

# CALL FOR PAPERS

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## Gratitude in Transatlantic Relations and Diplomacy

*This online symposium seeks to bring together new approaches to international studies - affect, material culture, public diplomacy - to examine the significance of gratitude in the history of transatlantic relations. At this stage, we refer specifically to relations in the Northern Atlantic. The symposium aims to build collaborative networks and to publish a collection of articles in a peer-reviewed journal. Submit proposals to [GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com](mailto:GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com).*

### Topic description

Expressions of gratitude have a long tradition in the development of transatlantic ties between Europe and North America. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Americans have repeatedly expressed gratitude for French aid in the American Revolution through celebrations of Lafayette. More recently, Dutch citizens adopted the graves of American soldiers buried on Dutch soil in gratitude for the American sacrifices during the Second World War. Conversely, when members of the Trump administration described the European NATO countries as 'ungrateful allies', we were reminded that the (perceived) *absence* of gratitude between nations can highlight and even accelerate political tensions.

What is the function of gratitude in transatlantic relations? When, where, and how has it been expressed and who was involved? Have gestures of gratitude evolved over time? Reversely, has the *absence* of gratitude had an impact on transatlantic ties?

By identifying the presence and significance of gratitude in the long history of transatlantic relations, we hope to offer new perspectives on US-European relations and to place, amongst other things, ordinary civilians, women, children, emotions, and material culture more firmly into the history of international relations. Following recent trends in diplomatic history, we do not mean to limit our understanding to the staged ceremonies of formal diplomatic exchange but rather urge participants to adopt a broad and inclusive exploration of the diplomatic process. This includes the roles of communities and private citizens in the development of transatlantic relations, and integrates insights from a variety of disciplines, not least cultural and social studies. Thus, we hope to develop case studies that consider gratitude in broader transatlantic cultural, political, economic, and diplomatic contexts.

### Questions

Questions that we wish to consider include (but are not limited to):

- What is the role of emotions in international and/or transnational relations? How are affective communities established and maintained?
- What roles do performances, rituals, or sites of memory play in cultivating transatlantic relations? What is the role of images and music?
- What roles do private actors play in the international exchange of gifts? How are official and unofficial (private) expressions of gratitude perceived and received across national boundaries?
- What are the relationships between expressions of gratitude and relations of power?
- In what ways is gratitude related to objects, emotions to material culture?

### **Online Meeting Format**

One of the great benefits of conferences and symposia is to meet new people and expand networks. Unfortunately, we live in a time when opportunities to travel and meet have been greatly reduced. Therefore, we have chosen to adopt an innovative format for this symposium that is geared toward collaborative publication as well as virtual network activities.

Symposium activities which would normally take place in one day will be stretched out over a series of online activities in the period January to June, 2021. The organizers will host an initial online welcome in January 2021 and, starting in March, will hold monthly panels which combine pre-recorded videos from speakers and live panel Q&A sessions attended by speakers, chair, and participants. A final online gathering will take place in June to allow participants to draw broader connections and conclusions.

Throughout this process, participants will also be able to share abstracts, ideas, and literature on a non-public project webpage.

### **Publication Project**

Following the symposium, a select number of participants will be invited to rework their presentations for publication in a special issue of an international, peer reviewed journal, under the general editorship of the conference organizers.

### **Submit a proposal**

Please send a 300 word paper proposal and a brief bio description to [GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com](mailto:GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com) by **15 October 2020**.

We will notify candidates about the acceptance of their proposal by 15 November 2020.

Participants will submit a full draft of their paper and present their work at an online symposium in June. After the symposium, there will be time to rework the draft for submission to a journal. Publication is subject to the outcome of the peer-review process.

### **Organizers**

For questions or expressions of interest, please contact:

- Dr. Albertine Bloemendal, Radboud University Nijmegen  
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[L.Broch@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:L.Broch@westminster.ac.uk)
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[J.vandenBerk@let.ru.nl](mailto:J.vandenBerk@let.ru.nl)

### **Social Media**

#TransatlanticGratitude

**Deadline:**  
15 October 2020

**Submit to:**  
[GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com](mailto:GratitudeTransatlantic2021@gmail.com)

**Organizers:**  
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