

INTRODUCTION

Maria Pia Di Bella and Brian Yothers

The study of travel is inherently interdisciplinary, bringing together a host of practices and narratives embedded in history, culture, and society. The chapters in this volume illustrate the range and vibrancy of scholarly work associated with travel: the intersection of travel with historical and communal memory appears in essays on the Holocaust in Europe and memories of slavery in Africa and war in Asia; the representation of otherness informs essays on topics ranging from illustrations in British colonial travel writing to travel in Afghanistan, the Balkans, and Melanesia; and the varied perspectives from which travel can be viewed appears in essays on Paris, Aleppo, Argentina, and Australia. This collection thus circles the globe even as it takes in multiple disciplinary perspectives, often within the same chapter. The taxonomy that we as the editors have used to divide the collection reflects how travel and travel writing can be read via historical memory and trauma (part I), the representation of otherness (part II), and the reimagining of perspective (part III). Notably, each of these essays engages with questions raised by all of the three sections, illustrating the interpenetration of major themes within travel writing.

The study of travel and travel writing has developed across disciplinary and geographical boundaries, at once taking in nearly the entire planet as well as the full range of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences. In social sciences like anthropology and sociology, the emphasis has been on how meaning is created through the act of travel itself, even as critical analysis of writing about travel has served as a necessary component to discussions of the practice of travel, beginning with Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques* (1955). Victor and Edith Turner's work on pilgrimage in *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (1978), for example, has helped to set the tone for a great deal of anthropological work on travel with its emphasis on pilgrimage as a liminal space, and the influence of their model has also worked its way into literary and historical studies related to travel. Maria Pia Di Bella, co-editor of this volume and co-founder of *Journeys*¹ has captured the range of significance that can be associated with travel as practice and lived experience in her work, included in this volume, on the Holocaust trail in Berlin in the early twenty-first century.

Notes for this section can be found on page 8.

In literature and history, travel has often been most closely connected to the study of empire. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1977) is a foundational text for this sort of work on travel writing, as Said sought to show how European travelers created an imagined Orient that they were able to control, in part as a result of the narratives they crafted. Mary Louise Pratt offered a similar focus on how travel, travel writing, and empire could intertwine with her 1992 study *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, which offered a reading of travel writing that focused on how the "gaze," raced as white and gendered as male, could become a mode of power and domination. If Said had emphasized European imperialism in Africa and Asia (especially British and French imperialism), Pratt emphasized the role of travel and travel writing in New World colonialism and imperialism. The interconnectedness of travel and empire also appeared in the New Historicist scholarship of Stephen Greenblatt, notably in his essay "Invisible Bullets" (1988), which showed how intellectual history, literature, and mobility could come together in one extraordinary essay. More recently, Pramod Nayar, who has provided the afterword for this volume, has offered substantial discussions of British travel writing in the Indian subcontinent in *English Travel Writing in India, 1600-1920: Colonizing Aesthetics* (2007) and of Indian travelers in Europe in *Indian Travel Writing in the Age of Empire, 1830-1940* (2020), and the work of William Dalrymple has drawn on travel and travel writing as Dalrymple has narrated the history of British India across multiple studies.

As the study of travel writing has developed as a field, scholars have become interested in capturing more equivocal dimensions of travel than those emphasized by Said and Pratt. Paul Fussell's *Abroad* (1980), for example, considered British travel writing as a source of the cultural and literary vibrancy of the 1920s and 1930s, and in James Buzard's 1993 study *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1920*, Buzard was less interested in travel as an expression imperial ambition than in the ways that Europeans constituted distinctive modes of travel: tourism versus more serious, cerebral modes of travel, for example, and authenticity of experience versus illusion. Graham Huggan and Peter Holland, meanwhile, have explored more recent approaches to travel, again with an emphasis on the generative aspects of travel writing, in their 1999 study *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing*. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs's 2002 *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* served to illustrate the geographical range of travel writing while also inviting discussions of travel writing in relation to the major preoccupations of cultural studies at the turn of the twenty-first century. Hulme and Youngs thus contributed to bridging the gap between considerations of travel writing as colonial representation and considerations of travel writing as a representation of the self.

Brian Yothers, a co-editor of this volume and of *Journeys*, has written about travel in contexts that combine the strand of travel writing research concerned with authenticity with the strand concerned with questions of empire in his work on nineteenth-century US travelers to Ottoman Palestine in his study *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790-1876* (2007). This particular strand of travel, with its mix of cultural, political, and aesthetic questions, has inspired multiple studies, with Hilton Obenzinger's *American Palestine* (1999), Bruce Harvey's *American Geographics* (2001), John Davis's *The Landscape of Belief* (1996), Burke O. Long's *Imagining the Holy Land* (2002), and Jeffrey Alan Melton's *Mark Twain, Travel Books, and Tourism* (2002) investigating US travelers in the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. Gender has joined race as a crucial mode of analysis in travel writing studies, as in Malini Johar Schueller's *US Orientalisms* (1998), which brought together questions of colonial representation and gender in relation to US travel writing. The essays in the volume thus emerge against the backdrop of a vigorous and growing field that has incorporated elements of literary and historical studies, anthropology and sociology, and the analysis of practice or representation across a wide range of media.

Memory and Trauma

The opening portion of *The Long Journey* illustrates how travel as a practice and travel writing as a mode of representation interact with historical and communal memory. Each essay both corresponds to the experience of a distinct region (Europe, Africa, East Asia) and to the complexities of trauma, guilt, and memory. Each shows how the act of travel itself can become a significant part of the practice of memory. The essays in this section also work across multiple media: the design of museums and memorials, the construction of prose narratives, and the role of cinema in representations of travel.

In "Walking Memory: Berlin's 'Holocaust Trail,'" Maria Pia Di Bella explores how the city of Berlin has developed a Holocaust trail of street memorials that become sites for secular pilgrimage and an communal remembrance. As she points out, the choice to identify multiple places of remembrance for the Shoah around the city constitutes a choice that German governments made after reunification, as the number of sites identified over the decades before reunification were much sparser. The essay thus illustrates how travel as practice is shaped by forms of representation even as it shapes them, and how these representational choices are shaped by historical developments, most notably in this case the transformation of German national self-understanding after reunification. Poems, sculptures, and art installations are contribute to

historical memory, Di Bella shows, along with specific sites of violence associated with the Holocaust and the train stations used to carry out genocide.

In “Touring the African Diaspora,” Cheryl Finley considers heritage tourism in Africa and the relationship between this form of travel and the task of remembering the historical trauma associated with slavery. Finley shows how recent work in the visual arts has worked to create a memorial that has otherwise been denied to the descendants of enslaved people. Taking Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* as a point of departure, Finley plays literary texts, works of visual art, and practices of tourism off on one another as she presents a taxonomy of the relationship between Africa and the Americas. For example, Finley examines art installations in the Americas and England and compares them to the original sites in West Africa on which the installations are based. The circulation of memories of place and visual images across the Atlantic and across the centuries thus becomes central for Finley’s essay, again illustrating the interpenetration of travel as practice and representation.

In “A Wartime Cinematic: Recreation of the Journey Linking China and Japan in the Modern Era,” the historian Joshua A. Fogel begins with the voyage of a ship called the *Senzaimaru* “of investigation and trade” from Japan to China in the 1862 and proceeds to consider how that voyage has been represented in film in the twentieth century. Fogel points to a 1944 cinematic representation of the voyage of the *Senzaimaru* that was found in the former Soviet film archives in 2001. As Fogel establishes, this film was created in Japanese-occupied Manchuria during World War II, and it found its way into Soviet archives after Japan’s defeat in the war. Unexpectedly, Fogel shows that even though this film was created in the context of Japanese war-time propaganda, it actually reflected a genuine sense of cultural exchange against all odds. Fogel’s essay leads into the preoccupations that shape the essays in the second portion of this collection, which are concerned with representations of otherness, particularly in the context of complex power relations. Fogel offers a fascinating account of how history and the arts continue to intersect over time through the temporal and physical voyages of people and artifacts.

Visualizing Otherness

The second cluster of essays, “Visualizing Otherness” addresses matters of vision and representation, taking up the concern over otherness that so shaped the seminal work of Edward Said and Mary Louise Pratt in providing a theoretical basis for travel writing studies.

Julia Thomas’s essay, “Seeing a Difference: Spectacles of Otherness in Eighteenth-Century Illustrated Travel Books,” investigates a period at which

modern travel writing was developing as a genre. As with walking tours of cities and cinematic and novelist representations, there has always been a multi-media dimension to how travel has been represented. Thomas takes us on a tour through a wide range of eighteenth-century travel books, showing how the images in each of them are characterized by both “visual delights and troubling inconsistencies.” The images that Thomas explores offer a tour of the eighteenth-century world as experienced by travelers, but for twenty-first century readers, it also offers a fascinating tour of the mentality of eighteenth-century Europeans and how their mental picture of the world became manifest in illustrated travelogues. As with Di Bella and Finley, Thomas emphasizes the centrality of the visual in the representation of travel across media, and here the visionary, imaginative aspects of travel writing are in tension with travel’s contribution to historical memory.

In “A Beginning, Two Ends, and a Thickened Middle Journeys in Afghanistan from Byron to Hosseini,” Graham Huggan takes on the question of how travel is visualized in conditions of peril. As with the first three essays in the volume, Huggan works across centuries, considering how wars in Afghanistan were represented in the travel literature of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century. Huggan considers the mis-representation of Afghanistan as part of the “Greater Middle East” as part of the propaganda in support of the War on Terror of the early 2000s, and he shows how looking at travel narratives diachronically can provide a useful corrective to misrepresentations. Here, as in the first three essays in the volume, questions of historical memory are paramount; for Thomas, the point that travel writing is a product of imagination and preconception as well as observation is crucial. For Huggan, old (twentieth-century British) and new (twenty-first-century American) forms of imperialism intersect in representations of the European and North American travelers’ gaze on Afghanistan over time.

In “New Men, Old Europe: Being a Man in Balkan Travel Writing,” Wendy Bracewell investigates a similarly complex context, as she considers how gender, and specifically masculinity, connects with the matter of travel in zones of conflict and threat. Bracewell points out that masculine toughness has been central to travelers’ representations of southeastern Europe, and she uses Said’s discussion of a feminized Orient as a foil for her consideration of a masculinized Balkan region. Bracewell considers Maria Todorova’s (1997) contention that this emphasis of masculinity in “Balkanism” reflects the “imputed ambiguity” of the Balkans’ status within Europe, but concludes that the various alternative “solidarities” that male and female travelers might embrace make it difficult to create a straightforward taxonomy of power relations based on the gender of travelers or of those they represent. Bracewell takes as her subject matter the emergence of a rich array of travel accounts of southeastern

Europe in the years after the fall of the Soviet bloc. She demonstrates that the representations of masculinity that tie these accounts together are profoundly historically conditioned, both in terms of the culture of the traveler and the culture of the destination.

Part II is rounded off by a richly visual piece that brings together questions of identity, otherness, and perception that have shaped all the essays in this section. In “Among Cannibals and Headhunters: Jack London in Melanesia,” Keith Newlin examines the writings of a figure who has often been read as a dissident from his culture’s racism and imperialism. Reading photographic images associated with London’s voyage and the artifacts London collected along with London’s travel writing, Newlin shows that these readings of London have missed the substantial degree to which London accepted and internalized racism in his responses to Melanesian islanders. This chapter illustrates how the early discussions of empire in travel writing studies can be complicated by the individual author whose work is explored, but also how authors who are conventionally regarded as being exceptional may be more representative of their own culture’s myopia than is commonly recognized.

Creating and Recovering Perspective

In part III of this volume, “Creating and Recovering Perspective,” the final cluster of essays shows the significance of angles of vision to travel and travel writing, moving from accounts of travel within Europe to western Asia, Europe, and finally, Argentina and India.

In “Forgetting London: Paris, Cultural Cartography, and Late Victorian Decadence,” Alex Murray examines the representations of London that emerged in late Victorian writing. Murray shows how Paris came to shape writers’ perspectives on London through the artistic conventions of Naturalism and Impressionism, thus bringing a painterly perspective to bear on the representation of the cityscape. Using the British Decadent novelist George Moore’s dictum that “To write about London I should have to begin by forgetting Paris,” Murray shows that the visual arts provide a grammar for how late nineteenth-century British writers imagined their own capital city. Murray shows that the change in perspective provided by the time that Moore and his fellow Decadent writer Arthur Symons spent in Paris meant that they were able to change how London was represented in the decades that followed. Here, then, travel as practice brings writers into contact with new forms of representation, which in turn reshape the gaze that they direct toward places formerly familiar to them. For Murray, travel becomes an enabling condition for new visions of place, including the home to which the traveler returns.

That Orientalism as a concept continues to shape studies of travel writing is evident in Mohammad Sakhnini's essay, "In The Eyes of Some Britons: Aleppo, an Enlightenment City," which considers early British narratives about Syria's second city. Sakhnini explicitly pairs the eighteenth-century British response to Aleppo with contemporary anti-immigrant sentiment in the United Kingdom, showing how eighteenth-century British travelers recognized the complexity of the Syrian cultural and intellectual milieu, and indeed presented Aleppo as a model of the Enlightenment values that the travelers hoped to realize in their own cities. Sakhnini's essay thus complicates the discussions of Orientalist travel that have been in circulation since Said's *Orientalism*, and Sakhnini reflects movingly on the way in which Aleppo's historical trajectory—and London's—reflects the fragility of all our social and cultural arrangements and the precariousness of human experience.

Robert Clarke's essay, "An Ordinary Place: Aboriginality and 'Ordinary' Australia in the Travel Writing of the 1990s," points to the ways in which travel writers represent and mis-represent indigenous Australians. Clarke surveys a range of late twentieth-century texts, highlighting how authors who engaged with aboriginality in Australia arrived at perspectives that avoided the conventional exoticism and condescension of much the sort of travel literature that is built around the imperial gaze that Mary Louise Pratt identified. In particular, Clarke shows that by regarding Aboriginal Australia as "ordinary," as not defined by otherness, at least some travel writers are establishing an alternative to modes of travel writing that have been shaped and warped by colonialism.

In "The Right Sort of Woman: British Women Travel Writers and Sports," Precious McKenzie Stearns examines travel from a vantage point that has attracted less attention than it deserves: that of travel's connection to the presence of human bodies, and specifically women's bodies, in the natural world. Stearns shows that women who engaged in big-game hunting in Argentina and India in the nineteenth century offered alternative perspectives on femininity to those that conventionally shaped travel literature in the era of British colonialism. In this essay, humans become participants in as well as observers of the landscape, with profound implications for how we understand the ecology of travel as well as the role of gender in shaping travelers' self-representations.

These chapters constitute a cross-section of the finest essays to appear over the last 20 years in *Journeys*. Some difficulties along the way in the production process meant that we were not able to include every essay that we wanted to in the print volume, and so these essays have been made available in their original form for free on the Berghahn Books website. These essays are Amardeep Singh's "Veiled Strangers: Rabindranath Tagore's America, in Letters and Lectures" (2009), Nigel Rapport's "Walking Auschwitz, Walking without Arriving" (2008), Andrew Irving's "Journey to the End of Night: Disillusion and Derange-

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ment among the Senses” (2008), and Brian Yothers’s “Facing East, Facing West: Mark Twain’s *Following the Equator* and Pandita Ramabai’s *The Peoples of the United States*” (2009). All four of these essays are available in the archives of *Journeys* for free as a supplement to the essays printed in this volume. The editors would like to invite the readers of this volume to consider these pieces as an extension of the work that is contained in this printed volume.

If there is one lesson that the varied and provocative essays included in this volume and on the Berghahn site can teach us, it is the remarkably protean quality of travel and the cultural productions associated with its practice. We travel for reasons that cover the range of human experience: pleasure and need, exploration and self-discovery, in order to write and in order to remember. The essays in this volume illustrate how travel and travel writing function across a range of motivations, practices, and representational devices, and they emphasize the vastness of the topic of journeys and the attempt to describe and narrate them.

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Notes

1. *Journeys: The International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing*, came out in 2000, published by Berghahn Books.

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