



**Crossing the Atlantic: Travel and Travel Writing
in Modern Times (Walter Prescott Webb
Memorial Lectures, published for the University of
Texas at)**

Thomas Adam

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“ . . . travel as an exploration of ‘the other’ which becomes an exploration of the self . . . a confirmation of identity.”—from the Introduction, by Frank Trommler

In an age when travel was more difficult but leisure was more available, those who journeyed across the Atlantic from the Old World to America or back created a wonderful literature about the divergent cultures and the fertile interactions among them. In travel diaries, journals, novels, journalistic reports, and guide books, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writers recorded impressions and ruminations that not only offer opportunities for comparison and contrast but also shed light on the processes of modernization and the future that would emerge on both sides of the Atlantic. This latest offering from the important Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures series explores themes like urbanization, modernization, education, gender, Jewish identity, nationalism and internationalism, political and cultural values, and the experience of travel itself. Volume editors Thomas Adam and Nils Roemer have assembled a collection of varied studies that permit enlightened reflection on the ways in which travelers from the New and Old Worlds have observed, documented, understood, and negotiated their similarities and differences. The freshness and variety of the previously little-heard voices documented in *Crossing the Atlantic* will serve as an important reminder that an attentive interaction with “foreignness” has been and will continue to be one of the best paths to a more enlightened engagement with the familiar.

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