

[Colloquium of American Studies in Ostrava]

On October 5th and 6th, 2023, the University of Ostrava played host to Americanists from seven countries at the 24th International Colloquium of American Studies and the Biennial Conference of the Czech and Slovak Association for American Studies. It was for the first time that this colloquium took place outside Olomouc, as all the previous colloquia traditionally took place at Palacky University. Alongside the University of Ostrava and its Department of English and American Studies, the event was co-organized by the Czech and Slovak Association for American Studies.

The colloquium centered around the theme “Perspectives on Ethnicity and the Environment in American Studies.” During two enriching days, participants heard 50 papers focusing mainly on ecological issues, as reflected in American literature and culture. They had the rare opportunity to hear two special guests, keynote speakers Sarah D. Wald, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and English at the University of Oregon, and Jay Fiskio, Director of Environmental Studies and Comparative American Studies at Oberlin College, both from the United States.

The entire event was generously sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Prague and was held under the auspices of the Rector of the University of Ostrava, Petr Kopecký, who opened the colloquium program. It is worth noting that it was also visited by Natalie Wilkins, Cultural Attaché of the U.S. Embassy in Prague, who delivered a warm welcome address at the American Center of the Ostrava City Library. There, the participants paid tribute to two distinguished late Americanists, Josef Jařab, the former rector of Palacky University and the former President of the European Association for American Studies, and our colleague Tadeusz Lewandowski. They could also get to know the new campus of the host university during the conference reception featuring poetry readings.

The colloquium was closed by the Ostrava Environment Tour to the area of Dolní Vítkovice. It should be noted that the success of the entire event would not have been thinkable without the organizational efforts of Jan Beneš and Dominika Beneš Kováčová, members of our department, and its student team.

Stanislav Kolář
Photos: *Linda Šubertová*



Petr Kopecký,
Rector of the University
of Ostrava (together with
Dominika Beneš Kováčová)



Keynote speaker
Sarah D. Wald,
University of Oregon, USA



Keynote speaker
Jay Fiskio,
Oberlin College, USA



Andrea Holešová,
University of Ostrava,
Czechia



Michaela Weiss,
Silesian University,
Opava, Czechia



Paul Von Blum,
University of California,
Los Angeles, USA



Tomáš Pospíšil,
Masaryk University,
Brno, Czechia



Julius Rozenfeld,
Pavol Jozef Šafárik University,
Košice, Slovakia



Joshua Parker,
University of Salzburg,
Austria



Tomáš Kačer,
Masaryk University,
Brno, Czechia



E-chou Wu,
Providence University,
Taichung, Taiwan



Stanislav Kolář,
University of Ostrava,
Czechia



Malgorzata Martynuska,
University of Rzeszów,
Poland



James Deutsch,
George Washington University
and Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C., USA



Informal atmosphere
of the conference
reception in the
new campus of the
University of Ostrava