



Travel Writing

On the interplay between text and the visual

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‘To travel is to see’, writes Bernard McGrane (1989: 116), and writing about travelling is thus an attempt to grasp what has been seen — in words and/or visually. Accordingly, travel literature deals not only with written texts but with visual elements, whether maps, pictures, drawings, photographs, sketches, (out)looks, viewpoints, or other media, regardless of whether they are displayed visually or drawn with words. An arbitrary list of travelogue (and travel blog) titles reveals the intrinsic relationship between text and image: *Pictures from Italy; Italienisches Bilderbuch; Sketches of Spain; Impressions de voyage; Reiseaufnahmen; Blickgewinkelt* (cf. Alù and Hill 2018: 6). Illustrations produced on the road, as well as visual material added later, have long been an integral part of travel writing. Visual material can convey information that cannot be verbalized. The visual can also lend authenticity to what was experienced and narrated, underscoring the credibility of the traveller/narrator. At the same time, the visual guides the reader’s perspective and tends to strengthen certain viewpoints even more than texts do. Nevertheless, visual depictions only *seem* to be more realistic, as Giorgia Alù and Sarah Patricia Hill remind us: ‘[visual representation] distorts rather than reflects social reality’ (2018: 1). Illustrations in travel writing thus partake in the construction of difference, of images of the self and the other, and consequently in the emergence of stereotypes and clichés.

This special issue of *Mobile Culture Studies — The Journal* is dedicated to this complex relation between text and the visual in travel writing. It grew out of two transdisciplinary workshops held at the University of Vienna within the framework of the research platform *Mobile Cultures and Societies: Interdisciplinary Studies on Transnational Formations* and the Marie-Sklódowska-Curie project *European Travel Writing in Context*.¹ The workshops were dedicated, first, to the intersection of travel writing (studies) and mobility (studies) more generally, and second, to the present focus on the relation between text and images in travel writing.

1 For more information on the two projects, see <https://mobilecultures.univie.ac.at> and <https://travelwriting.uni-mainz.de>.



In what follows, we begin by briefly discussing travel writing, before moving on to reflect on travel writing studies, mobility studies, and the relationship between them. After providing a definition of our understanding of ‘text’ and the ‘visual’, we offer an overview of the themes and topics covered in the following articles. Work on this issue began under normal conditions; given the worldwide COVID pandemic, however, our contributors were ultimately forced to write and revise, and our reviewers forced to evaluate, under difficult circumstances — circumstances that we clearly wish to acknowledge. Although we were all heavily affected by these events, given the real-time nature of the pandemic, they could not be dealt with from a critical point of view in the present articles.

Travel writing and travel writing studies

Written documents about travel make up one of the oldest literary genres, the roots of which date back to antiquity. People record their experiences of journeys for different reasons: some aim to provide a resource for other travellers, for instance, while others seek to teach and entertain, perhaps even intending their travelogues to serve as a form of autobiography. Throughout the long history of the genre, travelogues have been popular with readers, particularly in certain periods, for instance toward the end of the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century.

The various accounts of travels and experiences of mobility differ greatly with regard to style (from scientific reports to amusing anecdotes), form (from letters to diaries and longer narrative forms, with or without illustrations), and media (from written documents to blogs and films). Differences can also be identified with regard to their production (during the journey or afterwards, immediately following the trip or many years later) and to their reception (in short but regular form in journals or blogs, as a longer project, read in preparation for a journey or for entertainment, perceived as part of an author’s oeuvre or as a single text).

The genre has evolved over time: as earlier travelogues had the added function of serving as guidebooks for other travellers, they had a more scientific and encyclopaedic character and focused on the collection of facts and knowledge. From about the second half of the eighteenth century (exceptions prove the rule), travellers and their impressions on the journey came to the fore. The increased possibility of travel due to improved infrastructure and lower costs from the late eighteenth century onward also enabled more members of the middle class to undertake journeys; among them were an increasing number of writers, who would then write about their experiences. The growing popularity of travel writing, together with the increased number of travel writing publications, meant that authors were increasingly compelled to develop their own individual approaches to the genre in terms of both form and content. The use of images is one way to render one’s travelogue unique and, at the same time, to underscore its subjectivity: the ubiquity of terms such as ‘pictures’, ‘sketches’, and ‘impressions’ in the titles mentioned above signals the particular, personal approach taken in such texts (even though the texts themselves often contained images and views that would have been familiar to readers, included to satisfy their expectations). With that said, images can also be used to convey authenticity, and thus to claim objectivity — the idea that what I experienced was really as I described it — rather than individuality.

The contributions to this issue aim to analyse the different forms and functions of images in travel writing and their relation to the text. In so doing, the supposed claims of the images



are carefully dissected, their underlying layers disclosed. Although the authors have diverse academic backgrounds and thus differ in terms of their approaches, all of the articles build, among other things, on research in travel writing studies and/or mobility studies.

Travel writing studies is a relatively young but lively and growing field that analyses travel writing from a literary and cultural studies point of view. A number of handbooks and introductions published over the past twenty years or so (see Hulme and Youngs 2002; Keller and Siebers 2017; Pettinger and Youngs 2019; Schaff 2020; Thompson 2011; Youngs 2013; Youngs and Forsdick 2012), the launching of academic journals on the subject (such as *Studies in Travel Writing*), and the founding of dedicated research centres, such as the Centre for Travel Writing Studies at Nottingham Trent University, show that travel writing studies is now an established academic field. The recently published *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies: A Critical Glossary* (Forsdick, Kinsley, and Walchester 2019) confirms the extent to which the field, which transcends various disciplines, is characterized by a shared critical vocabulary. Scholars in the field mostly engage with texts that record journeys that have actually taken place rather than purely fictitious travel accounts. Accordingly, we follow this definition of travel writing in this issue. We understand travel as a specific form of mobility characterized by certain elements and thus as distinguishable from other forms of mobility (such as flight and exile), even though the exact delimitation may sometimes be blurred.

Over the past few decades, research on travel writing has concentrated on a number of topics: certain groups of travellers and modes of travel have been studied, such as the travelling nobility and elites (see Freller 2007; Leibetseder 2004), the travelling middle class on the Grand Tour/*Bildungsreise* (see Black 1985; Brilli 2001; Findlen 2009; Hibbert 1987), female travellers (see Bassnett 2002; Findlen 2009; Foster 1990; Habinger 2006; Siegel 2004), and travellers on foot (see Albrecht and Kertschner 1999; Solnit 2000). The research in this field has been dedicated to particular destinations, with Italy being the most popular (see for instance Aldo Bertozzi 2007; Brilli 2001; Egger 2006; Grimm, Brey Mayer and Erhart 1990; Pfister 1996), although travellers in France and England have also been studied extensively (see Grosser 1989 and Struck 2006 on France, for instance, and Maurer 1987, Dankelmann 1999, and Fischer 2004 on England). Studies on smaller European countries and Central Europe remain rare (see Balogh and Leitgeb 2014; Struck 2006).

In English-speaking countries, studies on travel writing have been highly influenced by Edward Said's *Orientalism* (2003), which revealed the links between travelling, representation, and (imperial) power and which triggered intensive study of travel writing from the 1980s onwards, from a postcolonial and cultural studies perspective. Scholars were particularly interested in the question of how notions such as exoticism were constructed via travelogues (and other artefacts) as part of the imperial project (Schmidt 2015). Accordingly, in the context of postcolonial and intercultural studies, travel writing on destinations in Africa (see Miller 1985; Youngs 1994), the Americas (see Pratt 1992), India (see Inden 1990; Suleri 1991), and the South Pacific (see Kuchler Williams 2004) has been scrutinized. This also led to the perception (if not the criticism) that travel writing was a rather conservative genre and resulted in a more concentrated focus on colonial contexts.



On the relation between travel writing studies and mobility studies

Somewhat surprisingly, the fields of travel writing studies and mobility studies are not as closely related as one would expect, given their shared focus on mobile subjects. Whereas travel writing studies explores how mobile subjects recount their mobile experiences, mobility studies adds other forms of mobility to the analytic framework, most notably the mobility of objects and ideas/concepts, as well as virtual mobilities.

Although mobility has clearly always shaped cultures and societies, its central relevance to the analysis of cultures and societies has not always been recognized. This changed with Mimi Sheller and John Urry's (2006) introduction of the 'new mobilities paradigm', which brought the many intersecting forms of mobility to the attention of researchers in the social sciences and, eventually, the humanities. While mobility was generally regarded in highly positive terms in much of the research conducted within the new paradigm, Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) emphasized the power relations at stake in determining whose mobility is encouraged, or at least not blocked, and whose is inhibited. They thus proposed that we focus on the 'regimes of mobility' that shape the various forms of mobilities and immobilities in a given setting. Both conditions can be forms of privilege, depending on the context within which im/mobilizations occur, and thus their effects must be examined in each case. Structural categories such as gender, age, class, race, and the like have an impact on all forms of mobility, and thus on travel.

While travel and tourism have been key issues in mobility studies from early on (cf. Urry 2002; Urry and Larsen 2011), travel writing has recently become a topic of great interest in mobility studies. In 2016, for example, the journal *Transfers* featured a section on 'Travel Writing and Knowledge Transfer', put together by guest editors Florian Krobb and Dorit Müller (2016/3), which focused on travel writing in imperial and colonial contexts, proposing that we conceive of knowledge produced while traveling as 'itinerant knowledge'.

Mobility studies have also increasingly had an impact on travel writing studies, which Forsdick calls 'a literature of mobility' (2019: 155). As he writes in his entry 'Mobility' in the above-mentioned *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies*, '[m]obility has the potential to root the study of travel writing in the material conditions of the journey', a notion that Forsdick borrows from Stephen Greenblatt's *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto* (2010). Forsdick further observes that the apparent neutrality of the term 'has the potential to avoid more value-laden and "historically tainted" (Clifford 1997, 110) designations such as "travel" and "tourism", allowing clearer comparison of the intersecting experiences and trajectories of those in motion' (Forsdick 2019: 155).

Readers and scholars of travel writing are thus challenged to pay attention to the representations of various regimes of mobility in travel writing (see Forsdick 2019: 155). Such an approach also has the potential to prevent travel writing studies from falling prey to the criticism that it focuses primarily on privileged narratives written by travellers in possession of internationally valid passports and the financial means to be as mobile as they wish. A key privilege associated with travel, as opposed to other types of mobility, concerns the form in which the journey is documented; travellers can usually choose from a variety of options when it comes to how they document their mobility. Even if they do not document their travels, this is usually a conscious choice, whereas people who move — voluntarily or involuntarily — for reasons other than travel (i.e. flight, migration, business) often have fewer resources (financial and/or mental) to dedicate to the documentation of their mobility. Furthermore, the construction of the traveller as a



mobile subject and the travellee (Pratt 1992: 242; Smethurst 2019) as immobile — a construct that can be found in much travel writing — must also be approached critically.

New forms of travelling and travel writing have sought to undermine the dominant understanding of travel as a practice that necessarily encompasses physical mobility. The New Zealand photographer Jacqui Kenny, for example, cannot travel physically because she suffers from agoraphobia and anxiety. She has therefore turned to travelling the world via Google Street View, and the photographs she takes on her virtual travels are so fascinating that they have been featured not only on her Instagram feed but also in exhibitions (with a book-length publication in the works).² Similarly, the English priest Ruth Lampard, who was unable to walk the Camino de Santiago (Way of St James) due to health problems, decided to go on a virtual pilgrimage instead, charting the (relatively short) distances she was able to walk per day on a map, looking for blogs and YouTube videos about the corresponding sections of the Camino and then tweeting about her experiences on Twitter.³ As her poor health also limited her ability to read and write, Twitter was an ideal medium for documenting her travel, allowing her to link her messages to videos and articles. Currently, Ruth Lampard is walking and tweeting about the Te Araroa Trail in New Zealand in a similar manner.

Virtual travel may become more of a trend in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has had an unprecedented impact on the practice of travel given the closing of borders not only between different countries but even between certain regions within countries. Business travel has largely been replaced by video conferences, and the potential uses of online tools in academia have been explored in unprecedented ways. While conferences were cancelled due to the pandemic, the number of webinars increased significantly. As physical mobility became restricted in various ways, virtual mobility was taken to a new level in 2020 — with both positive and negative consequences.

In the weeks of the lockdown, newspaper travel sections contained fewer and fewer travel reports, and reading travel writing was featured as an alternative to travelling during the pandemic.⁴ Destinations such as Barcelona and Venice, which had suffered from over-tourism for many years, became largely deserted urban spaces; on television, daring reporters were shown standing in an empty St Mark's Square.

It is too early to speculate on how the experience of the pandemic and its consequences for travel will affect the genre of travel writing. As a theme, it will certainly be reflected in future travelogues. Perhaps more interesting, however, is the question of whether it will also have an impact on the — already heterogeneous — forms associated with the genre of travel writing, which in many cases is defined by the way in which text and visual forms relate to each other.

2 <https://www.instagram.com/streetview.portraits/>; <https://www.theagoraphobictraveller.com/>.

3 See her Twitter account @ruth_lampard.

4 See, for example, contributions in the Austrian press such as 'Unterwegs in Wort und Bild', *Die Presse*, 21–22 March 2020; 'Reisen im Kopf' in *Freizeit, Kurier*, 18 April 2020. Under the heading 'Vor Kurzem noch am Ende der Welt' (*Die Presse* 28–29 March 2020), travel authors wrote about how they spent their time in the lockdown. Other articles featured tours that offer new perspectives on familiar places, such as the *Vienna Walking Week* (cf. 'Urlaub für Wiener in Wien', *Die Presse* 19 April 2020).



The interplay between text and the visual in travel writing

Although the field of travel writing studies has thus far given precedence to the visual over other senses (though the latter have started to receive attention in recent research; see Pettinger and Youngs 2019), we believe that the relation between text and the visual in travel writing is still under-researched and in need of attention. In general, there seems to be a growing awareness of the hitherto paltry research on the relation between text and the visual, as recent dedicated calls for papers and conferences show.⁵ With regard to travel writing, standard introductions to the field usually refer to visual aspects of the texts, although dedicated studies of visual elements and their function in travelogues are rare (for a recent exception, see Alù and Hill 2018). As the contributions to this special issue show, however, the visual is not a mere illustration of the text in travel writing; it has particular functions that vary from travelogue to travelogue. Furthermore, the text and the visual are closely related and must therefore be analysed together, taking into account the ways in which they refer to each other. With this special issue, we want to shed light on some of these questions and thus to contribute to a growing area of research.

Narratives about travel take different forms. In this special issue, we bring together contributions that focus on printed forms of travel writing that have generally also been edited — such as classic travelogues, graphic novels, and illustrated books — and analyses of alternative forms of travel narratives, such as contemporary travel diaries, which are often published in the form of blogs. These are usually available instantaneously to a broad readership and are generally self-published. These examples also illustrate the broad time frame of this issue, which spans the late seventeenth century up to the present.

We rely on a comprehensive understanding of the ‘text’ and the ‘visual’; our focus is the interplay between what is verbally formulated (text) and visually presented (e.g. sketches, drawings, images, maps, photos, films, etc.) in travel writing. These two elements can clearly also overlap, for example in the form of *ekphrasis* or of texts that are inscribed within images, as in comics and graphic novels. The visual presentations in the travelogues thus range from (mobile) motifs in texts (Winkler), to copper engravings (Vlasta), sketches (Englert), and comics (Thomson), to photographs (Helm, Riggert, Waller), films (Sennefelder, De Almeida/Müller/Wimplinger), and computer-generated maps (Unterpertinger), and ultimately to intermedial formats such as zines (Kapp) and tableaux (De Almeida/Müller/Wimplinger).

The contributors to this issue come from different disciplines, including African studies, comparative literature, French and Italian studies, German studies, and film studies. They use different approaches in their analyses; some have a background in travel writing studies, while others are more rooted in mobility studies or in media studies. This crossover makes this special issue a transdisciplinary one, which is further supported by the fact that most of the contributions are indeed working in a transdisciplinary way; that is, in most cases the authors have combined approaches and frameworks from different disciplinary backgrounds. We believe that the broad range of these contributions sheds new light on the very diverse and (more often

5 For instance, at their next congress in 2021, the *Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (The Society of Anglo-American Studies of the 17th and 18th Centuries) will deal with ‘Maps and Mapping in English-speaking Countries in the 17th and 18th Centuries’. The *Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Erforschung des 18. Jahrhunderts* (German Society for Research on the 18th Century) dedicated its annual conference in 2020 to the topic of ‘Pictures of Enlightenment’. Finally, the British PERLEGO network dedicated its inaugural (digital) conference in October 2020 to ‘Critical Perspectives on Image and Text’.



than not) intricate relationship between ‘text’ and ‘image’ in travel writing. The intention was to combine the study of the travelogue as text (and image) with an awareness of the mobility that precedes the texts, is inscribed in them, and is therefore re-performed in the act of reading and watching. Moreover, the diversity of the texts and analyses highlights once again the heterogeneous nature of travel writing as a genre and the extent to which the critical vocabulary of travel writing studies and mobility studies can help us to read it.

Text may qualify as image, and ekphrasis is the most commonly known form of this kind of verbalization of pictures. In the nineteenth century in particular, many travelogues were presented as pictures. Fanny Lewald called her book on her stay in Italy *Italienisches Bilderbuch* (1847, Italian Picture Book), for instance, although there are no pictures at all in the volume. The same is true of Heinrich Heine’s *Reisebilder* (1826–1831, Travel Pictures), which again consisted of text alone. As shown above, the two authors were not the only ones at the time to use the metaphor of pictures to refer to their travel experiences. Of course, these texts are not examples of ekphrasis in the classical sense, i.e. they are not descriptions of paintings or other visual works of art. Rather, the impression of the journey is understood and conveyed as a picture — a precursor to the actual photographs that later travellers would bring home from their journeys. Similarly, Lewald and her contemporaries were aware of the individual aspects of their pictures, of their snapshot-like quality; indeed, they emphasized this facet in the titles of their travelogues. At the same time, the authors often referred to images that were well known to their readers. A travelogue on Italy, for instance, will have referred to certain places, monuments, works of art, and everyday commodities with which readers would have been familiar from earlier reports. In this way, images are also mobile; they migrate from travelogue to travelogue and may be transformed along the journey, as it were. In his contribution on Jean-François Regnard’s pastiche *La Provençale* (The Provençal), written in the late seventeenth century and published in 1731, Daniel Winkler analyses the various intermedial references in the text, which can be understood as a differentiated mobile inventory of images, all expressed in the form of text. *La Provençale* is an example of early modern Barbary Coast literature, which has often been discussed as a subgenre of travel narratives. While much research on this subgenre had previously focused on questions of ‘authenticity’, Winkler takes a different approach when arguing that *La Provençale* is an extremely dense text shaped by a variety of popular cultural and literary traditions.

Actual images in travelogues may be read as paratext, i.e. what Gérard Genette has called an ‘accompagnement’ (Genette 1991: 261) to a literary work, but also the ‘zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*: a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public’ (Genette 1997: 2). Sandra Vlasta offers a comparative analysis of Georg Forster’s *Reise um die Welt* (German 1778–80; *A Voyage Round the World*, 1777) and Karl Philipp Moritz’s *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahr 1782* (1783; *Journeys of a German in England*, 1795) to show that, despite their similar publication dates and readership, paratexts in the form of images in these two accounts have different functions. Whereas Forster uses detailed drawings of everyday objects, musical instruments, and weapons to underscore the fact that he is writing about a scientific expedition, the first edition of Moritz’s account depicts the entrance to the Peak District’s Peak Cavern — an unexpected illustration of a journey to England, which most contemporaries would have associated mainly with London.



Both authors were well aware of the power of the paratext and used it to characterize their reports: in the case of Forster, the voyage and everything connected to it is presented as enlightening, not least for the reader; in Moritz's text, the enlightened subject is central.

Rhian Waller also focuses on the paratextual elements of travelogues, underscoring the importance of book covers in establishing the nature and context of written works. In her contribution, Waller understands book covers as visual social semiotic forms that comprise textual and visual signifiers which may encode meanings beyond the commercial purpose of the book cover. She examines the Penguin edition book covers of Paul Theroux's travel writing through a visual social semiotic lens and identifies the ways in which they display (and thus confirm) unequal power relationships between western travellers and the peoples and cultures they encounter. Thus the images — which, as Waller notes, were most likely chosen not by the author but by the publisher — are at times in opposition to Theroux's texts, which prove to be much more reflective and self-critical than the cover images suggest. Nevertheless, the stereotypical representations on the book covers are appealing to book buyers. This may have to do with the development of the genre: travelogues have long played a role in passing down and developing stereotypes. More recent forms of travelogue have likewise been dominated by cultural stereotypes — about both travellers and travelleses. Accordingly, Anna Karina Sennefelder takes up the topic of cultural stereotypes and their visual realization in her analysis of contemporary cinematic travel documentaries, a genre which has enjoyed increasing popularity in Germany over the past five years. Sennefelder argues that these documentaries are characterized by an almost exclusive focus on the subjective experience of the travelling self. As she points out, 'these crowdfunded and personalized travel documentaries emerged from the prosumer-culture of digital communication and social media, such as the travel vlog, and the influences of the sub-genre's origins are still personalized in their visual aesthetics and discursive patterns' (91). By employing a multimodal analysis, Sennefelder focuses on two highly successful examples of this sub-genre: *Weit (Far, 2017)* and *Reiss aus (Break Free, 2019)*, demonstrating how the films exhibit stereotypical attributions of cultural identity — against the filmmakers' intentions.

In a similar manner, the blog format, which in the past twenty years has become an especially popular means of documenting the travel experiences of non-professionals and professionals alike, offers manifold examples of stereotypical representations of the other, but also of the self. In her blog *The Blonde Abroad*, a woman who introduces herself as 'Kiki, a California native, who left [her] career in corporate finance to become a world traveler', portrays herself as someone who embodies the dominant standards of the beauty industry: young, slim and blonde. Her own styling is presented as a harsh contrast to the people she meets on her travels. In one of her entries on Botswana, for example, she poses in front of luxury lodges dressed in typical 'safari style' outfits, with further images of meerkats and two images of unnamed Khoisan people in traditional clothing representing the wilderness.⁶ There are also clearly plenty of examples where masculinity (as opposed to femininity) is displayed in a similar one-dimensional manner. A blog by the Austrian Joe Pichler provides an example in which a motorcycle serves to underscore the masculinity of the traveller, who reaches locations considered 'out of the way' by ordinary travellers.⁷ Pichler also reports from his adventure trips in the form of

6 <https://theblondeabroad.com/staying-at-jacks-camp-in-botswana/>; c.f. also <https://blondearoundtheworld.com/>.

7 <http://www.josef-pichler.at/>.



live slideshows, a genre that is alive and well in the age of social media, most likely due to the higher degree of ‘authenticity’ that the multi-media genre, which puts the single, still image at the centre, promises its audience. While accounts told in person by the traveller him- or herself still draw audiences, in the last couple of years much storytelling about travels has relocated to social media formats, most notably Instagram.⁸ On this social media platform the image clearly dominates, and the text, often in the form of hashtags, serves to locate the image and to share the emotions that the location evoked in the traveller. Texts that offer anything beyond these ‘coordinates’ (in the geographical and emotional sense) are rare. Blogs, which are usually characterized by a more balanced relation between text and the visual, are therefore unlikely to disappear in the near future, not least because the endless possibilities they offer when it comes to combining text, images, and other graphic elements (background colours, formats, and so on) allow for much more creativity on the part of the author than the rigid formal structures that define social media platforms.

In her contribution, Mirja Riggert focuses on the intermedial reciprocity of visual and verbal elements in travel blogs. She examines the ‘About’ pages of four blogs by female travellers and discusses the practice of self-presentation within travel writing by mapping out different levels of inter- and intramedial tensions, which continuously disrupt the ego-concentration. In the blogs in question, self-presentation occurs both via pictures (portraits) and via the accompanying text. Through narrative disruption, the perspectives on the travellers and their self-presentation is multiplied, and individual experiences of the travellers gain social significance. This makes it easier to include product placements (for instance of cameras) and to insert links. Ultimately, Riggert argues, the breaking of narrative coherence in the ‘About’ pages can be seen as an enhanced performance of the self and serves several commercial purposes.

An analysis of the relation between the text and the visual in travel writing also prompts the question of whether there are topics or themes that are more suitable for writing and others that lend themselves more to visual representation. In a letter, for instance, Georg Forster argued that the letters of the alphabet are hardly ever sufficient to describe our visual impressions (see Vlasta’s contribution to this issue: 28). Such a statement clearly favours the visual over the text; at the same time, per definition, travel writing is primarily a written report about a journey. In fact, until the 1770s, the overseas expeditions organized by European nations and scientific societies were mainly documented in writing (see Rees 2015). Only from the late eighteenth century onwards were visual records used to report the experiences of travellers, as exemplified by James Cook’s second voyage around the world, documented, among others, by Georg Forster’s travelogue (see Vlasta). As the contributions to this issue show, however, the existence of discrepancies between different means of expression is not just a historical problem.

The speed of travel has clearly increased over the course of history; still, with the emergence of the slow travel movement, a reverse trend has also been observed in the past few decades (cf. Ouditt 2019: 229–230). With technological innovations, the speed with which visual impressions can be documented and processed has likewise increased over time, as has the speed with which travel accounts are published: the blog format and social media platforms allow travel

8 Contrary to the early years of Instagram, when only photographs could be uploaded, the platform now features short videos. Nevertheless, the platform is still known primarily as a tool for sharing photographs, and videos remain YouTube’s domain.



and publication to occur almost simultaneously. In this regard, however, a reverse tendency can also be observed: many of those who first publish their travelogues online later also publish a revised version in the form of a book, often a hardcover and/or proper coffee table book (cf. Topping 2019; see also the reviews of recent publications by the Bell Collective and Franz Paul Horn in this special issue).

In ‘On the (Im)possibility of Writing a Travelogue, or Dimensions of Polygraphy in Manuel João Ramos “Ethiopian Travelogue” (2018)’, Birgit Englert discusses the work of the Portuguese anthropologist, essayist, and illustrator Manuel João Ramos, who refuses to take photographs of his travels and instead turns to drawing, taking the time to observe his surroundings and to interact with those whose curiosity his activity invariably provokes. Ramos sees in drawing a less imperialist form of representation, and in sketching a means of dealing with the limitations he experiences when he tries to convey his travel experiences to others in words (whether spoken or written). His sketches thus function not merely as illustrations of the written travelogue but as ‘texts’ in their own right, as Englert argues. She recommends that we consider the text-visual relation in Ramos’s work as a form of ‘internal polygraphy’ insofar as the text and the visual constitute two accounts of a journey that can be read on their own. Further dimensions of polygraphy, a concept that refers to the practice of re-writing accounts of a single journey, are also discussed with regard to Ramos’s book, which was originally published in Portuguese in the year 2000, re-published in a revised version in 2010, and translated into English (and again revised, especially with regard to the graphics) in 2018.

Sketches are also at the core of another genre in which manifold and stylistically highly diverse travel accounts have been published in the past three decades: comics/graphic novels.

Sigrid Thomsen uses the perspective of mobility to analyse how movement and uncertainty are navigated in Sarah Glidden’s autobiographical comic/graphic novel *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*, in which Glidden depicts her travels around Israel, which she undertook as part of a Birthright trip offered to young Jews in the diaspora. Thomsen argues that Glidden depicts two kinds of mobility: first, she portrays her own body, and those of others, travelling to and within Israel. Second, Glidden’s avatar, Sarah, moves from a place of certainty regarding the situation in Israel/Palestine to one of uncertainty, ambiguity, and doubt. In her analysis, Thomsen reveals ‘how the images and the text come together to show this doubled mobility, focusing on the panel structure (including the space of the gutter), the use of water-colours, and specific affordances of the medium of comics such as fantastical elements and playing with size’ (Thomsen: 155).

The political context and questions of representation and authenticity also take centre stage in the contribution by Ana de Almeida, Jan-Hendrik Müller, and Christian Wimplinger. Their article focuses on the coverage of the 1974 peaceful Carnation Revolution in Portugal in the works of German intellectuals. The latter documented their experiences in journals and films, using, among others, the genre of tableau. On the other hand, the analysis brings to the fore the pictures of the revolution provided by these intellectuals and highlights the differences between the 1968 protests and the approaches taken in the actual revolution.

Ultimately, analysis of the relation between text and image in travel writing may also be undertaken by applying mobile methods such as psychogeography and literary mapping. In ‘Journeying the Page’, Tanja Kapp uses a psychogeographical approach to analyse the relation



between text and image in an ephemeral sub-cultural form of writing: the zine. Taking two zines by British creators Emma Charleston and John Molesworth as examples, Kapp examines the ways in which zines use intermediality to convey psychogeographical walking. By considering the combination of words and images in the zine in particular, she shows how the experience of travelling correlates to the experience of reading. Kapp argues that 'the psychogeographical zine thus provides a territory into which the reader sets out to travel, a practice that, in this medium, requires its audience to subjectively complete an abstracted, simplified world of text and images' (Kapp: 171).

Erika Unterpertinger uses the method of literary mapping to visualize geographical information from the South Tyrolean collection of sagas *Tales of the Fanes*. With this contribution, the special issue comes full circle in two ways: first, maps are one of the most widely used (and earliest) visual elements of travelogues. It has been shown that although maps may aim to provide a realistic depiction of a certain space, more often than not they distort reality. They can create spaces just as much as they reflect them. Therefore, both their accuracy and their aim must be critically assessed. Still, they can be very useful: in the case of *Tales of the Fanes*, the text does not contain any illustrations — only various references to actual places and spaces. The method of literary mapping enables us to visualize information (place names, physical and geographical features, movements in space, etc.) in maps, which then helps us to gain more information about a text and reveal hitherto unnoticed details. Thus, text is not alone in being able to describe images, as we saw above in the case of Fanny Lewald and Heinrich Heine; we as researchers can generate pictures from the texts we work with and use the former for a more productive analysis of the latter.

This thematic issue also includes a section with an essay and two reviews. In his essay on August Strindberg and the travelogue of his journey through France in 1886, Holger Helm retraces the Swedish writer's journey. In particular, Helm focuses on the views from the train, which Strindberg at times wrote about, at times sketched, and at times photographed. The visual elements in this travelogue are thus threefold: besides the actual traveller's view of the landscapes he describes in the text, Strindberg tries to convey these vistas by drawing them and by taking pictures of them.

We close the special issue with two reviews by Birgit Englert, one of which is dedicated to a coffee table book by the *Bell Collective*, a group of female travel photographers who began their careers on Instagram and who have now published their photographs in a printed book for the first time. The second review deals with a book by Franz Paul Horn, who combined a travelogue of a bicycle trip with two friends from Vienna to Teheran with the narratives of two refugees who travelled a similar route in the summer of 2015 — albeit in the other direction and under very different circumstances. While the bike trip by three young Austrian men is documented in numerous photographs, which form an important part of their travelogue, only a single picture on the back cover of the book depicts the journey made by the two men from Syria and Afghanistan — a visual reminder of the 'regimes of mobility' at play.

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