

Magazines on the Move: North American Periodicals and Travel

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Abstracts

Sofia Aatkar (Nottingham Trent University), ‘Motivity and Mobility in Jamaica Kincaid’s “On Seeing England for the First Time” (1991)’

The concept of motivity first appears in John Locke’s *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). The term motivity, Locke suggests, refers to the ‘power of putting body into motion through thought’ (Locke 2001, 243). In this paper, I want to explore how the relationship between thought and mobility is represented in Jamaica Kincaid’s essay ‘On Seeing England for the First Time’ (1991). The text describes Kincaid’s engagement with the former colonial power from her static position as a child growing up in the Caribbean and the journey she undertakes many years later from the United States of America to England. ‘On Seeing England for the First Time’ appeared in the magazine *Transition* in 1991. *Transition* is published by Indiana University Press and is associated with the Hutchins Centre at Harvard University. The content of the periodical is concerned with the African diaspora and reflects on black life in a globalised world. ‘On Seeing England for the First Time’ fits into *Transition*’s domain as it combines a condition of stasis and imagination with travel and reality from a black diasporic subject position, and subsequently raises complex questions concerning the mode and purpose of corporeal movement and the idea of ‘return’.

Shannon Derby (Tufts University, USA), ‘Tourism Narratives and the Production of Paradise’

In ‘The Voyages Issue’ of *The New York Times Magazine*, published in March 2017, Wells Tower recounts highlights of his family vacation to Oahu and Hawaii Island (or, the Big Island)

in ‘The Hawaii Cure: A first trip to the island, in a desperate bid to escape the news.’ Like many tourist accounts of Hawaii, Tower’s vacation highlights include a trip to a luau, personal musings of the reality of the ‘Aloha spirit,’ accounts of the local flora and fauna, one-sided depictions of the local population, and, of course, lava. Writing against the backdrop of an increasingly tumultuous Trump-era America, Tower lives up to Paul Fussell’s definition of a tourist who is motivated by the desire ‘to allay social anxiety [and] to realize fantasies of erotic freedom’ (42) and casts Hawaii as both an exotic place apart to which the media-weary mainlander can escape and a familiar island destination packaged and sold to fellow tourists. In doing so, Tower constructs a representational space defined by tourism that is, as Henri Lefebvre writes, ‘consumed in both the economic and literal senses of the word’ (122). Using theories of travel and spatial representation, as well as histories of exploration, imperialism, and neocolonialism associated with travel to Hawaii, I argue that the tourism narrative reorders space through the desire to impose familiarity onto a place. Therein lies the paradox inherent to the periodical narratives that Tower’s account typifies: they produce the (neo)colonial space as exotic, unknown, and alien while at the same time reproducing that (neo)colonial space in an idiom of ‘Western,’ and specifically American, familiarity. By reaching a large audience through the accessible medium of *The New York Times*, Tower rewrites the ‘foreign’ and exotic into a recognisable tourist destination for bourgeois American readers back home on the mainland.

Rachel Farebrother (Swansea University), ““It all depends how you look at it”: Travel Writing in the *Brownies’ Book*, 1920-21’

The short-lived children’s magazine *The Brownies’ Book*, which was edited by Jessie Fauset with assistance from W.E.B. Du Bois and Augustus Dill, has been hailed by Katharine Capshaw Smith, among others, for rethinking notions of black childhood in such a way as to encourage children’s racial pride while preparing them ‘for the realities of race prejudice’. Given this, it is somewhat surprising that the travel writing collected in the magazine, which focuses on Mexico, Carpe Verde, Britain, Spain, Puerto Rico, Algiers and China, has been somewhat overlooked. Through close analysis of a selection of essays including Langston Hughes’ ‘In a Mexican City’ (April 1921), this paper will argue that such writing cannot be divorced from the broader transnational scope of the magazine. It is always in dialogue with artwork by cartoonists and illustrators such as Laura Wheeler and Albert Alex Smith, artwork that is often animated by tensions between the exotic and the ethnographic. Moreover, the political and cultural implications of Fauset’s (and Du Bois’s) commitment to travel writing is part of a larger project to dispense with romanticised ideas of childhood in favour of commitment to an education that fosters curiosity, experimentation and active engagement with the world, an approach best captured in Du Bois’s ‘As the Crow Flies’, a news column narrated by a sarcastic, world-weary crow who flies across the globe, providing stark, unflinching detail information about such matters as the Great Strike, colonialism and the Pan-African movement.

Josefin Holmstrom (University of Cambridge), ““A dream of enchantment”: Travelling with Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Agnes of Sorrento*’

This paper is on the serialisation of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Agnes of Sorrento*, which ran in the *Atlantic Monthly* between May 1861 and April 1862, during the Civil War. I will discuss *Agnes* as a ‘substitute’ for travel, a reading which becomes especially evident when the novel

is encountered in its serialised form. Many travellers published letters from their journeys, appearing in instalments and allowing the readers to follow the correspondent's adventures in (somewhat staggered) real time. Agnes, conceived of and began as a piece of parlour entertainment during the author's 1859 trip to Italy, appears once a month and traces a journey from Sorrento to Florence and Rome. The novel has many features of traditional travel narratives, not least Stowe's attention to foreign customs and traditions, which she takes care to explain to her readers. Agnes is a historical romance set in fifteenth-century Catholic Italy, but its exoticism is tempered by Stowe's attempt to present her characters (among them reform preacher Savonarola) as proto-Protestants. I will offer a reading of the novel's anachronisms, treatment of time, and debates with classical antiquity and medieval Catholicism, within the context of the nineteenth-century travel narrative and its conventions.

Claire Lindsay (University College London), 'Tourism advertising in *Mexican Folkways* (1925-1937)'

This paper examines the use of tourism advertisements in *Mexican Folkways* (1925-1937), a renowned bilingual periodical designed to describe 'customs ... art, music, archaeology, and the Indian himself as part of the new social trends' (López 2010) during Mexico's post-revolutionary period. The paper combines formal and thematic discussion of advertisements for El Buen Tono cigarettes and Mexico City hotels with findings from archival research that shed light on the genesis and dissemination of this magazine, which has since become a treasured source in the historiography. The paper contends that such a historically situated focus on the periodical's paratextual features illustrates some of the central paradoxes at stake in the character of and reliance on *Mexican Folkways* as source material, tensions that resonate with others regarding the new Republic's endeavour to deploy tourism as a means of recovery and reconstruction after the Revolution. In doing so, it illuminates what Shelly Garrigan (2012) has called 'the dialectical embrace of patrimony and market' in the periodical as well as untold accounts of recycling of processes and stakeholders that had been fundamental to nation building during the *porfiriato* (1876-1911) in the re-making of modern Mexico after 1920.

Mieke Neyens (KU Leuven, Belgium), 'True Norwegians in Mexico. Reports of travel and migration in *Nordmannsforbundet*, 1907-1940'

This paper studies the reports on Mexico in the Norwegian emigrant periodical *Nordmannsforbundet* distributed among Norwegians at home and abroad since 1907. The focus is on the accounts written by Norwegian reporters visiting their countrymen in Mexico in the period 1907 and 1940. These were times in which Norwegian authorities strove to reduce the massive emigration (mainly to the US) that had left its mark on the country since the 1860s, and to encourage those abroad to return home. To this end, they sought to stimulate feelings of national pride and strengthen the bonds between Norwegians worldwide. Against this historical backdrop, *Nordmannsforbundet* was created with state funding. All of this entailed a major rhetorical challenge for the magazine: on the one hand, articles were to bring a positive image of Norwegians abroad (as part of the national pride); on the other, they could not report too enthusiastically about emigrants and their new lives (so as to keep emigration limited). My

paper analyses the discursive strategies used to face this challenge in the reports of Norwegians and their undertakings in Mexico.

Jak Peake (University of Essex), ‘Life “Beyond the Color Line”? New York Wanderers and Caribbean Wonders’

The early twentieth century represents a significant milestone for black writers in terms of literary acclaim, recognition and travel writing. Indeed, some of the most acclaimed black writers to emerge in the early to mid-twentieth century, including W. E. B. Du Bois, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and Richard Wright, could be said to owe their careers in part to their travel writing and literary engagement with travel. Published prior to 1950, Hughes’s *The Big Sea* (1940) and McKay’s *A Long Way from Home* (1937) are perhaps two of the most prominent full-length autobiographical works by black authors which signpost the importance of travel. However, in the 1910s-1920s, the vast majority of black travel writing was published in smaller form and often emerged as part of a journalistic article, essay or vignette in radical and black periodicals like the *Nation*, the *Messenger*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the (Harlem) *Liberator*.

Black travel writing as featured in American periodicals in this period often demonstrated anti-colonial concerns and interests in colonialism in the Caribbean and Africa. The Caribbean in particular, as a number of Caribbean states—Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Virgin Islands—were taken under US administration, served as a region of ambivalent signification for writers and political activists in this period. On the one hand, it represented an area of relative freedom for black and mixed-race populations and, in the case of Haiti, stood as a symbolic site of black resistance. On the other hand, the colonial administration of various Caribbean states and their increasing annexation to the United States presented a move away from self-governance and autonomy in the region.

This paper seeks to address the significance of the Caribbean, its culture and its people, to black writers who published travel articles or articles inspired by travel in 1920s and 1930s New York and US periodicals. It further explores how the Caribbean served as a conduit for issues of black internationalism and broad issues of anti-colonialism, anti-racism and national independence.

Matthew Pethers (University of Nottingham), ‘Early American Periodical Culture and the Problem of the Picaresque’

This paper takes its prompt from an unexplained peculiarity of early American literary history – namely, the surprising dearth of serialised picaresque novels in late eighteenth- and early-nineteenth century American magazines. Scholars of picaresque fiction have often remarked that its episodic, globe-trotting narrative style mirrors similar tendencies in the emergent periodical culture of this time, without ever really noticing how few picaresque novels actually appeared in the pages of these publications. I will attempt to address that lacuna by historically contextualising one particularly significant early American picaresque, Royall Tyler’s *The Algerine Captive* (1797), a text that ‘travelled’ not only in terms of its plot, which follows the protagonist’s rambles from the Northern and Southern states through London to imprisonment

in Algiers, but also in regard to its material circulation, when it became the first American novel to be republished in Britain. That republication, which saw *The Algerine Captive* shifting from book format to serial instalments, marks out, I will argue, some of the challenges that the picaresque presented to a periodical culture increasingly invested in fiction that adhered to narrative models of progression, continuity and suspense. By situating *The Algerine Captive*'s appearance in the *Lady's Magazine* in 1804 in relation to these formal trends both within Britain (where early eighteenth-century newspaper serialisations of *Don Quixote* and other picaresque works had already given way to Tobias Smollett's failed experiments with the magazine picaresque in the 1760s) and America (where picaresque serials such *The History of Constantia and Pulchra* had begun to engage in an almost absurdly hyperactive level of place-hopping by the 1780s), I ultimately want to consider some of the ways in which the periodical mode may constrain or negate fictional accounts of travel.

Eric White (Oxford Brookes University), 'On the Move and On the Margins: Stranded Expatriates in *Globe* and *The New Review*'

This paper explores the stubborn, static flip sides of translocal modernist poetics in American journals of the 1930s. Focusing on *The New Review* and *Globe*, it investigates how the contingent circumstances of both editors and contributors problematise current assumptions about the frictionless 'cosmopolitanism' of such journals. For example, *Globe* contributors such as Bob Brown and Ezra Pound eventually found themselves detached from both the exotic circuits of 'intimate travel' with which the magazine tempted its readers, and from their dwindling avant-garde networks such publications indirectly sustained due to the demands of politics, economics, and individual circumstances. In a related vein, the editors of the internationalist *New Review*, Samuel Putnam and Peter Neagoe, were forced to negotiate a transnational spat with Fascist Italy at the same time as their last base, the rural village of Mirmande, was experiencing severe economic deprivation during the build-up to the Second World War. The paper argues that its examples reveal systemic tensions between the translocal and the *cislocal*— those deeply-entrenched features and systems identified with a particular geographical place for a sustained duration of time. This spatial dynamic is embedded across modernism and its periodical codes, and it a tension that modernists both acknowledged and revelled in.