

Introduction: Mirrored Sea – Reflective Glance

Bryan A. Garrett and Isabelle Rispler

Transatlantic history is more than a field of historical inquiry; it is a collection of theoretical and topical approaches devoted to understanding structures and human agency. It is grounded in local phenomena; it (re-)examines established knowledge and historical nomenclature. Its adherents also place local and regional phenomena within a global context. Thinking (trans)atlantically means thinking simultaneously about movements and linkages “beyond,” “below,” and “across” the societal and cultural constructs of the Atlantic basin. Transatlantic history entails considering “transdisciplinary conversations,” “transcontinental exchange,” and “transboundary transfer.” Transatlantic history is inextricably, yet necessarily, tied to the past. It must consider the past across the disciplines, as both subject and object of inquiry. It (re-)examines structures alongside (re-)examinations of individual and group agency. It traces identity constructions, symbolism, and connections throughout and across the Atlantic. Ultimately, transatlantic history (re-)evaluates the movement and circulation of people, goods and ideas within and across the continents surrounding the Atlantic basin between the fifteenth century and the present.

As stated in previous introductions to this journal, *Traversea* is dedicated to providing a platform for young scholars to present their findings, their new ideas, and fresh perspectives in the field of transatlantic history.¹ Moreover, *Traversea* continues to serve as the established avenue for publishing research presented at the Annual International Graduate Student Conference on Transatlantic History at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Beyond publishing conference presentations, the latest edition of the journal also provides an expanded space for defining and redefining the content and relevance of transatlantic studies with the new section entitled “Opinion Pieces.” This space is devoted to exploring the foundations and future trajectories of transatlantic history.

With the Fourteenth Annual International Graduate Student Conference on Transatlantic History, the conference at the University of Texas at Arlington has expanded into a weekend-long forum for graduate students and young scholars, from across the globe, to present their cutting-edge research and scholarly findings. Such broad and diverse participation at the International Graduate Student Conference has provided the editors of *Traversea* a remarkable pool of

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¹ Kristen D. Burton and Isabelle Rispler, “Introduction: What Is Transatlantic History?,” *Traversea* 1 (2011): 4; Kristen D. Burton and Isabelle Rispler, “Introduction: New Approaches and Perspectives on Transatlantic History,” *Traversea* 2 (2012): 1.

innovative research and scholarship from which to draw on. Five of the following contributions below, derived from conference presentations.²

The articles featured in this volume emphasize research topics, such as “indigeneity,” that have been rather marginalized within the field of transatlantic history; they exemplify neglected perspectives, such as the North-South axis, and they present more established avenues, such as the North-North connections, in a new light. The first two articles address the complex interplay of native/colonial Atlantic discourse through the theoretical approach of “indigeneity:” With her contribution “Encoding Authority,” **Amanda Kenney** examines the convergence of native and Spanish cultures in colonial Peru through the medium of the *kipu*. Elaborate linguistic constructions, *kipu* functioned as contested sites of meaning between expressive forms of an idealized pre-contact civilization versus its colonial interpretation as an atavistic artifact of the “foreign” past. **Antje Dieterich**’s research has taken her to the western U.S.-Mexico border. In “Constructions of Indigeneity in Urban Spaces,” her objective is twofold: exploring the conceptual history of indigeneity, as well as analyzing representations of indigeneity in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Being a multilingual journal, *Traversea* also features **Maria Juliana Galdini**’s contribution on the life of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca in Spanish. “*Fuerzas locales, espacios atlánticos, horizontes globales*” (“Local Forces, Atlantic Spaces, Global Horizons”) aims at the historiographic reconciliation through a biographical approach, Cabeza de Vaca having travelled to and lived in both fifteenth-century North and South America. **G. H. Joost Baarsen**’s “Sucking on [America’s] Tit” provides an invaluable deconstruction of the all-too-human cultural tendency to adopt anthropomorphic language when addressing the supposed overarching character of nation-states. Specifically, the author investigates shifting currents in language employed within a broader transatlantic dialogue regarding nation-states in Europe and North America. Baarsen examines the socio-cultural, economic, and political relations between Europe and the United States, through the discourse of the transatlantic “family.” Transatlantic family relations have been filtered through the symbolism of gender and age prejudices, and into the language of dependency and obeisance, represented in the changing dynamic of power relations between the US and Europe, from the eighteenth century to the present. The October conference also brought us **William B. Roka**, whose independent research, “Building the *Titanic* for Mr. Morgan,” has taken him on his own transatlantic exploration of maritime locomotion. Roka argues that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Atlantic cosmopolitans sailed on opulently adorned steamers traversing the Atlantic during an era of momentarily accelerated mobility. Transatlantic ocean liners evolved from being merely crafts for American pilgrimage to the imagined cultural motherlands of Europe into bejeweled playgrounds for the American middle class, when after World War I, American travelers made the conscientious decision to commute on oceanic vessels for mere leisure, rather than seeking “social validation” in Europe.

The editors are excited about the prospect of the new section of the journal that is devoted to providing an open forum for scholars to present their academic interpretations regarding the role and responsibilities of transatlantic history as a field of inquiry and representation. We are fortunate to include a thoughtful contribution from one UT Arlington’s own history faculty, and Transatlantic History Student Organization advisor, **Kenyon Zimmer**. His submission continues the conversation on transatlantic history, and consequently, *Traversea*’s role in bringing that

² For a more comprehensive report on the conference, see Bryan A. Garrett, Isabelle Rispler, and Nicole Léopoldie, “14th Annual International Graduate Student Conference on Transatlantic History. 25.10.2013-26.10.2013, Arlington, Texas,” *H-Soz-U-Kult*, 2014, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=5317>.

conversation to its readership. Zimmer outlines the growth of the field of transatlantic history, and its scholarly position in relation to Atlantic history. Such a comparison, Zimmer tells us, must take into account the periodization schemes adopted by each overlapping field.

Traversea, Vol. 3 represents not just a time to celebrate our most recent successes, but also a moment of long-term reflection. At the conclusion of the 2013-2014 academic year, the History Department bid farewell to one of our faculty: Stanley H. Palmer.³ We will miss Dr. Palmer's erudite, yet accessible, introduction to the field of transatlantic history for graduate students, and his patience in leading deeply thoughtful class discussion. But beyond the classroom, his open-mindedness, his candor and humor, fully represented in his unanimously popular historical role-playing exercises for undergraduates, will be without equal. We wish you luck in all your future endeavors.

We, the editors, would like to thank all those professors nationally and internationally, who have dedicated their time with enthusiasm to the blind peer-review process of the articles submitted to our journal. Their work is invaluable to the existence and academic recognition of *Traversea*. The editors would also like to thank the sponsors of the annual THSO International Graduate Student Conference, the UTA History Department, the UTA College of Liberal Arts, and the Barksdale Lecture Series. We would also like to thank, W. Marvin Dulaney, Chair of the History Department at UTA, who has been an adamant supporter of all student endeavors and initiatives of the doctoral program in Transatlantic History, organized in the Transatlantic History Student Organization (THSO). His support made possible the growth and success of the conference and the journal.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all those people who have been involved in the editorial process. "*Traversea* is operated by doctoral students as a joint project between the Transatlantic History Student Organization and the doctoral program in transatlantic history at the University of Texas at Arlington." (website) The following doctoral students and PhD candidates in the transatlantic history program at the University of Texas at Arlington have contributed their precious time to the sometimes seemingly undending but completely irreplaceable editorial process: Kristen D. Burton, Robert B. Caldwell, Michael A. Deliz, Justin T. Dellinger, Jay Goldin, Jacob Jones, Nicole Léopoldie, Austin Eli Loignon, Christopher Malmberg, Lydia Towns, and Cory Wells. Without your assistance, this venture would not have been possible.

³ For his contributions to the field, see Stanley H Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780-1850* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and also Stanley H Palmer and Dennis Reinhartz, *Essays on the History of North American Discovery and Exploration* (College Station: Published for the University of Texas at Arlington by Texas A&M University Press, 1988) and; Stanley H Palmer, Bede K Lackner, and Kenneth R Philp, *Essays on Modern European Revolutionary History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977) for his role in facilitating UTA's Walter Prescott Webb Lecture Series, and co-editing the conference's paper presentations. He is also our linkage to the larger Palmer academic legacy in transatlantic history, through R.R. Palmer, whose work has been central to building the field; see R. R Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1959); a work that paved the way for other seminal contributions to the field, including Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).