HOW LONG IS TOO LONG

HLiTL

Project Reference Number: 2019-1-FR01-KA203-062506

Travel and Health in North American and British Literature

Joint seminar with professors and students from Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (France), Universidade do Porto (Portugal), and from Philipps-Universität Marburg (Germany)

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2021

IO2C

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1. Introductory Remarks

The Master's seminar "Travel and Health in North American and British Literature" is part of the blended mobility testing phase (IO2C) of the Erasmus+ project *How long is too long? (HLiTL).* The blended mobility testing phase includes a joint seminar with students and professors from three universities that participate in the Erasmus+ project, as well as a physical mobility in form of a winter school in Porto, Portugal, and surveys on students' and teacher's experiences with blended and international learning. In this report, we present our joint seminar project and provide a detailed elaboration of the syllabus, the structure of the joint sessions, the teaching practices and didactic methods, as well as the reading material which served as the basis for our class discussions and students' presentations. We also added a detailed bibliography with primary and secondary sources which we used in class and recommend for seminars or lectures on travel and health literature.

Contents of the Seminar

The joint seminar focused on British and North American travel and health narratives from the 18th and 19th century. Among the key topics that were discussed in class were the main features and functions of travel writing and travelogues (i.e., descriptions of foreign landscapes and societies as well as encounters with the unknown). We also looked at the historical and cultural backgrounds of the required readings as well as conventions of travel writing and different literary genres. The protagonists of the discussed narratives either travelled because of health issues -for instance to find medical assistance in another country- or they became ill while travelling. We read works by Henry Fielding, Henry Matthews, Edgar Allan Poe, William Beckford, Herman Melville, George Borrow, Susanne Moodie, Charles Dickens, Henry James, Dora Wordsworth, and Mary Seacole; brief summaries and analyses of the primary literature are included in chapter 2. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our joint seminar reached a particular topicality and parallels between our current situation and illnesses and pandemics in the 18th and 19th century were frequently drawn.

Information on Participants

The participants of the joint seminar were students from *Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines* (France), *Universidade do Porto* (Portugal), and from *Philipps-Universität Marburg* (Germany). Prof. Jan Borm is Full Professor of British Literature at *Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines*. The 18 students working under his supervision are enrolled in the MA programs of English Studies as well as Cultural Project Management. Prof. Fátima Outeirinho is Full Professor of Comparative Literatures at *Universidade do Porto* and her 9 students are enrolled in the MA program Comparative Literary Studies. Prof. Carmen Birkle is Full Professor of North American Studies at *Philipps-Universität Marburg* and her students made up the largest part of the group: 48 students that are either enrolled in the MA program North American Studies, the undergraduate programs BA Anglophone Studies or BA American, British, and Canadian Studies, or as students of the teaching degree English. Consequently, we had a very heterogeneous

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learning group with students from different backgrounds, courses of study, study levels, and with different language skills in English. Along with the three professors, Laura Hartmann supported the seminar as additional lecturer and Marie Zarda as student assistant (both are from *Philipps-Universität Marburg*).

Original Plan for the Joint Sessions

In the planning stages of *HLITL*, it had been decided that a joint online experience of a Masters seminar would be an excellent way to test how students may be prepared more efficiently for a physical mobility experience in a partner university, the online experience of internationalization potentially working as a teaser persuading more students to wish to engage in an Erasmus+ or other form of physical mobility. An intensive study programme in January 2021 was intended to create further ties between the groups and to offer them more intensive networking opportunities while providing feedback on the project's objectives focusing on the length of mobility experiences.

Besides the students' different preconditions and backgrounds in terms of their learning competences, the planning of our seminar was tricky owing to varying semester plans at the three universities (the winter term in France and Porto already started in September, whereas the winter term in Germany started in November) and the one-hour time difference between Porto and France and Germany. The original plan for the joint seminar was to have 12 joint sessions à 120 minutes every Tuesday, in which the students would be taught in their actual classrooms and virtually "meet" their fellow students (from the two other universities) via a video conference system (livestream). Our plan was also to ask all students to read the same texts (British and American travel and health literature) so that students from each university could work together on one text, and plan and give their presentation together; the group work should foster the interaction between students from each university. The best scenario would have been to have one presentation by three students from Versailles, Marburg, and Porto but this proved to be impossible to set up.

Re-Organization Because of the Pandemic

Due the differing semester plans and course requirements in France, Germany and Portugal, as well as the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and the resulting restrictions, we had to re-organize the joint seminar sessions. We agreed to start our joint seminar in November and have six sessions together: every Tuesday from 4-6pm. As Prof. Borm and Prof. Birkle were only allowed to teach remotely, we were not able to try out the blended format with the entire group, but at least Prof. Outeirinho was able to meet with her students in the classroom every other week and use the live stream. We agreed to use the video conference system Cisco Webex as the University of Marburg prohibits the use of Zoom; therefore, Cisco Webex was the only accessible tool in English. As the students had different previous experiences with English and American literature, we decided to indeed focus on the overall topic of travel and health in literature but asked the students at each university to read different texts. Prof. Borm and Prof. Outeirinho focused more on British literature and Prof. Birkle only chose North American literature. Furthermore, we did not find a common learning platform which we could use to share the reading material and

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presentations. Consequently, the students from the different universities were asked to give presentations on literary texts that were part of the mandatory readings for their respective seminar, to then discuss them with the entire group (for example: students from the University of Marburg presented Edgar Allen Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death", prepared key questions, and discussed them with their fellow students from the Universities of Porto and Versailles).

Didactic Methods

We started our joint seminar on November 3, 2021 with an introductory session in which the three universities and professors were introduced. Also, the students got to know each other by introducing themselves, their courses of study, and by sharing some of their previous experiences with international learning environments and digital learning. In the five remaining sessions we then had three presentations by students from each university every Tuesday, followed by a joint class discussion. Hence, fifteen different texts and presentations were held and discussed in total. In order to foster a lively class discussion, we also had 1-2 responsible discussants for every text, who were asked to prepare questions. As we knew that this would be a new learning situation for all students and teachers, we gave them as much guidance and assistance as possible. In the introductory session we presented the syllabus and expectations for the presentations and class discussions and gave tips on what we called "technical pitfalls" (see attachment). Moreover, the students were asked to follow a code of conduct, or "netiquette" (see attachment), to make sure that all students feel comfortable in this new learning environment. All presenters were asked to stick to a strict time frame of 20 minutes presentation and 15 minutes discussion. Further on, we prepared guiding questions for the presentations (see attachment) to ensure a similar focus and structure of each presentation. As we did not have a common learning platform, we created a mailing list including the names and email addresses of all participants (professors and students) which we used to communicate with each other, share the students' presentations, and send around information on the class organization. Laura Hartmann and Marie Zarda mainly took care of the mailing list and were the contact persons for any technical difficulties. As additional lecturer, Laura Hartmann offered an extra session every week for the Marburg students, to further discuss the readings and presentations and reflect the joint seminar.

2. Course Contents

2.1 University of Versailles

2.1.1 Henry Fielding, *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*. London: Printed for A. Millar, 1755 (available online at: https://archive.org/details/b30526310/page/n7/mode/2up)

Henry Fielding's text published posthumously is an excellent way to introduce the subject of travel and health in 18th century British literature. While the *Grand Tour* continued to be a guiding principle for many travelling young Aristocrats in Europe, health increasingly

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became a reason for British travelers to seek southern destinations during the Age of the Enlightenment. Fielding being one of the foremost British writers of this period, it is also interesting to see what he has to say about the writing of a travelogue, as he does, at some length, in the preface to his journal, a kind of meta-discourse on the art of writing about travel, as it were.

Fielding's starting-point is Horace's well-known dictum "prodesse et delectare" to be found in his *Ars Poetica* – that poets want to either to instruct or please, or to do both, an observation at the origin of the idea that a travel account should be both useful and entertaining, or, in Fielding's words, travels represent "profitable study" if they provide both "entertainment and information of mankind" (preface, i). However, this can only be achieved if travelers offer "a real and valuable knowledge of men and things", i.e. that their remarks are based on accurate observation of *difference*, or, as we would say nowadays, *otherness*, one of the central notions at work in travel writing, an indispensable element to nurture and maintain interest, as Fielding notes himself: "If the customs and manners of men were every where the same, there would be no office so dull as that of a traveller." (preface, ii). Fielding insists on the need to be selective and to record one's own observations without commenting them (preface, iv). He then discusses some personal opinions when it comes to writing about travel (preferring Herodotus to Homer, notably, his admiration of the latter notwithstanding), warning any potential author about the risk of embellishment (preface, viii). Nonetheless, the art of writing must allow for some form of embellishment, as Fielding claims for himself, especially as far as dialogue is concerned: "It is sufficient that every fact hath its foundation in truth, as I do seriously aver in is the case in the ensuing pages" (preface, xiv). One is tempted to be weary of truth claimers, but nonetheless, it is obvious that travel experiences need to be "written up" in narrative form and that dialogues in particular cannot possibly be expected to be *verbatim* renderings of what someone may actually have said. This is the case in any form of non-fiction writing that would draw on dialogue, the guiding principle being that the spirit of what was said needs to be respected and reproduced. In contemporary travel writing, this is a fundamental element of the reading pact since extensive dialogue has become one of the hallmarks of the contemporary British travel book.

To return once more to Fielding's preface, the latter ends up reaffirming that his purpose "is to convey instruction in the vehicle of entertainment", his principal objective being "a perfect reformation of the laws relating to our maritime affairs" (preface, xvii), that-is-to-say, Fielding sets out to witness his own condition in view of advocating reform.

The actual journal is carefully wrought, the tooth-ache of his wife serving for instance as a foil to Fielding's sufferings. Though critical of some British maritime affairs, Fielding does adhere to the idea of "British superiority in naval affairs" (66). Similarly, his views about Portuguese society are clearly determined by his own Protestant faith when he observes about Lisbon that "there is no where more pomp of bigotry" (preface, x). Still, the main driving force behind Fielding's enterprise is the improvement of his own health by "removing to a warmer climate" (39), the other being his determination to finance his endeavor at least in part by writing about it.

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2.1.2 Borrow, George. *The Bible in Spain*: *or the Journey, Adventures, and Imprisonment of an Englishman in an Attempt to Circulate the Scriptures in the Peninsula*. London: John Murray, 3 vols., 1843 (available online at: https://archive.org/details/bibleinspainorj06borrgoog)

Written in a rather different vein, George Henry Borrow's *The Bible in Spain* became an immediate "bestseller" as the three successive English editions within a year and tens of thousands of copies sold in the U.S. illustrate (according to information provided by the George Borrow Society: http://georgeborrow.org/literature/theBibleInSpain.html - accessed April 2021). Assembling retrospectively the letters he had sent to his employer, the British and Foreign Bible Society, Borrow added connecting paragraphs to produce a highly popular account of life in Spain as he witnessed it during a five-year stay. As the preface to his work indicates, Borrow's views tend to reflect his fond memories of Spain and its people. Indeed, Borrow goes as far as suggesting that the five years he spent there were the time of his life – "the most happy years of my existence" (preface, xii). No wonder, then, that he recalls Spain in enthusiastic terms: "she is the most magnificent country in the world, probably the most fertile, and certainly with the finest climate". This very last remark may come as a bit of a surprise given chronic English lamentations about the heat in the South, to be found, notably, in William Beckford's famous sketches of life in Italy, Spain and Portugal (1834, 2 vols.), another of the set texts of this seminar (see for instance, vol. 1, p. 123 about Venice in August 1780: "The heats were so excessive that night, that I thought myself several times on the point of suffocation, tossed about like a wounded fish, and dreamt of the Devil and Senegal."; or about Lisbon, June 1787, in vol. 2, p. 77: "The bright sunshine which has lately been our portion, glorious as it is, begins to tire me. Twenty times a day I cannot help wishing myself extended at full-length upon the fresh herbage of some shady English valley…"). Borrow insists on the "kindness and courtesy" with which he was treated by the "peasants, shepherds, and muleteers of Spain" (preface, xiii) with whom he mostly spent his time, attesting to the "sterling character" of Spain's population (preface, xiii), admitting that his conclusions may strike English readers as awkward since they voice an opinion very evidently going against the grain: "Strange as it may sound, Spain is not a fanatic country." (preface, xiv). His first impressions of the peninsula were rather negative, though, judging by the remarks on his arrival in the Portuguese capital: "I found disembarkation at Lisbon to be a matter of considerable vexation; the custom-house officers were exceedingly uncivil…" (4) "After having submitted to much ill usage and robbery at the custom-house, I proceeded in quest of a lodging, and at last found one, but dirty and expensive." (5) Nonetheless, and despite the visible vestiges of ruin caused by the terrible earthquake (6), Borrow offers a remarkably favorable view of the Portuguese capital even though Portugal is not a subject of reflection in his preface: "With all its ruin and desolation, Lisbon is unquestionably the most remarkable city in the Peninsula and, perhaps in the south of Europe." (7) Thus, Borrow does not hesitate to voice unorthodox views, perhaps voluntarily enhancing ideas to strike his reader. Whatever the case may be, his praise of Lisbon is no doubt somewhat unusual in the context of the Grand Tour and 19th century English tourism on the beaten track to Italy and Greece: "[…] I shall content myself with remarking, that it [Lisbon] is quite

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as much deserving the attention of the artist as even Rome itself." (7) But then again, his work did reach a large audience in the UK and elsewhere.

2.1.3 Bennett, James Henry. *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean*. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1870 (available online at: https://archive.org/details/winterspringonsh00unse/page/n17/mode/2up)

Like Fielding's journal, James Henry Bennett's *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean* is more directly concerned with health issues, offering his readers systematic descriptions of southern locations in view of improving one's health, based on his own experience during ten successive stays during the years 1859-69. It is, in a way, the most "practical" of the three texts as far as travel is concerned, or, to put it in more critical idiom, the narrative in which the "guidebook function" of travel writing is perhaps the most evident. Be that as it may, Bennett draws a picture of the Genoese Riviera and Menton in particular as a haven for those seeking refuge from reputedly foul English weather in the winter months: "When, overtaken, by ill health, I was obliged to abandon the hard work of active life, it was a consolation to me to know that I could migrate to this sun-favoured coast, and conscientiously spend the dreary winter in legitimate idleness, in a spot which memory painted in glowing colours." (1). The metaphor appears well-chosen for a city usually identified with lemons and its picturesque old city center. But more importantly than the bright colors is the regional climate, the whole region from Toulon to Reggio being protected and the winter climate characterized by its "mildness" (3). As we can see, right from the start, Bennett adopts a general perspective, reflecting on the benefits of the environment to travelers seeking to improve their health. At the end of the first part, these benefits are considered in terms of "medical characteristic of the climate" (163), notably in view of curing consumption, an illness Bennett suffered from himself, concluding: "With the assistance of the sunshine, a dry, bracing atmosphere, a mild temperature, and rational sthenic treatment, hygienic, dietetic, and medicinal, I have found pulmonary consumption in this favored region, especially in its earlier stages, by no means the intractable disease that I formerly found it in London and Paris. After ten winter passed at Mentone, I am surrounded by a phalanx of cured or arrested consumption cases." (165-166)

The notion of the health "quest" then explicitly becomes the central focus of the second part entitled "The Search for a Better Climate", Bennett assessing the merits of various southern destinations including Corsica, Sicily, the Italian lakes, Biarritz and Arcachon, as well as Algiers and Algeria, before he ends up sharing his varying views of Spain. Even though a town like Alicante may appear "so dusty, so sunburnt, so arid, so dried up, so devoid of vegetation, and consequently so desolate, that a residence here for months would be a sad penance," (545) Bennett nonetheless appreciates the place as "decidedly the most favourable health station that I have seen on the south-eastern coast of Spain." (545). Murcia is seen in a positive light, so is Valencia, albeit to a lesser degree. As to Sevilla and Cordoba, there was "much to enjoy in these two great cities" (562) but from the point-of-view of the health tourist (as opposed to the "pleasure tourists", 562), the verdict, "without any hesitation", he notes, "is unfavourable" (562). Malaga also seems to have been a disappointment (565), while Granada certainly represents an "architectural dream",

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though the winter is too cool and the summer too warm there, according to the author (573). In his "medical conclusions", Bennett observes that "the health regions of Spain are confined to the easter and south-eastern coasts, at the foot of the central table-land." (579), conceding in the "general medical conclusions" that the Mediterranean climates "have an advantage over our British winter climates, inasmuch as the thermometer is generally above 50° or 55° in the day throughout the winter" (10°C to 12.78°C; 581) It is not obvious for a British writer to admit more favorable, not to say superior, conditions elsewhere at the time. Still, from a medical point-of-view at least, the case appears to be obvious. Many readers seem to have taken his advice literally as the popularity of the French and Italian Riviera, but also Portugal and Spain among British holidaymakers and expats goes to show, so much so that we can speak of the "attractions" of these countries and destinations just like Bruce Chatwin has written about the "attractions of France" (see his short story collected in the posthumous volume *Anatomy of Restlessness*).

2.2 University of Porto

The presentations by students from UP were dedicated to the following works:

Anon., *Portugal; Or, the Young Travellers: Account of Lisbon and Its Environs, and of a Town in the Alemtéjo (…) From a Journal Kept By a Lady.* London: Harvey and Darton, 1830.

William Beckford, *Italy, With Sketches of Spain and Portugal*, 2nd edition, 2 vols. London: Richard Bentley, 1834, volume 2.

Terence McMahon Hughes, *An Overland Journey to Lisbon at the Close of 1846:with a Picture of the actual state of Spain and Portugal*, 2 vols. London: Henry Colburn, 1847

Henry Matthews, *The diary of an invalid: being the journal of a tour in pursuit of health in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France in the years 1817, 1818, and 1819*, 2nd edition. London: John Murray, 1820.

Dora Wordsworth, *Journal of a Few Months' Residence in Portugal and Glimpses of the South of Spain*. New edition (ed. Edmund Lee). London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1895.

2.2.1 Anon., *Portugal; Or, the Young Travellers: Account of Lisbon and Its Environs, and of a Town in the Alemtéjo (…) From a Journal Kept By a Lady.* London: Harvey and Darton, 1830.

This work was discussed in the context of women's travel writing, the anonymity of the author having been a deliberate choice. The students' readings focused notably on the representation of Portuguese men and women. Concerning the former, two passages were highlighted:

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“The first novelty that attracted her attention was the pilot: his dark-brown complexion, strange dress, and uncouth language, were the first intimations of the new country they were entering.’’ (p. 14)
“The appearance of the waiter filled the young people, at first, with surprise, and afterwards with amusement. He was dressed in a very shabby and dirty blue jacket, and took his part in the conversation that was going on at dinner, in a manner very unusual to those he waited upon.” (p. 19)
As to Portuguese women, the following two quotes were looked at in more detail:
“Two or three women were passing, wrapped in their capotes, having white muslin handkerchiefs on their heads, pinned under the chin, instead of bonnets.” (p. 16)
“Then the woman: paint her well. Bertha. A brown jacket with, tags, (do not you call them,) fitting close to her lovely figure ; pink cotton gown ; scarlet apron, with one leather pocket outside; and her high, white cap with a chin-stay. Skin, the colour of walnut-catsup, and hair as black as sloes.” (p. 18)
Health aspects then came under consideration in view of the seminar’s general theme, as well as cultural representation and the important role of comparisons:
‘‘Do they never wear bonnets?’’ Said Bertha.
‘‘No, my dear’’ Answered her father.
‘‘How strange!’’
‘‘They would probably think the same of our custom of wearing them," he replied. " Every nation has its separate modes, which are, generally, very well adapted to the habits of each country. We must not fancy things to be ridiculous or strange, because they are new to us.’’ ’’ (p. 17)
‘‘ As they entered the church, the young people were struck with awe at the grandeur of the edifice. Its height, its lofty pillars, and the beautiful tracery work round the windows, together with the sober light they admitted, inspired them with a feeling of reverence." This," said Sophia, " is more like our own cathedrals than anything we have yet seen.’’ ’’(p. 42)

2.2.2 Terence McMahon Hughes, *An Overland Journey to Lisbon at the Close of 1846: with a Picture of the actual state of Spain and Portugal*, 2 vols. London: Henry Colburn, 1847

The presentation first focused on aspects of the genre of the travelogue, such as “language as a reflection of impressions” and the role of foreign words, notably, in the narrative, as well as figure of speech, drawing on the following examples:
“[…]which it describes avec ***une rapidité incroyable*** and rises subsequently.”
(page 30 Volume I)
“[…]**But, *en revanche*,** they make tea in England immeasurably better than in France.”
(page 106, Volume I)
“The chief square […] ***Plaza de la Constitucion***; it is more commonly, however, called the ***Plaza Nueva.***
(page 155, Volume I)
Another important element of travel writing, first-person narration, was also discussed:

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"As, however, **I mean to record my actual impressions** in this journey, as they arise from actual observation, I must state that beauty in the streets of Havre I have met but little […]" (page 10, Volume I)
"I think I am too much of **a citizen of the world**, and **have really lived too long abroad**, **not to be superior to them.** I believe myself to be **impartial**, and **it is certainly my strong desire to be so.**" (page 32, Volume I)
Finally, the tension between fact and fiction in travelogues was analysed in *An Overland Journey*, the author presenting what is usually referred to as a "truth claimer":
"As I have set out with the determination of **telling the truth and the whole truth**[…]"
(page 138, Volume I),
Insisting on the fact that he tried to receive information only from reliable witnesses, -
"The following incident I had from **a most trustworthy person as having occurred** at the period of my stay[…]"
(page 54, Volume I)
or trying to be as precise as possible:
"The distance from Paris to Tours is 59 leagues, or about 145 miles" (page 103, Volume I).
Intertextuality, another important dimension of travelogues, then came under consideration. Indeed, travellers tend to engage in links with their predecessors in their narratives, referring to their work in order to highlight changes or lack thereof, voicing agreement or disagreement, adding meaning to their own account by comparing themselves to illustrious figures like in the following quote:
"[…] unlike the **sage Ulysses,** I have received but a faint impression […] in comparison with the eloquent words with which he charmed Arete and godlike Alcinous […]"
(page 464, Volume II)
Another reference concerns Henry Fielding whose journal of a voyage to Lisbon, published posthumously in 1755, was discussed by UVSQ students during a preparatory meeting for the common sessions of the students from the three universities:
"It is now just a century since **the incomparable Fielding performed the same journey** […]and recorded bis impressions in an admirable work — his ***Voyage to Lisbon***"
(page 17, Volume I)
Other rhetorical elements the students looked at in an *Overland Journey* include direct appealing by the author to the reader, as Wordsworth and Coleridge also did in their famous collection *Lyrical Ballads*, the role of memory, and "thick" description.
The presentation ended with a discussion about health issues in the travelogue.

2.2.3 Dora Wordsworth, *Journal of a Few Months' Residence in Portugal and Glimpses of the South of Spain*. New edition (ed. Edmund Lee). London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1895.

Dora Wordsworth, presented as "the apple of her father's eye", is discussed as a female traveller in relation to remarks by Carl Thomson in *Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing*, 1763–1862: "For women like these, manuscript circulation [...] felt safer exercising authority and influence within what one might regard as the "semi-public sphere" of an extended network of friends and associates, rather than in the fully public sphere of print."

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The author as first-person narrator is focused on:
"[…] I must be allowed two or three pages to tell of […]" – (p. 15);
intertextuality: "To give a true and lively picture of St. John's da Foz, and of the scenery of the Douro […] I cannot do better than extract […] from a story called 'The Belle': - […]" – (p. 5);
the theme of "fact versus fiction":
"I resisted the temptation of getting up a few 'moving accidents and hairbreadth 'scapes,' and of so giving to my Journal the attraction of a Story-book." (p. xliii, Preface to the First Edition);
description and figures of speech, including the use of "foreign" words (or "foreignisms" as the presenters put it), to provide local colour and to enhance the impression of authenticity:
"…his **Senhora**" – (p. 11)
"The **Fidalgo** will on no account cease from his dippings…" – (p. 10)
"It is quite unsafe to ride about the streets at the **festa** seasons." – (p 13);
Other important themes discussed in Wordsworth's work include the representation of women and men, as well as health issues, and cultural representations. Concerning the latter, the "self" is discussed in relation to the "other":
"I think in my account enough is told of our reception […] to refute the assertion of want of hospitality in Portugal. The fact is, the English ever will carry English habits and English prejudices into foreign countries; …" – (p. 129).
Wordsworth's account can even be seen as an effort of what one might call "proto"-deconstruction:
"My main inducement, indeed, to the publication of this desultory Journal is the wish to assist in removing prejudices which make Portugal an avoided land by so many of my roving countrymen […]" – (p. xliv, Preface to the First Edition).
To end, let us note a striking example of "self-deprecation" in this passage, a trope that has come to the forefront 20th century British travel writing.

2.3 University of Marburg

2.3.1 Edgar Allan Poe's Short Story "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842) [*The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writing*. Ed. David Galloway. London: Penguin, 1986. 254-60.]

Poe's short story is an unusual choice for the topic "Travel and Health." While disease, namely the (fictional) Red and (actual) Black Death, is undoubtedly the center of attention, traveling is rather metaphorical than geographical. The characters do undertake a movement from the outside to the inside of one of Prince Prospero's "castellated abbeys" (254) and, in line with the seven differently colored chambers that are arranged from East to West with the red and black room at the end where death awaits all, undergo a life journey that ends in the Prince and his 1000 revelers succumbing to the Red Death. While the story begins with the sentence "The 'Red Death' had long devastated the country" (254), it similarly ends on the alliterative note: "And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death

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held illimitable dominion over all" (260). Prince Prospero, most certainly an allusion to Shakespeare's play The Tempest (1611), and his followers do not succeed in keeping the disease outside: "A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within" (254). All those inside, who try to enjoy life at a luxurious masquerade (what we, in 2021, would call a "Corona party"), laugh and dance to music, only intermittently stopped by the striking of the hour of a black ebony clock, and are ultimately enraged by a figure actually wearing the mask of the Red Death, emphasizing Poe's pun on "mask" and "masque." The "apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life" (257), an early indication that the end is soon to come. As it turns out, the Red Death is inside the abbey and kills all. The masked figure provokes "terror," "horror," and "disgust" (258) because his "vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brows with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror" (258). The Red Death cannot be combatted because, when attacked, the revelers find "the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form" (259). This climax turns into the dénouement of death for all, emphasized through the alliteration of dark sounds ("d"), the predominance of the colors black and red, the ebony clock's and the fire's expiration: "And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all" (260).

While hubris is punished and no-one can escape death, as most people understand, the story can also be read metaphorically with Prince Prospero being an imperialist representative of the British Crown and the red and black colors alluding to the Native American and African American populations. Blacks are enslaved and taken westwards from Africa to the New World—as the movement of the rooms illustrates—and Native Americans are pushed westwards to the territories. This movement is bound to provoke counteraction and resistance, as the Red Death shows. Ultimately, Poe's story is not just one of universal hubris punished but also a strong criticism of the imperialist and White supremacist politics of his time. We might say: "The empire strikes back."

2.3.2 Herman Melville's Novel *Redburn: His First Voyage* (1849) [New York: Modern Library, 2002.]

Melville's first-person novel, told by young Redburn himself, Melville's thinly disguised alter ego, depicts the protagonist's first sea voyage from New York City to Liverpool. As a first-time sailor, Redburn is initiated not only into the daily work routine on the ship but also to a different kind of atmosphere and language his mates use on board: "People who have never gone to sea for the first time as sailors, cannot imagine how puzzling and confounding it is. It must be like going into a barbarous country, where they speak a strange dialect, and dress in strange clothes, and live in strange houses. For sailors have their own names, even for

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things that are familiar ashore; and if you call a thing by its shore name, you are laughed at for an ignoramus and a land-lubber" (75). This is Redburn's first encounter with an unknown world, from which he, at first, is excluded. Eventually, he becomes part of the inner group. Moreover, Redburn shifts from romantic feelings at the beauty of the sea to terror and fear at the powerful natural forces they have to fight. His mood shifts from "glorious ocean life" to "abominable voyage": "But how soon these raptures abated, when after a brief idle interval, we were again set to work, and I had a vile commission to clean out the chicken coops, and make up the beds of the pigs in the long-boat" (77).

Most importantly, however, his voyage is one of personal growth and maturation since he is in search of his father's spirit – who died when Redburn was still a child – and takes along some of his father's guidebooks to Liverpool. Redburn's intimate relationship to and personification of this "Old Morocco" (174) show his desire to follow in his father's footsteps. The guidebook entitled The Picture of Liverpool is like a shrine for him, which he views with nostalgia: "As I now linger over the volume, to and fro turning the pages so dear to my boyhood,—the very pages which, years and years ago, my father turned over amid the very scenes that are here described; what a soft, pleasing sadness steals over me, and how I melt into the past and forgotten! Dear book! […] my beloved,—old family relic that you are […]" (166). However, he does not realize that there are about 40 years in between his father's and his own voyages to Liverpool so that he is disappointed when he cannot trace his father's footsteps since the city has significantly changed: "Guide-books, Wellingborough, are the least reliable books in all literature; and nearly all literature, in one sense, is made up of guide-books. […] Every age makes its own guide-books, and the old ones are used for waste paper" (182). Guide-books, that is all literature, become outdated and unreliable. But there is one "Holy Guide-Book […] that will never lead you astray, if you but follow it aright; and some noble monuments that remain, though the pyramids crumble" (182). Almost deus ex machina-like, a voice shows Redburn the way to the Bible that will never fail him even if the pyramids crumble. His father's guide-book leaves the shrine, becomes one of many out-dated books, and is replaced by an eternal work that will give him the guidance that he needs. His wanderings through Liverpool make him understand that he cannot go back in time, that the city is not just a tourist site but also one where poverty reigns. He takes the docks with the many ships from all over the world and their multicultural crews as signs of the world in a nutshell. The Liverpool dock becomes a "small archipelago, an epitome of the world, where all the nations of Christendom, and even those of Heathendom, are represented. For, in itself, each ship is an island, a floating colony of the tribe to which it belongs" (191).

His mental health has been restored after his disappointment, and he goes back to the ship to start the return voyage. The ship carries Irish people, escaping from the potato famine and eventually seeking a new life in the United States. It is in the cramped Irish quarters below deck where a devastating fever breaks out. This marks Redburn's second initiation because he transforms from someone who believes the Irish to be dirty and living like animals into someone who begins to understand that they are human beings and that their poverty determines how they undertake the ocean crossing. The "malignant fever," from which the Irish are suffering, is brought about by "confinement," "deprivation of

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sufficient food," and "personal uncleanliness" (330). People look "upon each other like lepers" (333). He understands that he has to make known what a "plague-ship driving through a stormy sea is like" (337). Once fair and sunny weather resumes and the Irish can move up on deck to get fresh air and better hygiene, the fever gradually decreases. In the midst of death and despair, Redburn also witnesses the birth of two infants and realizes that life is a cycle from birth to death to birth and so on. He no longer questions the right of the Irish to immigrate to the United States but considers it a God-given right to all people to immigrate in search of a better life. The all-male world of sailors has been humanized for Redburn through his recognition of the Irish people's humanity. His journey of initiation has come full circle both literally by returning to New York and figuratively by having entered the next step in his maturation and life cycle process.

2.3.3 Susanna Moodie's Memoir *Roughing It in the Bush; or, Life in Canada* (1852) [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1989.]

In a similar vein, Susanna Moodie's autobiographical account of her own voyage from England and settlement in Canada in the early nineteenth century thematizes (im)migration as a main form of travel. Voluntary even if necessary migration across the Atlantic under middle-class conditions was far easier for the Moodie couple who traveled with a newborn child. Moodie wrote the book from hindsight and did not at all want to encourage people to undertake such an endeavor. Roughing It in the Bush destroys people's dream of a new and better life in Canada and describes life in the Canadian bush as "a mass of misery" (13). The pull factor for their journey was a "Canada mania" that turned into a general "infection" with this spirit (14). Health terminology persists when she depicts their arrival at Grosse Isle where the "dreadful cholera was depopulating Quebec and Montreal" (21) in August 1832. She is quick to depict the origins of the two health-officers who board their ship, one French, one Scottish, and who demand recompense but also purification efforts. She shifts between admiring landscape descriptions venturing on the sublime – the mountains as "Titans of the earth, in all their rugged and awful beauty"; "a thrill of wonder"; "the excess of beauty" (26)—and "the crowd of many hundred Irish emigrants" who are "confined by sickness" (28) or washing their clothes in the open. As she sees it, "[t]he confusion of Babel was among them" (29). Her fear of what she cannot understand and of what she deems hard-featured and rude makes her compare in a surprising way the Irish to the Indians, whom she will later encounter: "[…] the Indian is one of Nature's gentlemen – he never says or does a rude or vulgar thing. The vicious, uneducated barbarians who from the surplus of over-populous European countries, are far behind the wild man in delicacy of feeling or natural courtesy" (29). The Irish on shore immediately "infect" the Scottish on the ship with their savagery (31). While the human beings they encounter produce disgust in her, the landscape provokes in her tears of "pure and unalloyed delight" (37). Their arrival in Quebec is again marred by the cholera. The ambiguity upon arrival between utmost delight and deepest despair continues to accompany their journey into the Canadian bush with joyful births and constant fevers frequently killing people. These early settlements lacked doctors and a doctor's advice. The Moodie family eventually moved out of the bush to the town of Belleville. It is there that she writes her autobiographical travelogues, basically warning

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people of too easily believing land dealers and speculators. Her narrative shows how she has to come to terms with her admiration for the landscape, on the one hand, and with social questions of ethnicity and class, but most of all with the hardships of continued diseases, on the other hand.

2.3.4 Henry James' Novel *Daisy Miller* (1878) [London: Penguin, 1986.]

Daisy Miller is one of Henry James's best-known short novels that focus on Americans traveling abroad, in most cases to Europe. Based on the idea of the original Grand Tour, geared toward young British men in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries who looked for educational refinement and entertainment, Americans began to travel to Europe as part of mass tourism in the late nineteenth century, thus offering authors like Henry James food for an international theme. The American James eventually also became a British citizen one year before his death. Daisy Miller portrays the voyage of the American Miller family—mother, Daisy, brother Randolph—to Vevey, Switzerland, and then on to Rome, and is presented from the perspective of the American Winterbourne, who has resided in Europe for quite some time. An omniscient, first-person narrator, the implied author, adds to Winterbourne's focalization.

Vevey is introduced as a typical tourist place with hotels close to Lake Geneva, where the numerous American tourists stay every year so that Vevey becomes like "an American watering-place" with "'stylish' young girls" and "dance-music in the morning hours" (47). Vevey becomes a cultural contact zone with "Russian princesses," "German waiters," "Polish boys," and many more. This is the place of encounter between Winterbourne and the Miller family, first with Randolph, who can be labeled a staunch American who considers American candy and men the best (50) and would much rather go back to Schenectady, New York, than on to Italy. It is in Vevey that Winterbourne has sight of Daisy Miller for the first time, "a beautiful young lady" (50), and is immediately struck by her eyes and easy-going way of conversation.

Winterbourne takes Daisy on a tour of the Château de Chillon while still in Switzerland and meets the family again in Rome. Henry James depicts all-American enclaves in both places; Americans mostly interact with other Americans without much interest in the native population. Tourist sites become a must to see but the travelers take their own values and expectations with them wherever they go. Winterbourne perceives Daisy as "'completely uncultivated'" but "'wonderfully pretty'" whereas his rich aunt, Mrs. Costello, keeps out of the Millers' way and considers Daisy "'dreadful'" (63) and exceeding "the liberal license allowed to these young ladies" (64) in the United States. Daisy is the only character in the novel who has contact with the local population in Italy, namely with Mr. Giovanelli, whom Daisy introduces as "'an intimate friend of mine'" (84) without hesitation. Winterbourne does not think much of Giovanelli. Daisy breaks the etiquette of behavior in this American diaspora and is shunned by most of the in-group. Winterbourne tries to explain to her what the rules are in Italy but mistakes American behavior transposed to Europe for actual European rules: "'Well,' said Winterbourne, 'when you deal with natives you must go by the custom of the place. Flirting is a purely American custom; it doesn't exist here. So when you show yourself in public with Mr. Giovanelli and without your mother—'" (99). The depiction

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of Daisy's behavior throughout the novel as one who constantly breaks the (American) norms of adequate and moral behavior—from Winterbourne's and other, mostly female Americans' perspective—prepares Daisy's demise at the end when she—in spite of all warnings—visits the Colosseum in Rome at night, a "craziness," as Winterbourne is convinced, "from a sanitary point of view, of a delicate young girl lounging away the evening in the nest of malaria" (111). Both Giovanelli and Winterbourne are convinced that "Roman fever" will not harm them but, as Winterbourne points out, Daisy might catch it. Sure enough, just a few days later it becomes known that Daisy is "alarmingly ill" (113) and eventually dies of this "terrible case of the fever" (114-15), brought on to her by Anopheles mosquitoes as carriers of the malaria parasites. Even though people at the time did not yet fully understand how malaria was transmitted, they did know that being out late at night significantly increased the chances of catching it. Although there is no evidence that men might be immune, the Italian Giovanelli and the American Winterbourne are convinced that they are strong enough to withstand it. And so is Daisy—mistakenly so. Is there a gender bias in the transmission of the disease? Is the disease used metaphorically to punish a young woman who wants to enjoy life, be independent, and not be confined by the restrictions of the cult of true womanhood? Is Daisy Miller a woman ahead of her time? A new woman even? Is her journey not only one of tourism but also of (subconscious) liberation? Winterbourne, at the end, understands that he has misjudged Daisy but since society cannot yet fully acknowledge its mistake, he goes back to Geneva and turns again to "a very clever foreign lady" (116), once more revealing the contrast to Daisy's seeming commonness. Daisy remains a short moment in Winterbourne's past, and neither he nor society have actually accepted that Daisy's illness and death have made it conveniently easy to turn back to their old life and not change.

2.3.5 Mary Seacole's autobiography *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands* (1857). [Ed. Sara Salih. New York: Penguin, 2005.]

Mary Seacole, daughter of a Jamaican Creole mother and a Scottish father, depicts in her autobiographical travelogue her own desire for traveling and healing. At the time, Seacole was a British subject since Jamaica was a colony, and her many encounters with British soldiers, whom her mother served and healed in a Livingston boarding-house, motivated her to become a healer or "doctress" and nurse: "It was natural that I should inherit her [her mother's] tastes; and so I had from early youth a yearning for medical knowledge and practice which has never deserted me" (11-12). Her first journey takes her to England where she encounters racism but also sells her own pickled fruit and realizes that she could easily become an entrepreneur. "I was never weary tracing upon an old map the route to England; and never followed with my gaze the stately ships homeward bound without longing to be in them, and see the blue hills of Jamaica fade into the distance" (13). Most of her early journeys, however, take her to Central America and, ultimately, to the Crimean War (1854-56): "I used to stand for hours in silent thought before an old map of the world, in a little corner of which some one [sic] had chalked a red cross, to enable me to distinguish where the Crimea was; and I traced the route thither, all difficulties would vanish" (69). In Panama, she encounters the cholera and suspects that it has been imported from New Orleans (29),

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which is a well-known importationist theory. To increase her knowledge of the disease, she even performs an illegal post-mortem autopsy on a small child to "learn from this poor little thing the secret inner workings of our common foe" (34). She continues to focus on the symptoms of the disease and her own treatments until she herself is infected. But Seacole triumphs over both the cholera in Panama and the yellow fever in Jamaica. Her subsequent journey to the site of the Crimean War is an experience of disappointment at not being accepted as a British nurse and of success because she establishes the British Hotel near Sebastopol as a restaurant and hospital for the British soldiers. She speculates about possible reasons for this rejection: "Was it possible that American prejudices against colour had some root here? Did these ladies shrink from accepting my aid because my blood flowed beneath a somewhat duskier skin than theirs?" (73-74). The soldiers highly praise her as "Mother Seacole," an ironic reversal of colonial power structures. Mary Seacole proves herself as healer and businesswoman in spite of Florence Nightingale's aversion of her while the soldiers fully accept her. Thus, she mediates between colonizer and colonized and black and white people and, moreover, integrates nursing and traveling because she wants "to be of use somewhere" (81). Yet, there is an interesting rivalry between the white Nightingale and the black Seacole. Both feel superior to each other, Nightingale morally and Seacole physically. Nightingale maintains hierarchy whereas Seacole prefers hospitality; Nightingale is a trained nurse while Seacole's knowledge is self-trained. Both understand the need for hygiene and air ventilation. While Nightingale later extensively publishes her insights, Seacole has only one life narrative to her name. Seacole, at the end of the Crimean War, is almost bankrupt. She does some more traveling but then returns to England and writes her autobiographical travelogue and war memoir. She plays with and reverses the conventions of the slave narrative and turns herself into a powerful and well-accepted colonial subject as businesswoman and war heroine. Seacole was forgotten for a long time but was rediscovered in the wake of the women's movements in the 1970s. Together with Nightingale, Seacole revolutionized nineteenth-century concepts of womanhood and connected the worlds on both sides of the Atlantic. Ever since, Florence Nightingale has been remembered as the "Lady with the Lamp" while Mary Seacole has eventually been dubbed the "Jamaican Nightingale." Seacole's extensive travelogue is an inexhaustible source of information on ethnic and gender constructions, on political relationships, and on the history of diseases such as cholera and yellow fever in a transatlantic world. It shows how two women fight for the health of those in their care and significantly enhance the nursing profession.

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4. Attachment

Technical pitfalls

- **If your camera or sound is not working or your app freezes:** Let us know via the built-in chat function, try to resolve the issue by yourself by closing all unnecessary tabs on your browser and/or leave the virtual room and come back again
- **If you are in the virtual room but the presenter's camera or sound is not working or the meeting ends abruptly:** turn on the chat function, write us in the chat or see if we are messaging you. If not, check your email for further instructions
- **If you are in the virtual room but the internet connection is weak:** Every student turns off their webcam. If that is not enough, also the presenter will turn off their video
- **If your internet connection fails:** just return quietly whenever you can

Netiquette

- Let others finish speaking before you take your turn and respect each other during our conversation
- Before you speak, please let fellow participants know you wish to speak up. You can do this by "raising your hand"
- If you are not speaking, please mute your microphone. You can do so by clicking on the microphone icon at the bottom. Just don't forget to unmute your microphone when it is your turn to speak
- Please use a headset to reduce background noises and echos (if you have one)

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Guidelines for Presentations

- presentations should not exceed 20 minutes, each presentation will be followed by a 15 minute class discussion
- do a close reading of the text
- explain the overall topic of the session with reference to the timeframe and cultural contexts: How is the literary text embedded in a larger context?
- use one or two secondary sources to support your claims
- add your sources to the end of your powerpoint (bibliography)

Guiding Questions for Your Presentations

- What are some of the most important biographical facts about the authors' lives that also have an impact on their (travel) writing? (no more than 4 minutes)
- Which elements of the genre of travel writing / travelogues do you find in the text? What are their functions? How are they presented? (e.g., choice of words, perspective, imagery)
- In which way does gender play a role for the presentation of journeys? Is there a difference between men and women? Are there obstacles for one group more than for the other group?
- Which aspects of health or illness/disease are presented and in which way? How do they influence the journey that is depicted? In which way do they reflect the respective time's perspective on health? Does gender make a difference in this respect?
- How are self (the traveler) and other (the other culture that is visited) connected? In opposition? In a friendly way? Is there curiosity? How is the setting in which these two groups meet (the cultural contact zone) depicted? Do you find prejudices / stereotypes? How does the traveler (visitor) and the visited deal with the encounter(s)?

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