

Call for Panel Contributions

“Navigating Cultural Crossroads: Exploring the Experiences of Transnational Travelers in the Americas”

Organizers:

Univ.- Prof. Dr. Stefan Brandt (University of Graz, Austria)

Dr. Saptarshi Mallick (University of North Bengal, West Bengal, India)

Planned venue:

11th IASA World Congress 2023 (ASA)

“Journeying (the) Americas: The Paradoxes of Travel (and) Narratives”

University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland, Sept. 7-10, 2023.

Travel is an intimate part of human existence that involves cultural exchange through observation and interaction. It requires us to recognize that, beyond our allegiance to our own nation, we are also bound together by our shared humanity and the global community. To truly understand our own selves, we must adopt an inclusive perspective towards life, where cultures merge and combine to form a constructive relationship. In today’s globalized world, the practice of travel, mobility, and cross-cultural contact challenges the politics of difference and the homogenizing perspectives of the world state. This ‘openness to the world’¹ enables us to appreciate the diverse cultures around us and discover our own identities in relation to others and their ethnolinguistic backgrounds. By engaging with difference, we can forge cultural connections that transcend time and space, and bring subjectivity into dialogue.

International travelers have been flocking to the Americas for centuries, drawn by its diverse cultures, natural beauty, and rich history. From the ancient Incan ruins of Machu Picchu to the bustling streets of New York City, the Americas offer a wide range of experiences for travelers to explore. One of the most popular destinations for international travelers is the United States. With its vast size and cultural diversity, the US offers something for everyone, from the beaches of California to the forests of Maine. Visitors can experience the excitement of Times Square in New York City, the natural beauty of the Grand Canyon in Arizona, or the historical significance of Washington, D.C. Another popular destination for international travelers is Canada, a country that boasts some of the most stunning natural landscapes in the world, from the Rocky Mountains to the vast expanses of the Canadian Shield. Central and South America also offer a wealth of experiences for international travelers. In Central America, visitors can explore the ancient ruins of Tikal in Guatemala, relax on the beaches of Costa Rica, or experience the vibrant culture of Mexico City. South America is home to some of the world’s most iconic destinations, including the Amazon rainforest, the Galapagos Islands, and the Andes Mountains. The Americas are rich in symbolism appreciated by international travelers. Examples include the bald eagle, the Statue of Liberty, the Mayan pyramids, Niagara Falls, the Hollywood Sign, the Golden Gate Bridge, and the Rio Carnival.

We invite scholars and researchers to submit papers for **presentations** (ca. 15 mins.) exploring the theme of transnational travel writing to (and in) the Americas. This interdisciplinary panel aims to examine the ways in which international travel writers from all parts of the world have represented and engaged with the Americas as a destination of traveling as well as a place of longing. We encourage papers that examine the diverse and complex intersections of travel writing with issues such as race, gender, class, imperialism, globalization, and transnationalism.

¹ Kwame Anthony Appiah. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York/London: Norton, 2006, 5.

Potential topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Travel writing as a site of cultural exchange and encounter
- Representations of the self and the other in American travel writing
- Travel writing as a form of political and social critique
- Travel writing and imperialism
- Gendered perspectives on American travel writing
- The role of technology and transportation in shaping American travel writing
- The impact of globalization on American travel writing
- The ethics of representing other cultures in American travel writing
- The role of translation and multilingualism in transnational American travel writing

We welcome submissions from scholars across disciplines, including literary studies, cultural studies, history, geography, anthropology, and beyond.

Please submit abstracts of 300-500 words to **Stefan Brandt** (stefan.brandt@uni-graz.at) and **Saptarshi Mallick** (saptarshieng@gmail.com) by **Friday, April 14, 2023**.

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