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UNIVERSITÉ DE PAU ET DES PAYS DE L'ADOUR
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THE TRAVELLER'S BODY IN THE LITERATURE, CIVILIZATION AND ARTS OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

This conference follows on from the research work regarding the body – the face, the reader's body, the artist's body – and is among the topics addressed by one of the teams of the ALTER laboratory at Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. These topics center around the representations of the individual and his/her relationship with the world as he or she moves and migrates. We suggest exploring the specific dimension of the chosen and accepted journey, but also movement as embodiment. The traveller's body has already been the subject of several academic studies, among others a *Viatica* issue and the conference entitled "Body in motion, travelling bodies: circulations du corps dans la littérature anglophone". Our purpose is to lay the emphasis on the physicality of travelling and its effects. Participants will be expected to focus their attention on three main lines of research:

- First of all, the material conditions of the journey create an intimate link with the body, according to several factors and circumstances such as the means of transport and travelling. These conditions are closely related with usually intermediate places that (dis)locate the body in an in-between space; railway stations and airports, concourses, harbours, hotels and inns are as many migratory and transitional spaces that result in particular postures. The traveller brings along accessories essential to his or her adventures (maps, compasses, spyglasses), wears specific travel attire and carries luggage: these objects are as many appendages or extensions of his or her body. And these very elements are often clues to his or her identity as a travelling body.
- Beyond these material aspects, the relationship of the traveller's body with its environment creates sensations or perceptions that reveal the force of this embodiment. This relationship is evidenced by feelings of pleasure and displeasure, caused by effort, fatigue, physical discomfort, and disturbed biological rhythms. It is also founded on the interactions with the landscape and architecture emerging in the background. It oscillates between contemplation and indifference, generating communion or even

rapture, or on the contrary repulsion or even a feeling of being crushed. To the observer, the traveller's body thus seems to be turned towards the scenery and the horizon, (im)mobilized in waiting, anticipating, or projecting itself in the distance. Conversely, the observer's eyes can be disoriented at the sight of a traveller who remains inward-looking, having his or her back turned, immersed in reading a book or writing a diary, drawing or painting the scenes, engrossed in the activity of eating, or simply asleep.

- These tribulations inevitably alter the body and its boundaries, leading it to a confrontation with difference and otherness. In spite of this, do they generate some reconfiguration, reconstruction, or even metamorphosis, or are they just sources of exhaustion and fragmentation? To what extent do these movements trigger a new positioning of the body itself? Praised for its initiatory and epiphanic effects, travel fosters the creation of new ways of feeling and being in the world. Further, in its phenomenological, epistemological, and ontological dimensions, travel comes to shape the modalities of artistic, cultural, and literary representation. Is it therefore possible to consider that the formal qualities of the work itself are moulded by the bodily alterations produced by travel? What are the marks, traces and prints left by the traveller's body in the world, in the text or in the picture?

KEY-WORDS: traveller and travellee – corporeality – physical body – location – landscape – scenery – bodyscape – position – posture – accessories – clothes – perception – sensations – mediation – description – movement – metamorphosis – reconstruction – awakening – liberation – therapy – communion – enjoyment – oppression – alienation – fragmentation – incompleteness – disembodiment – dissolution – erasure

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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FURTHER READING

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