

One-Day c19c Conference: “The Travelling Nineteenth Century”

30th of May 2024, Parliament Hall

8.45-9.00 **Coffee & Tea – and welcome**

9:00-9:10 **Opening words, Prof. Will Fowler & Prof. Mary Orr**

9:10-11:10 **Session 1: Outward c19c Travelling**

Chair: Dr Michael White

Nat Bartels, “Decadent Sexualities and ‘Cannibal’ Anxieties in John Gray’s ‘The Advantages of Civilization’”

Professor Emma Sutton, “‘Full developed although still in miniature’: Representing Pacific music in Robert Louis Stevenson's *In the South Seas*”

Dr Luke Gartlan, “St Andrews and the Making of Colonial Careers”

Maitrayee Roychoudhury, “Tracing the ‘Dry Bones’ of Empire: Fergus Hume’s *Hagar of the Pawn-shop*”

11:10-11.30 **Coffee & Tea**

11.30-12.30 **Plenary:** Prof Martin Willis (Guest Speaker, Head of School of English, Communication and Philosophy, Cardiff University), “Sleeping Beauty on the Move! Science, physiology, and fairy tale in Nineteenth-century Sleep Culture”

12.30-13.30 **Lunch**

13.30-15.00 **Session 2: Intermedial c19c Travelling**

Chair: Dr Helen Stuhr-Rommereim

Dr Gregory Tate, “Thomas Carlyle, Time Traveller”

Dr Victoria Turner, “Nature and Fairy Tale in Nineteenth-Century Translations of ‘Aucassin et Nicolette’”

Professor Linda Goddard, “Women artists in Paris around 1900 and their literary legacies”

15:00-15:15 **Coffee & Tea**

15:15-16.15 **Session 3: Inward c19c Travelling**

Chair: Professor Aileen Fyfe

Pauline Preisler, “An “infinite voyage [...] into endless space”. Jean Paul’s *Traum über das All* [Dream of the Universe] in comparison with Thomas De Quincey’s *Dream upon the Universe* and *Dream-vision of the Infinite*”

Alejandro Adame Basilio, “‘While exploring the deserts of Asia, or wandering the pampas and prairies of America.’ Joel Poinsett on the Human Race”

Professor Will Fowler, “Analysing Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian’s travel books as a means to deciphering the mind of a Habsburg ‘Spare’”

16:15-16:45 Concluding Remarks and Programme Planning 2024-25: Professor Mary Orr



Abstracts (in alphabetical order):

Alejandro Adame Basilio, “‘While exploring the deserts of Asia, or wandering the pampas and prairies of America.’ Joel Poinsett on the Human Race”

Joel Poinsett’s name is only indirectly remembered today (through the *poinsettia* plant), yet during his lifetime (1779-1851) he achieved distinction as diplomat, politician, and promoter of learned societies. He was also regarded as one of the most widely travelled persons of his day. While he travelled, he socialised and dined under the roof of the Tsar’s palace at St Petersburg and under the tent of a tribal leader in Quba (in today’s Azerbaijan). This paper will analyse—with particular reference to the text of Poinsett’s lecture, ‘On the natural progress of the human race.’— how his travel experiences shaped his personal view of notions such as ‘barbarism’, ‘race’, and ‘civilisation.’

Nat Bartels, “Decadent Sexualities and ‘Cannibal’ Anxieties in John Gray’s ‘The Advantages of Civilization’”

This paper examines a short story by the Decadent writer John Gray, “The Advantages of Civilization” (1894). My analysis explores the way Gray characterizes the main character (a Fijian convert to Methodism) as a queer, Decadent, potentially transgressive other through musical references and racialized caricatures. This paper will address the ways current scholarship on Decadent literature has failed to robustly address the frequent problematic depictions of racial others in literature of the literature of the *fin de siècle*. Without belittling the story’s problematic aspects, I ultimately argue that Gray uses the idea of cannibalism as a metaphor for homoerotic desire.

Professor Will Fowler, “Analysing Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian’s travel books as a means to deciphering the mind of a Habsburg ‘Spare’”

Before Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian (1832-67) became Emperor of Mexico (1864-67), he found himself at a loose end after his older brother Franz Joseph unexpectedly became Emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1848. A Prince Harry of his day, Max “the Spare” took to travelling between 1850 and 1856 around the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas,

visiting Portugal and Madeira in the Atlantic, and going as far as Brazil in 1860, and wrote several travel books that were published first in German but later in translation in English. Rather than what his books tell us about the countries he visited at mid-century, the present 10-minute paper is interested in what they tell us about Max's prejudices, ambitions, liberal tendencies, and romantic sensibility, and how these in turn may help us understand some of the more controversial decisions he took once he accepted the Mexican throne.

Dr Luke Gartlan, “St Andrews and the Making of Colonial Careers”

To what extent did the educational institutions in Victorian-era St Andrews adapt to cater for colonial careers, and, in particular, for entrance to the schools of the East India Company? Taking the Robert Lindsay's family and Jessie Playfair as examples, this paper examines the appeal of St Andrews for families seeking to place their sons in the schools of the East India Company at Addiscombe and Haileybury, particularly with regard to the teaching provision of 'Hindustani' as a requisite language skill for their entrance exams. Considered in relation to a small group of family photographs, I intend in this paper to emphasize colonial mobility and education as fundamental aspects to St Andrews and its community in the mid-nineteenth century.

Professor Linda Goddard, “Women artists in Paris around 1900 and their literary legacies”

This paper focuses on two among the many women who travelled to Paris at the very end of the nineteenth century to undertake training in art schools: the German Paula Modersohn-Becker and the Welsh Gwen John. Both artists wrote letters (a travelling form). I will explore the engagement of later women artists and writers with the *writings* of these artists – Adrienne Rich's poem “Paula Becker to Clara Westhoff” and Celia Paul's *Letters to Gwen John* – thus investigating translation or travel between countries, as well as between media (word and image) and between generations.

Pauline Preisler, “An “infinite voyage [...] into endless space”. Jean Paul's *Traum über das All* [Dream of the Universe] in comparison with Thomas De Quincey's *Dream upon the Universe and Dream-vision of the Infinite*”

Thomas De Quincey translated much of Jean Paul including *Traum über das All* which belongs to the unfinished novel *Komet* (1820-22) and presents the journey of a soul through cosmic space. About twenty years after the publication of his translation *Dream Upon the Universe* (1824), De Quincey integrates the *Dream vision of the Infinite*, which is based on a “fading remembrance” of Jean Paul's text, as the finale to his essay *System of the Heavens* (1846). Apart from Frederick Burwick who provides a brief examination of these dream-visions (Burwick 1968), no one has compared Jean Paul's and De Quincey's texts to date. In my 20-minute-presentation, I will therefore address this gap by exploring and comparing the worlds the narrator travels through in Jean Paul and De Quincey.

Maitrayee Roychoudhury, “Tracing the ‘Dry Bones’ of Empire: Fergus Hume's *Hagar of the Pawn-shop*”

In *Hagar of the Pawn-shop* (1897), Fergus Hume's gypsy detective unravels the criminal histories of hocked goods from her Lambeth pawnshop. How do her investigations expose the circulation of capital, commodities, and criminality that is the mainstay of Empire? How are notions of British superiority, reified in White bodies and the metropolitan space, destabilized by her cross-country enquiries? Finally, as the text travels the globe through the channels of the periodical press, how does it bring home the flawed nature of social hierarchies of gender, class, and race?

Professor Emma Sutton, “‘Full developed although still in miniature’: Representing Pacific music in Robert Louis Stevenson's *In the South Seas*”

This paper examines a passage of descriptive prose about Kiribati music by Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson from his travel book/ethnographic study *In the South Seas* (posthumously published in 1896). It considers some of the formal and political questions raised by European writers' attempts to represent or evoke non-Western music in literature, asking: how does Stevenson explore the difficulties of representing, in language, music from an 'unfamiliar' culture? How does the passage negotiate Eurocentric cultural hierarchies, such as those between: written and improvised music; literate and oral cultures; and vocal and instrumental music?

Dr Gregory Tate, “Thomas Carlyle, Time Traveller”

In *The French Revolution* (1837), Thomas Carlyle sets out to convey the intensity and immediacy of the revolution by narrating its history in the present tense; ‘the Past Tense’, he cautions, is ‘a most lying thing’. This is one example of the numerous ways in which Carlyle flouts the conventions of English grammar throughout his historical writing, as he seeks to bring his readers into collision with an alien and discomfiting past. This paper will discuss how Carlyle’s verbal eccentricities assist in his elaboration of what Isobel Armstrong describes as a ‘perlocutionary’ style, which emphasises the necessity of personal action, and the dangers of inaction, in response to historical change. It will argue that the grammar of his style in *The French Revolution* and *Past and Present* (1843) expresses an important aspect of his understanding of the work of the nineteenth-century writer, whose job is to provoke readers to actions, purposive yet dutiful, of their own.

Dr Victoria Turner, “Nature and Fairy Tale in Nineteenth-Century Translations of ‘Aucassin et Nicolette’”

This paper will discuss how the natural world is translated in three nineteenth-century English versions of the medieval French song-story ‘Aucassin et Nicolette’. I aim firstly to consider what these translations can tell us about nineteenth-century attitudes towards translating the medieval and how the translators’ own environmental concerns influence their representation of medieval nature; secondly, I will analyse how they use nature to facilitate particular connections to the past - or how nature makes the medieval past ‘relevant’; thirdly I will explore how the representation of nature and forms of ecomedievalism in these translations contribute to the framing of this story as a fairy tale for modern readers.

Prof Martin Willis (Guest Speaker, Head of School of English, Communication and Philosophy, Cardiff University), “Sleeping Beauty on the Move! Science, physiology, and fairy tale in Nineteenth-century Sleep Culture”

The myth or tale of sleeping beauty, rooted in oral narratives that predate the nineteenth-century, reached its zenith in the mid-nineteenth century, and has remained an influential sleep imaginary in Western culture since then. In this talk, I show how imaginaries of sleeping beauty travelled between media (from fairy tale to painting to theatre) and thereafter ventured further on, first to play a role in medical writing on sleep (for example, in discussions of sleep in the *Lancet* and *Nature*), and then voyaging further again into popular journalism. I go on to argue that many representations of sleep took on the magical qualities of extended sleeping that the sleeping beauty fairy tale provided. However, there were also counter perspectives: extended sleeping was also linked with fakery, fraud, and resistance to paradigms of social order. Drawing throughout on both textual and visual images of sleeping beauty, I’ll reveal how emerging ideas of sleep as a form of physiological energy – examined by sleep scientists, physiologists, and Marx and Engels – fundamentally altered the reception

of sleeping beauty, and how that legacy has also travelled with us into contemporary sleep narratives.