

Destination(s) – the thirteenth international conference on Anglo-American Literary Studies, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Montenegro, Faculty of Philology, Tivat, Montenegro, September 8–9, 2017

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In the era of migrations, displacement and countless perilous journeys undertaken by refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants travelling the notorious Balkan route, the organizers' idea to choose the topic of destination(s) for the annual literary conference of the Department of English Language and Literature of the Faculty of Philology in Nikšić seemed highly proper and fitting. The plurality of the meaning of the conference topic drew 30-odd participants from Glasgow, Mostar, Abu Dhabi, Genoa, Dublin, Osijek, Ankara, Tetovo, Ural, Izmir, Seoul, Podgorica, Prešov, Belgrade, Lille, California, Tirana and Nikšić to a small Montenegrin coastal town of Tivat, only a fifteen-minute-ride away from the international airport. The venue of the conference was a modernly designed, spacious and technology-equipped conference hall of the Tivat City Hall. This year's symposium was supported by the U.S. Embassy in Montenegro and the University of Montenegro.

The conference opened with the keynote lecture on "Scottish literature and the Arts, National and International" delivered by Professor Alan Riah, University of Glasgow, Scotland. Focusing on the distinctive themes and characteristics that arise from the Scottish (political) history and geographic, cultural and linguistic particularities, the distinguished guest contended that there were qualities intrinsic solely to Scottish literature and arts.

During the first day of the conference, researchers presented papers on Joseph Conrad's, D.H. Lawrence's, Gertrude Bell's, E. Hemingway's, S. Beckett's, T. Stoppard's, P. Roth's, P.K. Dick's destinations along with the talks on the British poetry of railways, Croatian destinations for literature lovers, "Homing in" in Native American fiction. Most of the papers were insightful, some were inspiring, and others analytical, but all of them made us altogether forget the torrential and gloomy day outside the conference hall – entirely unexpected in the Mediterranean in early September.

The second (and the last) conference day opened with a keynote lecture on "Destinations: European Paths to Democracy and Deceptions of Anti Americanism" delivered by Professor Nikola Samardžić of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. The audience eagerly listened to and even participated in his discourse on the prospects of democracy and possible challenges awaiting the liberal consensus in the contemporary European anti-Americanism. The discussion afterwards extended during the coffee-break. The plenary talk was followed with the presentations on Paul Yoon's *Snow Hunters*, Harper Lee's and W. Faulkner's depictions of American south, destinations

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of/in the multiculturalism, the translation of culture-specific items, Shakespeare's reception in Italy, Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* and Caryl Phillips' *The Final Passage*, child migration in the Americas, destinations in autobiographical writing, as well as in women writers' memoirs, and the exilic experience described in *You don't have to live here* by Nataša Radojčić.

The last keynote lecture "Navigating Home" was delivered by Professor Allison Hedge Coke of the University of California Riverside. She presented perspectives in homing and place as defined by belonging, borders, and the burden of need in the literature of Native Americans where writers often have a personal story to tell and share.

Since two of the plenary speakers are published poets in addition to their scholarly careers, the conference ended with a poetry reading session when the participants had a delightful opportunity to listen to two contemporary poets, one Native American, the other Scottish, who read their poems in turns. A real cherry on top! In the last fifteen years, the two charming colleagues organizing this conference – Marija Knežević and Aleksandra Nikčević-Batričević – have perfected the art of conferencing to the level that each annual event can be defined as a master class, but they carry on this academic work with the same fervor and warmth as when they organized their very first conference in snow-bound Nikšić in December 2005.

The value of the conference was two-fold. As always, it created a new network of scholars and researchers who cross language and literature barriers to explore broadly the phenomena of transition, migration, travelling, (reaching) the destination. Secondly, it posed and tried to answer the important questions of how literature, culture, language and politics could affect various ideas of transfer and the ability to arrive at the desired destination (goal). The intellectual vigor, stimulating readings, exchange of different points of view and cross-European-American-Asian reach of the conference can only attest to its topical contemporaneity.