

Theodore Roosevelt: Global American
May 24-26
Roosevelt Institute for American Studies
Middelburg, The Netherlands



Theodore Roosevelt was one of the most internationally oriented presidents in U.S. history. He travelled extensively, enjoyed a large network of friends abroad, and maintained a close familiarity with global developments. International reform projects, the state of conservation and resource development, and the potential for an international security architecture ranged highly among his interests.

But while Roosevelt was keenly aware of global developments and the international context in which the United States operated, he was also an ardent nationalist and imperialist. He rejected cosmopolitanism as ‘unpatriotic’ and racialized understandings of international relations shaped his global outlooks. For TR, the ‘Global’ served both as stage for the globalization of U.S. interests and simultaneously as inspiration for progressive political, social, economic, and environmental reforms.

In addition, Roosevelt also frequently served audiences at home and abroad as focal point and personification for their perceptions, interrogations, and evaluations of the United States in the world. His global outreach fascinated or repelled national and international audiences alike. It encouraged Americans to critically engage with the state of global affairs while it simultaneously underwrote many international assessments of the United States as Roosevelt came to epitomize the ever increasing role of the United States in world affairs. In this process of personification and conflation, TR was often re-defined and appropriated by international audiences to serve their specific interests in and understandings of the United States.

This workshop will:

- a) Explore the importance of global outlooks and perspectives to Theodore Roosevelt
- b) Evaluate how TR’s ‘world-making’ influenced contemporary discussions of globalism and globalization(s) in the United States
- c) Expand the spatial lens of international perceptions of TR beyond the standard transatlantic framework by including voices and perspectives on Roosevelt from the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific World.
- d) Engage the life and times of Theodore Roosevelt as a conceptual framework to highlight the entangled and embedded character of the Progressive Era in the global scope of reform to further explore how global history approaches can serve as useful analytical lenses for the writing of U.S. history.

The workshop makes distinct contributions to the internationalization of TR scholarship, the historiography of the Progressive Era, and the writing of global history. It emphasizes the importance of global imaginaries and their social construction to Roosevelt, the United States, and international audience responses to TR and his legacy in a variety of world regions. It also re-affirms the interpretative power of embedding the U.S. experience in histories of global reform and by underlining the great variety of entanglements, transfers, and appropriations to counter exceptionalist narratives. Finally, the workshop also affords an opportunity to probe the utility of actor-centered/biographical approaches to the writing of global history.

We welcome contributions which explore a) the importance of global outlooks and perspectives for Theodore Roosevelt, b) the impact of TR on the global imaginary in the United States, and c) global perceptions, rejections, appropriations, and memories of Theodore Roosevelt and their intersection with perspectives on the role of the United States in the world.

Potential topics include but are not limited to:

- The Global in TR's socialization and intellectual/political development;
- The origins, contours, and consequences of TR's perspectives global political-legal, social, and economic orders;
- The tensions between globalism and nationalism in TR's 'world-making';
- Race, class, and gender in TR's global outlooks and perceptions;
- Formats and outlets of TR's globalism (i.e. cartography, travelogues/history, images, travels, fairs and expositions);
- TR and the geopolitical and geostrategic imagination;
- Contemporary U.S. perceptions and discussions of TR's globalism;
- U.S. memories and commemoration of TR's global outlooks;
- TR's interpretation of globalization(s) and its driving forces, contours, and repercussions for the United States;
- Connection/dis-connection and integration/fracture in TR's global outlooks;
- TR's views on infrastructure, technology, global resources, and global conservation;
- Perceptions of TR in the Americas, Africa, Asia, the Pacific World, and Europe during his lifetime;
- TR's racism, imperialism, and nationalism in contemporary international assessments receptions and responses;
- TR as a lens of exploring international perceptions of the rise of the U.S. to world power;
- The role of TR in international perceptions of and engagement with Progressive Era America and its contradictions;
- The utility of political biographies and actor-centric approaches to write global histories of the United States

If you are interested in presenting your research at the workshop, please send a **CV and 300-word proposal** to info@roosevelt.nl. The deadline is **January 31, 2023**. A selection of papers will be considered for publication after the conference.

We plan to hold the workshop in person at the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies in Middelburg, The Netherlands. A hybrid option for remote participation will also be provided. Accommodation will be covered for presenters and a small travel grant program will be available to facilitate the participation of PhD researchers and early career, non-tenured scholars.

The Roosevelt Institute for American Studies is a research institute with a strategic cooperation partnership with Leiden University. Located in the capital of Zeeland, the RIAS is the Netherlands' preeminent archive, research center, and graduate school for the study of American history and transatlantic relations. The institute organizes academic, educational, and public activities aimed at the study of America in all its facets and from transatlantic perspectives and is particularly committed to research that enhances historical themes that affect both American and Dutch society (including slavery, human rights, environmental challenges, and international relations). More information about RIAS can be found on its website at <https://www.roosevelt.nl>.

Contact information:

Frank Schumacher, The University of Western Ontario, London/Canada
fschuma@uwo.ca

Gaetano Di Tommaso, Roosevelt Institute for American Studies, Middelburg/The Netherlands
g.di.tommaso@roosevelt.nl