

Julia Straub

0 Introduction: Transatlantic North American Studies

1 General Introduction

This *Handbook of Transatlantic North American Studies* is part of De Gruyter's *Handbooks of English and American Studies: Text and Theory* series. It responds to the considerable surge of interest in transatlantic literary and cultural studies that has impacted the discipline of North American Studies for the last twenty years. Like many other approaches that fall within the orbit of what is usually called the 'transnational turn,' transatlantic studies seek to give accounts of literary and cultural developments and phenomena now that 'nation' has become a heavily contested concept, replacing the nation-state with the Atlantic world as a site of cultural production.

Transatlantic studies have provided important new perspectives on both North American and English (whereby is meant both British and Irish, unless specified differently) literature, producing a multitude of publications and research projects exploring periods, aesthetic developments, genres, the works and artistic biographies of individual authors as well as literary culture in a broad sense. Adopting a bifocal perspective, scholars have examined the complex processes of intellectual and material exchange defining the Atlantic world ever since the days of its exploration and their effect on literary writing. Rather than dwelling on comparisons or engaging with the notion of 'influence,' transatlantic literary studies seek to understand North American and English literature as irreducibly linked with each other by virtue of historical and cultural ties and pay special attention to the many refractions and mutual interferences that have characterized both traditions. This has led to a revision of literary history, a rethinking of preconceived ideas of the canon and national literature, a new approach to genres and texts and a reconsideration of the Anglo-American literary market and its manifold processes of production, distribution, reception and criticism.

This handbook combines articles that present some of the crucial concepts, debates and topics in transatlantic literary studies, thereby reflecting on the added benefit of a distinct transatlantic perspective in contradistinction to other related approaches similarly interested in literature as a transnational phenomenon, such as 'comparative (American) studies,' 'transnationalism' or 'post-colonialism.' For example, contributions contained in this volume examine periods in literary and cultural history when transatlantic relations were particularly dense (such as the colonial period), literary movements (such as modernism or romanticism) and individual authors (e.g., Henry James) with strong transatlantic profiles, as well as genres that

have developed across the Atlantic (such as the sentimental novel or the slave narrative). In their chapters, all authors bring together theoretical aspects related to transatlanticism as a critical concept for literary and cultural studies and apply them to their interpretations of literary works, thereby enriching existing definitions of what ‘transatlantic’ actually means, both in theory and practice.

The geographic and linguistic focus of this handbook rests on the Anglophone Atlantic world – from Puritanism to Afropolitan writing – but, as several chapters make clear, the Atlantic, both as a geographical and historical entity as well as a subject of research, is of course much wider in terms of ethnicity, language and cultural identities. Furthermore, while transatlantic criticism should adopt a bifocal perspective and refrain from claiming one vantage point against which comparisons with the Atlantic ‘other’ (i.e., Britain, Europe, Africa) are made, this handbook responds to debates and discourses that have shaped North American studies. However, the contributors were asked to address multi-directionality and processes of circulation (rather than one-way transfers) wherever possible.

2 Transatlantic North American Studies and the ‘Transnational Turn’: Theories and Concepts

This section discusses the position of Transatlantic North American Studies vis-à-vis a variety of transnational approaches. The concept of the ‘nation,’ referring not only to a geo-political entity, but also to something like a national character and identity, has become a methodological impediment for many scholars working in North American studies. Works such as Donald Pease’s edited essay collection *National Identities and Postnational Narratives* (1994) and *The New Americanists* (1992), to name but two examples, heralded a ‘transnational turn’ and gave leverage to a rethinking of North American cultural and literary history across and beyond national boundaries. These crucial interventions produced a flurry of scholarly activity, with many scholars in literary and cultural studies embarking on a re-reading or re-writing of these histories across and beyond the constraints and boundaries of the nation-state, which has traditionally also served as a defining frame for the discipline of American studies and many other academic disciplines. Not dissimilar to the figure of the ‘author,’ the nation may have been declared ‘dead’ within academic disciplines and discourses (see Noble 2002), but remains a lingering presence for many scholars.

As a consequence of these revisionary processes, the critical questioning of pre-defined spatial dimensions within which literary and cultural production have occurred (and which are used for its analysis) and the scrutiny of the labels that have been given to literary texts to mould them into these spaces have become common practice. Political borders and disciplinary boundaries are challenged given the fact that ethnic and linguistic identities and cultural affinities or traditions do not always

correspond to the geographical mapping of a nation. The Atlantic world figures prominently in these debates, not only in literary studies but also in the study of history (see Armitage and Braddick 2002; Bailyn and Denault 2009; Canny and Morgan 2012; Wendt 2014), where, following Immanuel Wallerstein's work, world-systems analysis – which examines history from the vantage point of global and interdisciplinary perspectives rather than the national ones – has had a major impact (Wallerstein 2004). A productive and central concept amidst these transnational debates, Transatlantic North American studies do not operate in isolation. In fact, there are many other approaches that follow similar impulses and are based on similar premises. They oppose the idea that American literature is a self-contained sphere, cut off from aesthetic developments, intellectual discourses and literary practices happening elsewhere, thereby questioning the “analytic adequacy of the sovereign state” (Dimock 2006, 3). As Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor have shown, transatlantic literary studies is a “framework” (2007, 5) which represents an alternative to such “model[s] of complicity, where literary texts are deployed to shore up and enforce a national self-image” (2007, 1). They define transatlantic literary studies as a means of “draw[ing] attention to the ways in which, within the discipline of American Studies, ideas of crossing and connection have helped to rethink the ways that national identity has been formulated” (2007, 4). This handbook investigates the different functions of such a framework in a variety of contexts, elucidating its compatibility and intersections with different theories, genres, methodologies, showcasing its applicability to the reading and discussion of literary texts and films, from the colonial period to the present day.

The various terminologies connected to the ‘transatlantic turn’ do not stand in direct competition with each another, nor do they render each other obsolete. They share many tropes, often raise the same research questions, and sometimes are built upon each other. Relating these approaches (some of which will be delineated below) to each other in a systematic way is a major endeavour which cannot be accomplished in this handbook: many are still being refined or have developed rich traditions of research themselves, others have elicited critical responses, resulting in a dense discursive network worth a handbook of its own. Yet there are nuances and differences among them that call for more reflection on the uses of these different terminologies, which should also clarify the surplus value of transatlantic studies as – yet another – term that circulates in these debates.

Transnationalism is a general term referring to the critical interrogation of the nation-state as a category relevant to the discussion of literary texts (and other artefacts). It stresses the nation's inadequacy to fully represent the diversity of its inhabitants' cultural, linguistic and ethnic identities and the general ineptitude of geo-political borders for reflecting the spatial fluidity that is engendered by this multiplicity. The ‘transnational turn’ (for a brief survey of American studies and transnationalism see e.g., Gross 2000) entailed a revision of the literary canon, promoted awareness of North America's multiculturalism (Kamboureli 1996; Sielke 2014; Klooss and Braun

1995), encouraged the critical scrutiny of borders, citizenship and national identity, revisited aesthetic techniques (Pease 1997), and highlighted the United States' relation with the Americas as well as its global connectedness. The Atlantic world as a subject of research is essentially a product of these transnational developments.

Global Literature and post-colonialism: Like transnationalism, post-colonialism and global approaches cover a wide range of phenomena and come with their own sets of intricate challenges and pitfalls. Post-colonialism has produced a vast field of research and it is impossible to adequately represent it in this introduction (see e.g., King 1996; Boehmer 2005). More specifically, the post-colonial dimension of US-American literature has been analysed by Laurence Buell (1992), Deborah Madsen (1999) and Ruth Mayer (2014); for the Canadian post-colonial situation see e.g., Moss 2003. One obvious complication (and difference with regard to Canada) is that the United States, very quickly after having gained independence from Great Britain, transitioned into being an imperial power itself. Transatlantic literary studies do not adopt a post-colonial position by definition, but many of the phenomena described as transatlantic in this handbook are framed by post-colonial issues and concerns, which makes the work done in this field an essential key to understanding the processes that have shaped the Atlantic world, in terms of its history and also particularly where identity formation is concerned. Similarly, *global approaches* to literature, or concepts such as *cosmopolitanism* or *World Literature* (see Damrosch 2003; Saussy 2006; Appadurai 1996), are in many obvious ways related to transatlantic readings. However, transatlantic studies do not stand in a metonymic relationship to global approaches, i.e., they do not cover an 'Atlantic sector' of the global 'whole.' They promote a heightened awareness of the global interconnectedness of texts that do not 'belong' to a particular place (or time for that matter, see Dimock's (2006) work on 'deep time') and seek to decentre ideals of 'national literatures,' but unlike global approaches, transatlantic approaches evoke a more visible and graspable, albeit fluidly defined spatial character.

Planetary and hemispheric approaches are both concerned with a remapping of those imageries used to spatially conceive of North American studies (see Porter 1994), and have a pronounced interest in defining and conceptualizing spatially the realms where literary and cultural identities are produced (see also Giles 2011). Hemispheric approaches propose a linear and vertical division of the globe into four sections, following the horizontal (equatorial) and vertical hemisphere, parcelling the world up into East and West, North and South (see Levander and Levine 2008; Murphy 2005). They offer a different model, for example, to that of the centre and periphery by dividing the North from the South, thereby rearranging the hierarchies within which certain areas had been placed in the past by putting them on the map again, also in a literal sense. Another approach that questions the territoriality of the nation-state and the domain-specificity of American literature is Dimock's "research program" of the planetary (2007, 5; see also Dimock 2001).

Recently, Reingard Nischik introduced the notion of ‘*Comparative North American Studies*’ in a handbook (2014), which underscores America’s global interconnectedness as well as the ties between the units which together make up ‘North America’ (i.e., the United States, Canada, Mexico) and which are sub-divided into regions themselves. She endorses the notion of a ‘new comparative literature’ based on a broadened understanding of literature as essentially connected with other forms of discourse, e.g., multiculturalism, gender and race (Nischik 2014, 14–15), following a “postcolonial, inner- and international/transnational, interdisciplinary orientation” (Nischik 2014, 15). Nischik’s (re-)introduction of comparative methods into North American studies is owed to significant changes and renewals in comparative literary studies, which have led to an amplification of its subject matter (steering away from the merely literary to cultural studies, see Bachmann-Medick 2014) and an adjustment to recent developments making ‘comparable’ approaches more amenable to the multi-faceted discipline of North American studies as it presents itself today.

Transpacific studies, in analogy to transatlantic literary approaches, shift the focus to the Pacific as a site of cultural production, considering the manifold links that exist between Asia, South-East Asia, Australia, New Zealand and North America (e.g., Huang 2008; Hoskins and Nguyen 2014; Giles 2014). Like transatlantic approaches, transpacific research is interested in the fluctuation and exchanges between countries, cultures and traditions, directing their attention to the Pacific World since colonial times. Kate Flint pointed to the metaphor of the undulating surface of the Atlantic that separates the continents and their literatures as relevant for such ‘maritime’ frameworks, replacing the “tillable, fertile territory of individual nation states with the fluid, mutable, dangerous oceanic” (2009, 324). For her, pursuing a transatlantic approach means “to replace the language of the frontier with that of the oceanic; to substitute for notions of nationhood that depend on ideas of pushing forwards and outwards, of expansion and conquering, a concern with fluidity, transmission, and exchange” (2009, 325). The same applies to the transoceanic, both transatlantic and transoceanic “hav[ing] generated a vocabulary of circulation, flow, movement” (Manning and Taylor 2007, 4). Both approaches share many questions and concerns (see Burnham 2011), yet transpacific literary studies have sought to counterbalance the weight that transatlantic studies as a research paradigm had gained. They respond to the significant political and economic transatlantic bonds since World War II, which may appear and even threaten to overshadow the Pacific Rim as an equally rich site of cultural production. To what extent and in which ways transatlantic and transoceanic approaches are comparable or interrelated is a question that requires further research.

Cultural Mobility is a concept that represents vectoral approaches, ‘mobility’ being a buzzword in today’s world and a prominent field of academic research in literary and cultural studies (see e.g., Berensmeyer et al. 2012), but also in linguistics and geography, for example (see Urry 2007). In his *Manifesto for Cultural Mobility*, Stephen Greenblatt made the following claims for mobility studies: mobility includes

the literal and symbolic movement of peoples, things, images, texts and ideas (Greenblatt 2010, 250); the contact zones where cultural goods are exchanged should attract our attention (2010, 251); individuals can only be mobile to the extent that the conditions and structures in which they live allow them to be (2010, 251). These features of cultural mobility describe also the various processes of circulation that inform transatlantic studies. As Oliver Scheiding and Martin Seidl argued in their transnational anthology of early short narratives where they apply a *wording approach*, the emphasis on circulation replaces tales of origin and emergence. A wording approach entails a rethinking of the existing spatial patterns such as the much-contested model of periphery versus centre (often used in post-colonial studies), replacing it with a model of “iteration rather than origination,” stressing the “pluridirectional flow of texts across different languages, cultures, and nations” (2015, 10) and the processual evolution of literature in clusters, rather than chronologies (2015, 11).

Transarea studies is a term that Ottmar Ette proposes in attempt to develop a “poetics of movement” (2012, 27). Ette places his emphasis on the vectoral forces that have been responsible for the movement of literatures across the centuries, arguing that space only comes into existence and readable qua patterns and figures of movement (2012, 28). To be able to fully comprehend ‘Europe’ or ‘North America’ and the literatures they produced, one has to understand these spaces as essentially dynamic (Ette 2012, 31).

In co-operation with these (among other) transnational and global attempts, transatlantic literary studies have been a productive field of research: there are numerous studies and essay collections that reflect the many purposes and areas for which a transatlantic studies approach has been particularly useful. However, the term ‘transatlantic’ is not unproblematic. Like any other of the abovementioned terms it comes with its own challenges and shortcomings. As Eve Tavor Bannet has pointed out, one can accuse it of being “parochial, linguistically imperialist, and otherwise politically suspect” (2011, 1), partly because among the “broader and less easily generalizable spaces” opened up by, for example, global literature approaches, it seems to re-insert a territorially circumscribable dimension into the discussion – however fluid it may be. Another point of criticism has been correctly identified by Jace Weaver, who states that some historians of Atlantic History have used the “Atlantic” to argue for an “Atlantic exceptionalism,” grounded upon a “predominantly white history with the Atlantic itself as the *mare internum* surrounded by Europe and the Americas” (2014, 4; emphasis in original). This “white Atlantic” (Weaver 2014, 4) has been diversified significantly by literary and cultural critics, most notably by Paul Gilroy, whose seminal study on the African diaspora in the Atlantic world established the rhizomic concept of the Black Atlantic as a prominent presence in the field, and Weaver’s own recent *The Red Atlantic*, where the Atlantic is seen as “that multilane highway that American indigenes travelled back and forth in surprising numbers” (Weaver 2014, 15). Both studies are correctives to accounts of the Atlantic world that downplay or marginalize its ethnic heterogeneity, ignoring the manifold encounters and exchanges between

the white settlers and other groups, in terms of trade, art and intellectual life. This handbook seeks to represent the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Atlantic world by including a separate section on the Black Atlantic and its afterlife, as well as chapters on Native US American and Canadian writing. Since its focus rests on the Anglophone parts of the Atlantic, its Ibero-American dimension, for example, remains a conspicuous gap (see Ortega 2006). Similarly, the place of Francophone literatures within a Transatlantic North American Studies framework is not explicitly discussed and needs to be further assessed (see Gilbert and Santoro 2010). The omission of these aspects in this handbook is, however, not meant to suggest that these areas are in any way marginal to the discipline of North American studies.

So what is the merit of Transatlantic North American Studies? Rather than only stressing the historical and cultural bonds that have tied Europe and North America together for centuries or presenting comparative interpretations, transatlantic studies focus on the processuality of cultural production, the modes of circulation and exchange that enabled cultures to develop, the materialities of Atlantic culture as well as different facets and forms of mobility. This becomes particularly evident in the case of early American studies, on which it is worth to dwell a bit longer. The Atlantic world is one of the crucial sites for Early American studies given that transatlantic “roots and routes,” to use Paul Gilroy’s expression (1997, 133), i.e., various forms of exchange, commerce and communication, were part and parcel of colonial and post-colonial cultures (↗19 The Black Atlantic). As Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning put it, “there are compelling historical, methodological, and literary reasons for keeping a spotlight on Anglophone transatlantic literary exchange during the period [i.e., 1660–1830]” (Bannet and Manning 2012, 1), despite the critical objections to the term delineated above. That these reasons are “compelling” is reflected by the sheer mass of scholarship on transatlantic matters. The recent interventions by scholars such as Paul Giles, Susan Manning and Eve Tavor Bannet have paved the way for many other scholars by establishing transatlantic literary studies as a serious mode of inquiry rather than a descriptive term (see Buschendorf and Franke 2007, Hutchings and Wright 2011, Bannet and Manning 2012). Transatlantic approaches have enabled a systematic retelling of American literary history by challenging the tenets of American exceptionalism (following e.g., F. O. Matthiessen’s influential work (1941)) and diversifying accounts of what constituted ‘American literature.’ In fact, one could go as far as to argue that transatlantic approaches challenge exceptionalisms as such, in the plural form, by parsing out the manifold entwinements, symbioses and interdependencies that have always defined the Atlantic world. Recent research in the field has produced studies on topics as diverse as anglophilia (e.g., Tamarkin 2008), Englishness in the colonial diaspora (e.g., Tennenhouse 2007), travel writing (Jarvis 2012; Clark 2013), the American Revolution (e.g., Verhoeven 2002), race (Doyle 2008; Manganelli 2012), salon culture (Shields 1997), letter writing (Bannet 2005), romanticism (e.g., Gravil 2000; Hutchings 2009; Greenham 2012), imitation and appropriations (e.g., Granqvist 1995), Native Americans and Native American culture (Vaughan

2006; Fulford 2009; Adams-Campbell 2015), publishing practices and reading (e.g., Bannet 2011), women's writing (e.g., Macpherson 2008), the world of theatre (Dillon 2014), literary characters (Manning 2013) and short narratives (Scheidung and Seidl 2015). Very recently, Edinburgh University Press published a collection of essays on *Teaching Transatlanticism*, reflecting the shaping force of transatlantic approaches on curricula and the university discipline of American studies (Hughes and Robbins 2015). By investigating modes of production and reception as well as the medial and technological conditions that enabled the circulation of texts; by factoring in the fluctuation and instability of such processes of exchange; by interrogating the premises of 'literature' and textuality (e.g., ideas of authorship, the work of literature and literary originality, the notion of genre) Transatlantic North American Studies do more than only insist on the transnational dimension of Anglophone literatures of the Atlantic world, but adds new perspectives to literature as a practice, a medium and an institution with its own material and aesthetic rules and conditions.

Another achievement of Transatlantic North American Studies, in co-operation with book studies, canon theory and the sociology of literature, has been the modification of chronologies that had cemented the ideal of a national literature into a stable and definable entity (see Straub 2011 and 2012). For many scholars, the discipline of 'American Literature' commenced in the latter part of the nineteenth century, 1870 having been suggested as the date when US American literature was in place as an institution, when "Americans produce[d] and market[ed] hundreds of thousands of American books each year, [and] authors, critics, readers, and publishers had established a national 'canon,' a body of important literary works and a constellation of 'great' authors" (Williams 2002, 165; on literary historiography in the US see also Delbanco 2006). Seen from a transatlantic perspective, after all a "position of reflection and estrangement" (Giles 2002, 2), American literature had come a long way by then, and the transatlantic bonds of course persisted far beyond such birth dates of American Literature, modernism as a deeply international movement being around the corner (↗5 Transatlantic Modernisms). British and North American writing upheld a "primary and multi-faceted relationship [which] evolved and persisted until after the American Civil War and arguably until the end of World War I in 1918 [...]" (Bannet and Manning 2012, 3). Like other transnational approaches, transatlantic literary studies refrain from drawing hard demarcation lines, also with regard to chronologies.

Together with many more titles that could not be listed here, these works help to establish what Paul Giles called a "counterpoint" to traditional national narratives (2006, 10), by pitching a "dialectic between local and global, attraction and repulsion" (6), rather than telling tales of American exceptionalism. A transatlantic approach towards both British and American literature, its history as well as its self-definition as body of writing and discipline, takes into account the multiple reflections and distortions that arise once the mutuality of interests and investments, the shared dimension of experiences, preferences and approaches are embraced positively and not in terms of an exception.

3 The Structure of this Handbook

The chapters included in this handbook represent topics and issues that have been framed by a transatlantic approach in the recent past. They are meant to invite comparison and foster dialogue between alternative transnational terminologies and concepts sketched above and to improve the critical understanding of ‘transatlantic’ as a meaningful category, useful for the analysis and interpretation of literary texts and other artefacts, contexts and media.

The contributors place different emphases on the term ‘transatlantic’ and show the different uses to which the term can be put. They substantiate ‘transatlantic’ as a critical term not only by opening up a multitude of different contexts (e.g., historical, aesthetic, theoretical), but also by applying it to their reading of selected texts. In this process they display a vast gamut of different kinds of interactions, “transnational interferences and reversals” (Giles 2002, 2), that have taken place within the Anglophone world, from colonial times to the present day: forms of intertextuality and intermediality (e.g., appropriation, adaptation), reception processes (e.g., authors’ fame and afterlives), legislation (e.g., copyright), the virtualization of the transatlantic other and the cultural imaginary, mirroring and othering, forms of mobility (e.g., travel writing, dislocation and diaspora, book trade, personal biographies), genre formation (e.g., the slave narrative, the sentimental novel), the literary marketplace and economical aspects of literature, technology, media and communication systems.

This handbook consists of eight sections: I. “Literary Movements and Key Periods in a Transatlantic Perspective,” II. “The Transatlantic Author,” III. “Transatlantic Aesthetics: Genres, Styles, Debates,” IV. “Transatlantic Media Cultures,” V. “Writing the Black Atlantic,” VI. “Transatlantic Afterlives: Reception Histories,” VII. “Transatlantic Canadian Studies,” VIII. “Widening the Transatlantic Sphere.” Given the considerable amount of existing research, the number of sections and the chapters to fill them could easily have been increased. For example, it is obvious that there are many more authors that could be labelled ‘transatlantic’ than Henry James, Elizabeth Stoddard, Margaret Fuller and T. S. Eliot and that would deserve an entry in this section. As it is, these three authors were singled out because their personal biographies as well as literary practice give evidence of the many different forms in which lives, friendships and relationships were conducted across the Atlantic Europe coining their (non-)fictional writing as well as their imagination. Similarly, there are many more (sub-)genres and forms of writing which developed against a transatlantic backdrop (e.g., melodrama or Cold War narratives) and which are not represented by a separate chapter for reasons of scope.

The first section of this book, *Literary Movements and Key Periods in a Transatlantic Perspective*, aims to selectively represent those periods and formations in literary history that have traditionally been recognized as deeply imbued by transatlantic exchange and circulation. The section begins with the colonial period (Spahr) and its manifold links between Britain and North America, ending with a chapter on fiction

and poetry after 9/11 (Klößner). It opens a wide temporal bracket and aims to investigate points of culmination. Despite following a chronological order, this section does not seek to retell literary history from a transatlantic perspective, but sheds light on distinct moments in time that allow particularly insightful glimpses into transatlantic studies as a framework for analysis. It contains a chapter on the literary market in eighteenth-century Britain and its relevance for the situation in colonial and post-colonial North America (Roxburgh and Auguscik) which lays bare the similarities of the literary industries in both countries, but also meaningful differences. Diane Piccitto explores the transatlantic links that connected authors such as Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson, arguing that various forms of transatlanticism had an impact on the Transcendentalists' notion of individuality and nature. Gert Buelens's chapter engages with two rich, and contested, terms in literary history, i.e., realism and naturalism. By focusing on the topic of financial capitalism, Gert Buelens shows how transatlantic novels of the later nineteenth century reflect major social and economic changes that affected the Atlantic world. The international dimension of modernism has been covered by several scholars (Klepper and Schöpp 2001; Halliwell 2006; Katz 2007). Matthew Eatough's contribution sums up the important backgrounds and intellectual as well as aesthetic contexts, opening 'transatlantic modernisms' up to a conversation with post-colonial, non-Western discourses on modernity.

The second section is entitled *The Transatlantic Author*. While the idea of the author as a source of meaning and originality has been under attack for some time now, North American authors' lives have in many instances been defined by transatlantic travels, yearnings and projections, and it is worth taking this dimension into account. Since colonial times, the authors of North American literary works travelled both physically and emotionally, developed their own 'America' or 'Europe' in their published and private writings and engaged with the 'other' literary traditions. It is not the aim of these chapters to propose a biographical reading of the authors included Henry James (Winnett), Elizabeth Stoddard (Lillge), Margaret Fuller (Cole) and T. S. Eliot (Leypoldt), but to trace the transatlantic pathways of intertextuality, letter writing, friendly networks and travel reports that enabled the production and distribution of literature as well as the intellectual engagement with the Atlantic world. While the time is long over when authors were claimed as 'property' belonging to a particular nation exclusively, a transatlantic approach to these authors conspicuously jettisons any such understanding by bringing to the fore the many interdependencies as well as elective affinities that tied these North American writers to Europe.

The third section is called *Transatlantic Aesthetics: Genres, Styles, Debates* and investigates the transnational circulation of certain modes of expression, be it sentimentality or 'taste' (Schweighauser), the Gothic (Soltysik Monnet), or forms of writing and publishing like the short story (Scheiding) or travel writing (Clark). Each of the chapters exemplifies the mobility of 'genres,' a term often shunned for its implications of formal rigidity, and the processual making of categories – qua transatlantic discourse and patterns of exchange – that scholars and students use to make sense of

literary texts. Debates about what constitutes ‘the aesthetic’ in the eighteenth century travelled as much as aesthetic features, modes of expression, or figures of the popular imagination, giving interesting insights into what distinguishes popular from high culture in the process. This chapter also shows how persistent certain transatlantic exchanges remain (e.g., the genre of the zombie film as a continuation of the Gothic) and how much more traditional fields of research such as the eighteenth-century novel, the short story (and the more recent phenomenon of microfiction), or travel reports yield once seen through a transatlantic prism.

Transatlantic Media Cultures is the heading of the fourth section. Transatlantic studies have contributed towards a reevaluation of ‘the archive,’ given several interesting intersections with book and media history, periodicals studies and the improved accessibility of many little known resources thanks to digitisation. ‘Archive’ here means the literary and cultural repertoire of the Atlantic world since the early modern period that has survived materially, but that has found its way into official narratives of literary history only selectively (or not at all) and whose presence in the canon(s) is only partial or limited. Including texts of unknown origin, translations, anonymous writing, reprints, fragments, ephemeral print products, texts (as well as images, illustrations, sheet music) by female or ethnic authors, censored or in any other way unclassifiable textual material, the archive offers a plenitude of alternative or enriched histories of North American literature and mirrors emerging epistemologies by virtue of its dynamics of structuring – but the archive also contains meaningful means or omissions. Forms of literature that for a long time had been dismissed as aberrations, make-do solutions, clumsy forms of literary amateurism – examples would be the reprinting of texts, hack writing, manuscript circulation – now enter the stage and become important elements in the history of American literature, introducing new possibilities for retelling it. Two recent examples are Meredith McGill’s *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834–1853* from 2003 and Jared Gardner’s *The Rise and Fall of Early American Magazine Culture* from 2012. In their own, different ways these studies reconfigure our understanding of the transatlantic social phenomenon of literature: McGill by throwing light on the culture of reprint, as she terms it, that shaped American literature in the nineteenth century (↗22 The Transatlantic Publishing Industry), and Gardner by sketching the potential of magazine culture as an alternative to the tradition of the novel usually associated with the eighteenth century, in Britain as well as in the United States. The chapters included in this section deal with transatlantic communication media such as the telegraph – a new medium in the nineteenth century – and their reflection in contemporary poetry (Hanlon). Tim Lanzendörfer explores both early American, i.e., colonial, print culture as well as nineteenth-century periodicals in two chapters. Lukas Etter’s chapter looks at text/image relationships from a transatlantic perspective by analysing composite media such as comics and graphic novels and their political implication in Cold War discourse and transnationalist debates. These chapters reflect the importance of transatlantic ties for various phenomena related to popular culture and raise aware-

ness of the medial conditions on which 'literature' and other forms of cultural expression depended.

The fifth section, *Writing the Black Atlantic*, aims to represent the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Atlantic world by revisiting Paul Gilroy's concept. Alasdair Pettinger's chapter frames the concept for this entire section by revisiting its history and critical reception, before proceeding to a speculative reading of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. Helen Thomas's contribution gives a survey of the slave narrative as a transatlantic genre. Finally, Betiel Wasihun explores the idea of Afropolitan writing, a term recently coined by the Ghanaian-American writer and photographer Taiye Selasi to discuss books written by a generation of younger cosmopolites with African roots, and probes its usefulness for a better understanding of present-day African writing.

The sixth section covers *Transatlantic Afterlives: Reception Histories* in a broad sense. The afterlives of authors, i.e., their critical reception, the material transmission of texts, the circulation of texts far beyond their demise, and the concomitant reception processes and phenomena like fandom or stardom play a role in this. Annika Bautz gives a book studies perspectives on the transatlantic book trade in the nineteenth century, tracing the commercial ties that connected the US American and British book industry in the nineteenth century, based on the success of Sir Walter Scott, Jane Austen and Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Alexandra Portmann engages with Stephen Greenblatt's notion of cultural mobility, in order to investigate the transatlantic Shakespeare. The transatlantic Shakespeare is a phenomenon which goes far beyond processes of literary reception, and pertains to performance history, festival culture and processes of canonization. Ursula Kluwick's chapter called "Dickens in America – America in Dickens" engages with both real and imagined new worlds. Dickens's travels in the United States, as a celebrated author, are well documented, yet he also drew mental images of 'America' in his works, inviting intriguing perspectives on the real versus the virtual transatlantic 'other.'

The seventh section is dedicated to *Transatlantic Canadian Studies*. Martin Kuester explores the history and current state of Canadian studies in Europe, presenting important developments and the role of (academic) institutions. He brings to the debate a distinct, little-explored aspect of transatlantic mobility: the transatlantic scholarly discourse that lies at the heart of North American, and Canadian Studies, in particular. Maria Löschnigg turns to the Canadian short story as one of the prime genres of Canadian literature, discussing short stories by major writers such as Mavis Gallant, Alice Munro, John Metcalf and Margaret Atwood. Hanne Birk and Marion Gymnich analyse the impact of multiculturalism on Canadian fiction and the place of transatlantic studies in these discussions. They consider the works of authors belonging to a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and establish a typology of transcultural Canadian writing. Nicole Perry follows up the enduring fascination with indigenous culture in Europe, and particularly the German-speaking part, from Karl May to the present day, rendering obvious how strongly today's constructions of the Native Canadian are still affected by legacies from the past.

Section eight, *Widening the Transatlantic Sphere*, picks up from where section V (on the Black Atlantic) ended – with an emphasis on the ethnic and cultural diversity of the English-speaking Atlantic world. The idea of ‘widening’ here means a geographical expansion, or more specifically awareness of those sites of cultural production in the Atlantic world that are easily subsumed under the notion of ‘Anglophone,’ but require particular attention. Avshalom Guissin and Tara Stubbs critically engage with the notion of ‘Irish-American’ literature by tracing the transformation of the term across time, its impact on identity formation and the complex mirroring of America and Ireland in literature. Kathryn Artuso expands this focus on the Irish diaspora by exploring strategies of defamiliarization in the work of a Caribbean writer of Irish descent, Kate McCafferty. Jane Judge examines the influence of Scottish Enlightenment thought and writing on American intellectual discourse in the later eighteenth century, emphasizing the mutuality of interest taken in the Atlantic ‘other’ at a time of historical and political change.

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The "transatlantic literary study" was proposed in a global context in which the American Exceptionalism and nationalism-oriented "American Studies" has come under scrutiny when homogeneity and singularity increasingly give way to transnational spaces of relation and hybridity. Sticking to a transnationalist insistence that understanding of the United States can only take place in the context of a wider hemispheric or pan-American study, Transatlantic Literary Studies is the sub-field that concerns itself explicitly with transatlantic texts and comparisons. It advocates dia Introduction: what is transatlantic literary studies? (pp. 1-14). Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor. "American Studies"™ was an indirect product of the post-Second World War attempt to stabilise and propagate "American values"™ in a world which had proved catastrophically volatile. The project of transatlantic studies has the potential to pry loose the tenacious grip of American exceptionalism by mapping the Atlantic as a space of multiple crossings and cultural exchanges. More than a geographic site, the Atlantic as "the Great Divide"™ offers a conceptual framework that overrides the boundaries of the nation as the primary unit of knowledge.