writing – in particular the novel – in which the boundary between the observer and the observed is fluid. The opportunity which the travel writer thus has to use external landscapes as a form of camouflage is also an escape route from the dilemmas posed by postmodernism as regards the status of the self, reflexivity, and self-consciousness. Otherness, the motor of travel writing, can be played down or played up as convenient, while the traveller both owns and does not own the anthropological landscape which he or she visits.*