Travel as Metaphor
From Montaigne to Rousseau

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Introduction
The Economy of Travel

When one thinks of travel, one most often thinks of the interest and excitement that comes from seeing exotic places and cultures. Likewise, the application of the metaphor of travel to thought conjures up the image of an innovative mind that explores new ways of looking at things or which opens up new horizons. That mind is a critical one to the extent that its moving beyond a given set of preconceptions or values also undermines those assumptions. Indeed, to call an existing order (whether epistemological, aesthetic, or political) into question by placing oneself "outside" that order, by taking a "critical distance" from it, is implicitly to invoke the metaphor of thought as travel.

The following study aims to investigate the relations between critical thinking and the metaphor of the voyage in the context of French philosophical literature from the late Renaissance through the Enlightenment. Before considering the specificity of that context, I would like, however, to reflect upon the travel motif as such at the more abstract level of its general epistemological presuppositions. Despite its association with the interesting or the innovative, the motif of the voyage counts among the most manifestly banal in Western letters. From Homer and Virgil, through Dante and Cervantes, Defoe and Goethe, Melville and Conrad, Proust and Céline, Nabokov and Butor, and on up through the most "postmodern" writers, one can scarcely mention a piece of literature in which the theme of the voyage does not play some role. The very image of thought as a quest is a commonplace in the history of philosophy and features

prominently in such canonical works as *The Republic, The City of God,* the *Essays* of Montaigne, Vico's *New Science,* Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind,* Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* Heidegger's *Being and Time,* Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques,* and Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition.* But if one grants the banality of the genre commonly associated with innovation, the question that needs to be raised is whether the commonplace quality of the metaphor of travel does not at some point constitute a limit to the freedom of critical thought.

This question might be rephrased at a still more abstract level in terms of the relationship between an institutional or ideological framework and that which claims to call it into question. What if the critique of a system were itself encoded as an institutionalized part of the system? It would seem, in fact, that the ways in which we question our world are themselves products of that world. Should one conclude pessimistically, then, that critical thought can never escape its entrapment by that which it supposedly criticizes? It is difficult to answer the question when it is phrased in so absolute a form. The hypothesis this study instead attempts to support is that the critical gesture is always entrapped in some ways and liberated or liberating in others. The assumption, in other words, is that no liberating gesture, no theoretical breakthrough, is absolute. Rather, there is always a concomitant degree of entrapment, which I suspect to be the condition of possibility for the liberation that does take place. Moreover, the element of entrapment may even function in certain writers as a desired safeguard that keeps the critical adventure within certain bounds. Granted this paradoxical status of the critical act, it is incumbent upon the critic to explore the conditions for critical discourse, to locate and describe the specific moments where entrapment or radical innovation takes place.

The metaphor of travel as critical trope is at least as paradoxical in its determinations as the critical act. If we are obliged to speak of the voyage as the most common of commonplaces in the Western tradition, a *topos* of the most fixed, conventional, and uninteresting kind, then such a formulation is paradoxical to the extent that a voyage cannot be restricted to or circumscribed within a place unless it is to cease being a voyage—that is, what necessarily implies a crossing of boundaries or a change of places. A voyage that stays in the same place is not a voyage. Indeed, the very notion of travel presupposes a movement away from some place, a displacement of whatever it is one understands by "place." For literature then to make of the voyage a commonplace is to deprive it of its very movement. But then again, if literature returns with such frequency to this *topos* (if it can still be considered to be one), the theme of the voyage must not be simply one literary theme among others but one that in some way or other raises the question of the status of literary discourse itself.[1]

It would seem, moreover, that the very banality or banalizing of travel to be found in literature both veils and unveils its importance for Western culture. The voyage is undoubtedly one of the most cherished institutions of that civilization, and banal as it may be, travel is persistently perceived as exciting and interesting, as liberating, and as what "opens up new horizons." The dearest notions of the West nearly all appeal to the motif of the voyage: progress, the quest for knowledge, freedom as freedom to move, self-awareness as an Odyssean enterprise, salvation as a destination to be attained by following a prescribed pathway (typically straight and narrow). Yet if there is such a great cultural investment in the voyage, that locus of investment is nonetheless one whose possibility of appropriation also implies the threat of an expropriation. The voyage endangers as much as it is supposed to assure these cultural values: something can always go wrong. The "place" of the voyage cannot be a stable one.

A Classical appreciation of the problem of travel can be found in the *Encyclopédie* article of 1765, "Voyage," written by the Chevalier de Jaucourt and whose opening paragraphs figure as the epigraph to this volume.[2] This attempt to define what one means by a voyage at the high-water mark of the age of discovery, at a time when the likes of Cook and Bougainville were preparing to circumnavigate the globe, analyzes travel according to three categories: grammar, commerce, education. The explication of the concurrence of these three definitions, or rather their mutual conjugation and articulation, should provide an initial set of terms with which to pursue an analysis of travel in early modern French philosophical literature.

A voyage is initially defined in grammatical terms as the "transport of a person from the place where one is to another place that is far enough away." Travel is thus first defined from an anthropological perspective: it refers to the movement of human beings, of "a person," from one place to another. To be sure, the agent of this transportation remains unclear: the person is transported. The following three sentences in this article are governed in French by the impersonal forms *on* and *il faut,* and maintain this depersonalized anthropology even as they present three examples of voyages. The first two designate a persistent axis of the specifically French reflection on travel from before Montaigne to after Butor, namely, the axis between Italy and Paris, one to which I will repeatedly return. The third example brings an abrupt switch from the literal to the figural: "It is necessary for everyone to make the great *voyage* at some point." The metaphorical voyage that is death is not simply something "one does," such as travel to Italy, but what "it is necessary for everyone to do." This ultimate "transport of the person" induces the imperative form of a moral prescription by which de Jaucourt closes this initial definition: "Ahead of your departure time, go deposit into your tomb the provisions for your

voyage." Beneath the anthropological perspective that guides the grammatical definition of travel lurks a risk and an anxiety, the risk—both necessary and inevitable—that the limit to the motion of the *anthropos* is to be found in the limit to the latter's existence: "le *grand* voyage." The anxiety is an economic one, that of not being prepared on time, of not having set aside the necessary "provisions."

As if to follow up on this economic anxiety, the second definition of the word is stipulated as "commercial": "the comings and goings of a mercenary [*mercenaire*] who transports furnishings [*meubles*], wheat and other things." If death is a voyage with no return, commerce is predicated precisely upon the going *and* coming of movable objects (the etymological sense of *meubles*): furniture for the house, wheat for the body, and so on. In the commercial sense of travel, it is not so much the person that is moved, but things that are moved back *and* forth, the latter being shunted about by a particular type of person, a "mercenary," a word whose primary meaning at this time was still simply that of someone working for monetary remuneration. His "mercenary" activity or *revenue* thus depends upon his return, upon the successful completion of his circular movement, by which the voyage can be counted as such: "One says that he has made ten *voyages,* twenty *voyages.*"

The third definition of "voyage" posits another kind of increment, namely, the educational value of travel: "The great men of antiquity judged that there was no better school for life than that of *voyages.*" Here, and in the ensuing paragraphs of the article, the great masters of learning (in a long catalogue from Homer and Lycurgus to Montaigne) are themselves enlisted to support the value of travel as better than any actual school, not unsurprisingly because it brings one to read the grandest textbook of them all: "that great book of the world" wherein "one incessantly finds some new lesson." As the anthropological agent of the voyage is thus secured by the revenue (in profits, in knowledge) of a return, so does the space of that trajectory become available to be read as the grammar of a topography.

And in a clause that impressively recombines the triple definition of the voyage as it brings this paragraph to a close, travel is stated to benefit the body as well as the mind: "The change of air along with the exercise is of profit to the body and the mind." The profits to be gained from travel are as corporeal as they are intellectual or commercial. If travel posits the risk and anxiety of death, it also signals the way to health, wealth, and wisdom. The triple definition of the voyage thus triangulates its object as a zone of potential loss or profit. But if one wants to economize on travel—that is, to minimize its risks and reappropriate any possible loss as profit—one soon discovers that the notion of economy already presupposes that of travel. For the exchange of objects that defines commercial activity implies

by its back-and-forth movement some kind of travel. Historically, the great economic and commercial powers have been those most successful at manipulating the means of travel, and vice versa. If there is a great investment in travel, it is perhaps because travel models the structure of investment itself, the *transfer* of assets that institutes an economy, be it political or libidinal, "restricted" or "general."[3]

Now, if there is an insecurity or anxiety associated with travel, it is that insecurity associated with the menace of irreparable loss. This loss can affect not only one's monetary assets but one's very life or sanity. Or one can simply lose one's way, since the possibility of there being no return is always implied in travel. Every voyage is potentially a voyage into exile, a voyage to the "end of the night." La Fontaine's famous fable "The Two Pigeons" provides an eloquent statement of this negative notion of travel. In this satire of the urge to travel, one of the two pigeons, "crazy enough to undertake / a voyage to some faraway land," suffers one disaster after another in his journey until, "half dead and half limping," he decides to return home.[4] Voltaire's *Candide* (1759) takes a similar point of view: after recounting the horrendous series of brutal misfortunes that befall both major and minor characters in their peregrinations around the globe, the "philosophical tale" ends with the famous didacticism, "it is necessary to cultivate our garden," the epitome of sedentariness.[5]

But just as travel poses the danger of loss so also does it propose the possibility of gain (whether this gain be in the form of greater riches, power, experience, wisdom, or whatever). Otherwise, there would be no incentive to travel. Semiotic research on tourism has demonstrated how, in even this apparently most innocent and innocuous mode of travel, strong economic and ideological motives are at work: tourists accumulate "cultural experiences" that then increase their social value within their home communities.[6] A positive evaluation of travel likewise occurs when the voyage is seen as an escape either in the banal urge to "get away from it all" or in the Baudelairean flight from ennui. Perhaps the most explicit—and brutal—form of travel understood as opportunity for gain is to be found in imperialist or colonialist ventures, of which those described in the narratives of the Spanish conquest of the New World offer a particularly forceful rendition.[7]

Both of these evaluations of travel, however, remain circumscribed within an economic point of view. Whether the voyage be loss or gain, what is at stake is a certain property, something that *can* be lost or gained. To be able to talk about loss or gain, however, also requires that something in the transaction remain unchanged, something in relation to which one can register a loss or a gain. In other words, in order to be able to have an economy of travel, some fixed point of reference must be posited. The

economy of travel requires an *oikos* (the Greek for "home" from which is derived "economy") in relation to which any wandering can be *comprehended* (enclosed as well as understood). In other words, a home(land) must be posited from which one leaves on the journey and to which one hopes to return—whether one actually makes it back home changes nothing, from this perspective. The positing of an *oikos*, or *domus* (the Latin translation of *oikos*), is what *dom*esticates the voyage by ascribing certain limits to it. The *oikos* defines or delimits the movement of travel according to that old Aristotelian prescription for a "well-constructed" plot, namely, having a beginning, a middle, and an end.[8] Indeed, travel can only be conceptualized in terms of the points of departure and destination and of the (spatial and temporal) distance between them. A traveler thinks of his or her journey in terms either of the destination or of the point of departure.

While the *oikos* is most easily understood as that point from which the voyage begins and to which it circles back at the end, its function could theoretically be served by any particular point in the itinerary. That point then acts as a transcendental point of reference that organizes and domesticates a given area by defining all other points in relation to itself. Such an act of referral makes of all travel a circular voyage insofar as that privileged point or *oikos* is posited as the absolute origin and absolute end of any movement at all. For instance, a journey organized in terms of its destination makes of that destination the journey's conceptual point of departure, its point of orientation. Thus, a teleological point of view remains comfortably within this economic conception of travel.

The economic conception of travel thus implies the attempt to keep travel enclosed within certain limits, that of the closed circle of the home, the *oikos*. On the other hand, so circumscribed a voyage can no longer be considered a voyage, since it never goes outside the range of the *oikos*. Home, the very antithesis of travel, is the concept through which the voyage is "oikonomized" into a commonplace. Hence, while the voyage can only be thought through this "economy of travel," the economy is precisely that which conceptually stops or puts an end to the voyage by assigning it a beginning and an end in the form of the *oikos*. To economize on something, or as the French say, *faire l'économie de quelque chose,* is to try to reduce or dispense with the object of that economy, to avoid or evade it. The voyage, it would seem, can only be thought at its own risk.

If, however, a voyage can only be conceptualized economically in terms of the fixity of a privileged point (*oikos*), the positing of a point we can call home can only occur retroactively. The concept of a home is needed (and in fact it can only be thought) only *after* the home has already been left behind. In a strict sense, then, one has always already left home, since

home can only exist as such at the price of its being lost. The *oikos* is posited *après-coup*. Thus, the voyage has always already begun.

Such a voyage, however, is literally unthinkable if it is pre-positional, that is, anterior to the positing of that originary position which I have been calling the *oikos*. What is commonly called "travel" is but an attempt to contain that other prototravel through a kind of reverse denegation that denies travel precisely by affirming it. When I say I am taking a trip, I feel confident in my ability to define it according to an itinerary between points. This "definition" is a containment of travel which allows it then not only to be thought but to be thought as a narrative, as a story—that is, if we accept the idea that it takes at least two movements to constitute a narrative. These two movements, according to the narratology of Thomas Pavel, include the "transgression" of an initial situation and its "mediation" or attempted resolution.[9] The travel narrative is then one in which the transgression of losing or leaving the home is mediated by a movement that attempts to fill the gap of that loss through a spatialization of time. This articulation of space with time smooths that initial discontinuity into the continuity of a line that can be drawn on the map. Through this instituted continuity, the voyage is found not only to conform to the rules of a narrative but also to be one of its canonical forms. Michel de Certeau has even gone so far as to declare that "every narrative is a travel narrative."[10]

What cannot be shown, however, in the drawing of such a line is the concomitant temporalization of space effected by travel, so the home that one leaves is not the same as that to which one returns. The very condition of orientation, the *oikos,* is paradoxically able to provoke the greatest disorientation. One need only cite here the stereotypical image of the traveler, who, à la Rip van Winkle, returns home only to find that it (or the traveler) has changed beyond all recognition. Such a disorientation at the point of return indicates the radical noncoincidence of point of origin and point of return. For the point of return as repetition of the point of departure cannot take place without a difference in that repetition: the detour constitutive of the voyage itself. Were the point of departure and the point of return to remain exactly the same, that is, were they the same point, there could be no travel. Yet if the *oikos* does not remain selfsame, how can one feel secure in it, especially given the fact that this identity of the *oikos* is what is necessarily presupposed by the economic view of travel, the only way we can think a voyage as such?

Be they real or imaginary, voyages seem as often undertaken to restrain movement as to engage in it, to resist change as to produce it, to keep from getting anywhere as to attain a destination. The theory of an economy of travel is an attempt to explain via recourse to an alternative set of

metaphors the paradoxical and contradictory ways in which travel is understood and practiced in our culture. The establishment of a home or *oikos* places conceptual limits on travel, supplies it with a terminus *a quo* and a terminus *ad quem* which allow one to conceive of the potentially dangerous divagation of travel within assured and comfortable bounds. The economy of travel thus domesticates the transgressive or critical possibilities implied in the change of perspective travel provides. Nevertheless, the very activity of traveling may also displace the home or prevent any return to it, thus undermining the institution of that economy and allowing for an infinite or unbounded travel. This complex economics of travel rehearses once more the paradoxical play of entrapment and liberation evinced in critical thought.

The problems raised in the analysis of travel also recall those commonly encountered in recent theories of textual analysis: the blurring of identity and difference, the undecidable effects of repetition, and a structured inability to isolate the object of discourse (that is, to talk about either texts or travel without becoming embroiled in another text or without embarking on a voyage, be it only a discursive one).[11] But if one finds the same anxieties and the same pleasures in both, it is not, in my opinion, because of a mere coincidence or accident. On the contrary, it is difficult to escape the impression that both problems are part of the same problem, one rooted in the decision of Western metaphysics to privilege presence over absence, voice over writing, and hence the near over the far. What I have been calling the economy of travel is but a moment in the history of metaphysics, which is also distrustful of language and which similarly seeks an economy of signification such that the persistent mediation of the sign is reduced to a minimum in the conveyance without residue of "full meaning."[12]

Not only, however, do both text and voyage raise the same set of problems, but one finds with surprising frequency that the problems associated with one are posited or described in terms of the other. It is as if the domestication or economy of the one proceeded from the other. On the one hand, one finds topological theories of language in which utterance becomes a question of choosing the right "route"; on the other, a textualization of topography such that travel requires the interpretation of signs; the ability, for instance, to "read" a map. This interpretation can also be written down in the form of travelogues or what the French writers of the Classical period referred to as *relations de voyage.* This latter appellation well denotes the domesticating aim of such writing. A *relation de voyage* is what relates the events of a voyage; it re-lates the voyage, brings it back by way of the narrator's discourse.[13] The "relation" (from *refero,* to bring back) itself acts as a voyage that brings back what was lost in the voyage. It institutes an economy of the voyage. If it acts as a voyage, it

is because *qua re*lation it repeats the voyage by recounting the itinerary in chronological order at the same time *qua* re*lation* (from *latus,* borne or transported) it displaces the topography into a topic of discourse.[14] The result is a mimetic narrative, which is nonetheless instituted by the very loss of what it claims to bring back, to relate. The *relation de voyage* can only mime and recount (can only mime as it recounts) what is already lost, what has already transpired. Not everything can be included or even should be. The most thoroughly detailed travel narratives can be the most boring and tedious. At the other extreme, some amount to little more than an enumeration of dates and place names.[15]

But if the narrative can be constituted by such a repetition and displacement—that is, if it is as much a *trans*lation as it is a *re*lation—the constitution of that narrative can only take place if the voyage is somehow already a kind of text, that is, if there is already in place a differential structure of relationships that allows the "voyage" to be cognized or recognized as such. This structure can be a map or any similar system containing points of reference ("reference" from *refero,* the same word from which "relation" derives). The idea of a reference point refers back to the *oikos* as the transcendental point of reference to which all others are referred. We can now add, though, the further qualification that this referential economy is of a textual order. In other words, a place can only "take place" within a text, that is, only if it can be marked and re-marked from the area in which it is inscribed.[16] Only in this sense can we speak of a topo*graphy,* for insofar as the very perception and cognition of a landscape requires an effect of demarcation, the latter can only be constituted as a space of writing. This space of writing is both the precondition for the referential mastery of the *oikos* and that which implies the inevitable decentering of this referential economy into an endless chain of reference. Such an eventuality, however, implies the loss of whatever mastery was thought to be gained through the positing of travel as text, even as it bears unwelcome witness to the justice of that thesis.

Conversely, the seemingly irresistible propensity of theories of language to use topological terms[17] suggests again that the relationship drawn between traveling and writing is not necessarily unwarranted, although once again perhaps it is not the relationship one would like. For what does Classical rhetoric with its network of topics and its catalogue of tropes pretend to, except, as Cicero declares in the *Topics,* a "disciplinam invendiendorum argumentorum, ut sine ullo errore ad ea ratione et via perveniremus" [a system for inventing arguments so that we might make our way to them without any wandering about][18]. The rhetorical treatise presents itself as a kind of guidebook to the traversal of linguistic space, a discursive Baedeker. The metaphor is literalized, so to speak, in that division of rhetoric known

as memory (*memoria*) wherein a prescribed technique to help one remember the points one wishes to make during one's discourse consists of associating each of those points with a familiar place. One can then reproduce one's argument by imaginatively traversing the designated places.[19] Nevertheless, the history of rhetoric, constituted by the interminable haggling, down to our own day, over the correctness of the divisions and schemata proposed by various rhetoricians, stands as a monument to the failure of its attempt to master language, a failure due not to the particular weaknesses of individual rhetoricians but to the structure of language itself.

Nowhere is this inability to maintain the stability of the rhetorical map more evident than in the problems encountered by theoreticians of figural language. Agreement cannot even be reached on the number of tropes or figures to be classified. Now, what a theory of figural language in principle proposes is a complete enumeration and consequent mastery of the ways in which language can mean something other than what it habitually means, ways in which meaning departs from itself. As Du Marsais writes, "Figures are manners of speaking *distanced* from those that are not figured."[20] The presupposition is that something like the literal or "proper" meaning of a word can be precisely determined, in relation to which all figural meanings can then be understood, contained, and mastered. For such a system to work, however, the "proper" meaning must be a stable one, an unchanging point of reference that dominates the field of figural meanings, which can then be grasped as wanderings, deviations, or departures from that proper meaning. At this point, the rhetorical problem of figural versus literal meaning is congruent in structure to the economic problem of travel, with "proper" meaning in the place of the *oikos*. The very language Classical rhetoric used to talk about figures would itself be borrowed from the vocabulary of travel. A more recent theorist of rhetoric has likewise written: "Every structure of 'figures' is based on the notion that there exist two languages, one proper and one figured, and that consequently Rhetoric, in its elocutionary part, is a table of *deviations* of language. Since Antiquity, the meta-rhetorical expressions which attest to this belief are countless: in *elocutio* (field of figures), words are *'transported,' 'strayed,' 'deviated'* from their normal, familiar habitat."[21]

Given such an understanding of figural language as *divagation,* it is not surprising that there should have arisen early on the possibility of seeing in a particular trope, the metaphor, the general form for all figural language, especially if we accept the Aristotelian definition of metaphor as the "application of an alien name by *transference* (*epiphora*)."[22] "Metaphor" comes from *metaphorein,* to transfer or transport. What better word to denote the transport of meaning than a word whose modern Greek equivalent, *metafora,* commonly refers to vehicles of public transport, such as buses?

But if the concept of metaphor can be used to effect an economical reduction of tropological difference—that is, if metaphor is to become the *proper* name for every figural impropriety—it can only attain that status metaphorically, by transporting the concept of transportation to that of the text—such a transportation taking place nonetheless within a text and as a text. Travel then becomes the metaphor of metaphor while the structure of the metaphor becomes the metaphor for the travel of meaning.[23] And if, as we have seen in our analysis of travel, the identity of the home is breached by the very movement that constitutes it, are we not entitled to ask if the *metaphorein* of meaning does not have similar consequences for the notion of proper meaning? In his commentary on Aristotle's definition of metaphor, Jacques Derrida suggests just such an eventuality:

> [*Métaphor*] risks disrupting the semantic plenitude to which it should belong. Marking the moment of the turn or of the detour [*du tour ou du détour*] during which meaning might seem to venture forth [*s'aventurer*] alone, unloosed from the very thing it aims at however, from the truth which attunes it to its referent, metaphor also opens the wandering [*errance*] of the semantic. The sense of a noun, instead of designating the thing which the noun habitually must designate, carries itself elsewhere [*se porte ailleurs*]. If I say that the evening is the old age of the day, or that old age is the evening of life, "the evening," although having the same sense, will no longer designate the same things. By virtue of its power of metaphoric displacement [*déplacement*], signification will be in a kind of state of availability, between the nonmeaning preceding language (which has a meaning) and the truth of language which would say the thing such as it is in itself, in act, properly. This truth is not certain.[24]

Both the homeliness of meaning and meaningfulness of the home can only be constituted at the risk of an infinite detour.

In the view of this slippery path leading one back and forth between text and travel, it is my suspicion that what might otherwise be construed as idle statements on travel in a writer's discourse allow on the contrary for the elaboration of a critical discourse of considerable force. And in light of the congruencies between the problems of travel, textuality, and critical thinking, the following study aims to discern the role played by the motif of travel in the economy of critical discourse. It is appropriate that this study should take place on the terrain of early modern French thought, since in that historical period there occurs a remarkable conjunction between the vogue of exoticism and imaginary voyages, on the one hand, and the philosophical trends of skepticism, relativism, and *libertinage,* on the other.

So if ever the motif of travel inhabited the critical spirit or *esprit critique,* it would have been in the Classical age.[25]

In exploring, then, the articulation of the discourse on travel with the critical tradition leading up through the *philosophes,* I find that a writer's sustained recourse to the figure of travel inevitably points to underlying concerns with the status of his position, vis-à-vis his own theories as well as in relation to earlier thinkers. Rather than attempt, however, a full-blown historical study of the relation between exoticism and the rise of French free thought,[26] the following study implements a rhetorical or textual approach in order to test the strength of the relationship between theory and travel in the discourse of particular writers of the Classical era. In order to see how far one could pursue an analysis of their writings by following the route indicated by their use of the voyage motif, I have accordingly chosen philosophical writers who also traveled as well as wrote on travel: Montaigne, Descartes, Montesquieu, and Rousseau. Needless to say, the choice of such a corpus is arbitrary to the extent that the problem under consideration extends well beyond the area circumscribed by these particular writers. On the other hand, the names of these writers have been traditionally associated with the notion of travel (Montaigne has even been christened by one critic the "first tourist"[27]) as well as the related issues of exoticism and philosophical relativism. As such, their names denote particularly strong or emblematic moments in the development of prerevolutionary French thought. I have limited myself, then, to a set of extended readings based upon what each writer says about travel (whether explicitly in the form of travelogues or implicitly in the travel metaphors used in their nominally philosophical writings). And if the theme of travel is commonly accepted to be at work in all these writers, my reading intends to corroborate another kind of filiation that binds them together at the level of what we can call their textual production. In each case, traits linked by the writer to travel trigger an associative chain that inevitably leads to concerns fundamental to the writing of the text itself, to the economy of its discourse, and to its authorial propriety. Hence, the writer's discourse on travel is found in each case to allow for the elaboration of a powerful metadiscourse opening onto the deconstruction of the writer's claims to a certain *property* (of his home, of his body, of his text, of his name). For if the property of the home is put in doubt by the voyage as the properness of meaning is by the figurality of discourse, it should not be too surprising to find that what is at stake in the discourse of our writers is that most fundamental of all properties, the property or properness of the proper name, a name whose properness becomes suspect the moment its signature is stamped with the sign of the voyage.

It might well be argued, at this point, that such an analysis would be in no way historical. The figure of travel is so generally implicated in Western metaphysics that it becomes difficult to grant any kind of historical specificity to the texts or analyses that appropriate that figure. The deconstructive potential of the voyage would be lodged in that figure itself and not in any particular or historical uses of it. Just as the privileging of voice over writing could be said, after Derrida, to define the *epochè* of logocentrism in the West, so the privileging of the *oikos* in the economy of travel not unsurprisingly underpins the ethnocentrism and imperialism that have consistently marked Western thought even in its best efforts to "comprehend" the other.[28] In fact, the very use of the terms "same" and "other," drawn as they are from Hegelian dialectics, with its systematic reduction—"sublation"—of differences in the progressive development of the subject of absolute knowledge, reinforces the problem whenever nonwhites, nonmales, or non-Europeans are designated as "others," a designation that presupposes the point of view of the white, the male, the European. The former are, of course, no more (or less) "other" to themselves than the latter are "self-same."

Another, perhaps less immediately obvious, centrism is also at work in the economy of travel: the phallocentrism whereby the "law of the home" (*oikonomia*) organizes a set of gender determinations. One need go no further than the prototypical travel narrative that is the *Odyssey* to find a modeling of the sexual division of labor: the domestic(ated) woman, Penelope, maintains the property of the home against would-be usurpers while her husband wanders about. Away from home, the latter encounters "other" women, who remain, at least for him, alluring and/or menacing, seductive and/or castrating. The call of the Sirens is a dangerous pleasure only for the sailor not securely lashed to the fixity of his phallic shipmast or whose ears are not made deaf to the cry of women. From the perspective of such a gendered topography, it is not hard to read the unpredictable pleasure/anxiety of travel in terms of a male eros both attracted and repulsed by sexual difference. When travel is not explicitly invested with eros such as in the male fantasy production of exotic/erotic enchanted islands such as those of Circe, Cythera, or Tahiti (populated by eagerly willing but fatally attractive women), desire is displaced onto the land itself ("virgin" territories to be conquered, "dark continents" to be explored) or onto the very means of transportation: the at once womblike and phallic enclosures of boat, plane, train, or carriage that allow the explorer to "penetrate" the landscape. At the same time, such vehicles foster male bonding to the exclusion of women, stereotypically left at home or sought after as objects abroad.[29] And while there is nothing inherently or essentially masculine about travel (women have most certainly traveled as well as

written about travel),[30] Western ideas about travel and the concomitant corpus of voyage literature have generally—if not characteristically —transmitted, inculcated, and reinforced patriarchal values and ideology from one male generation to the next, whether by journeying conceived as the rite of passage to manhood or by the pedagogical genderization of children's literature whereby little boys are led to read *Robinson Crusoe,* the novels of Kipling and Verne, or that modern corollary of adventure literature, science fiction. As such, the discourse of travel typically functions, to use Teresa de Lauretis's term, as a "technology of gender," a set of "techniques and discursive strategies" by which gender is constructed.[31]

The workings of such a technology can be found, for example, in Melanie Klein's psychoanalysis of the case of little Fritz, a young child whose attitude toward motion, as exemplified by his daily walk to school, vacillates between pleasure and anxiety. Not unsurprisingly, Klein finds at the core of this affective dilemma the castration anxiety of an unresolved Oedipus complex, wherein the boy's pleasure in motion, sense of orientation, and, more generally, his interest in learning are inhibited or motivated by the degree to which the "sexual-symbolic" determinant of these activities as coitus with the mother are repressed. Situated at the home, as what can be lost or regained by the daily excursion to that institutionalizing locus of paternal law that is the school, stands the mother. And, as if to underscore the phallic dimension of the road to school, the child's anxiety is especially evoked by its being lined with large and menacing trees. Interestingly, the lifting of the repression and the reconversion of anxiety into pleasure are marked by the apparently simultaneous sexualization of the topography as maternal body and of the mother's body as a fantasmatic landscape whose various "entrances and exits" elicit in the child a desire for "exploration."[32] To the extent, then, that little Fritz is caught between a good and a bad economics of travel, Klein's analysis thus provides a psychoanalytic reconfirmation of our own initial insights regarding the economy of travel even as it further elaborates the gender paradigms of the journey in the Western male unconscious. That Oedipal narratives of fathers and sons should accordingly emerge repeatedly through the discourse on travel in the texts of the male philosophers analyzed in this study obviously points less to their escape from than to their entrenchment within phallocentrism, and therefore to another limit on the critical possibilities of their discourse. On the other hand, such a conjunction between travel and phallocentrism also reveals a motif that invites a rereading of these texts from more explicitly political, psychoanalytical, or feminist points of view: the disruptive liminality women are represented as occupying in such texts. The analysis of travel in the writers studied here is intended to prepare the ground for such

thoroughgoing critiques of the institutional roles and complicities assumed by these writers.

And here it does seem pertinent to reintroduce a certain historicism into my reading of the problem of travel. There is a particular force to such an analysis when it is carried out in the context of French Classical thought. A deconstructive opportunity is provided by that era's strong and insistent representation of the thinker as traveler, concretized in such literary stereotypes as the *picaro,* the knight errant, and the prudent navigator, or more abstractly in the Baroque theme of the *homo viator.*[33] Such representations, as well as the desacralization of the traditional Christian image of the path to salvation (typified in the notion of pilgrimage), themselves take place within the postmedieval crisis of feudal society, whose institutions, among other things, situate the lord's name as the name of his home. It is in the early modern texts of Montaigne, Descartes, Montesquieu, and Rousseau that we are told the manifold consequences of setting adrift the signifying relations that define where one is, who one is, or what is one's own. The so-called age of discovery (roughly spanning the fourteenth through nineteenth centuries) is also the era during which "economics" itself is discovered by European society and formulated progressively into a discernible object of knowledge and discipline of thought. The "science of wealth" was one that developed by discontinuous reactions to unprecedented and unsettling phenomena such as rapid inflation and sudden devaluation. Only through successive critiques of political economy does there eventually occur (after mercantilist theory, after Colbert, Law, Montesquieu and the Physiocrats, after Smith, Ricardo, and Marx) a theory of the production of value that is abstracted from its simple representamen (money, precious metals) and that is able to explain the unexpectedly disastrous effects of the mere accumulation of precious metals, effects made manifest by Spain's ruinous importation of vast quantities of gold and silver from its American empire.[34]

Concomitant with the initial period of European exploration and expansionism is the development and refinement of the new printing technology, which enabled both vast new liquidities through the invention of printed paper money and the commodification of knowledge itself in the form of the printed book. As has been amply demonstrated elsewhere, this new phase of textual objectification triggered an entirely new set of problems relative to the property (as well as propriety) of the book, notably the issue of author's rights and privileges.[35] In the last two decades and in the wake of even newer technologies of symbolic reproduction, it has been fashionable to speak of the death of the author, but this very notion of writerly authority that links name and text in an author's signature and whose wake we now

celebrate is one born and circulated during an age that dislodged the bond between name and land.[36]

Another kind of name aggressively figures in preindustrial Europe, the paternal surname, whose instance points to a distinct inflection within the history of Western patriarchy. If the aristocrat's name is his title (to a piece of land), the prototypical bourgeois surname designates the father as such, whether it be in terms of his trade, physical appearance, or place of origin. The surname linguistically consolidates a family unit headed by a father, the king of this diminutive body politic, just as the king in post-Renaissance political thinking is characteristically designated as the father of that extended family which is the nation.[37] Concomitant with the new, public role played by the father was the increased privatization of women's world, what Sarah Kofman (in a transparent allusion to Foucault's "great confinement [*grand renfermement*]" of madmen in the seventeenth century) calls the "great immurement [*grand enfermement*]" of women carried out in the Classical era.[38] The same age that saw the birth of nation-states and that sent men scouring the four ends of the earth also shut women up within the home, a historical coincidence perhaps but one that legitimated the gendered topography of the male imaginary in the very organization of daily life. The birth of the modern family, marked by the patrilinearity of the surname, and reproduced on the macropolitical level by the consolidation of the "fatherland" under the royal paternalism of absolute monarchy, sustained the economics of the home as an ideological complex at a time when the traditional relation to land, concretized in the feudal institution of the fief, underwent a slow but seismic upheaval. That domestic economy headed by an unyielding paterfamilias and typified by the productive mode of cottage industry casts an important historical bridge between manor and factory, between feudal and capitalist worksites.

Within this context of a fundamental dislocation of property relations, a dislocation affecting almost everything that can be comprehended within the figure of the *oikos* or home, it does not seem sufficient to limit an analysis of the travel motif in early modern French philosophical literature to the mere unveiling of the obvious (mis)representations of cultural others such as Montaigne's cannibals, Lahontan's "good savage," Montesquieu's Persians, or Diderot's Pacific Islanders. While the critical analysis of such (mis)representations is of crucial import to any understanding of the ideological self-justification for European expansion as well as of the often suspect development of the discipline of anthropology,[39] the entire discourse of travel in these writers can be seen to thematize a fundamental economic anxiety in the widest sense of the word "economic," an anxiety whose repression is coincident with modern forms of subjectivity: selfhood, authorship, patriarchy, proprietorship. So not only are their texts particularly

available to a reading of their preoccupation with travel as indicative of some larger anxiety, but that reading, generally applicable as it may be, is also precisely what leads us to account for the specificity of these texts. In each case and in each chapter of this study, the same problems and anxieties are traced in a way specific to the text under consideration. Each time, a new point of departure leads to a different point of arrival, although the steps along the way indicate the existence of a set of associations and assumptions common to all the writers studied, a set that, at least in the limited context of this study, sketches a tale of the history of French philosophical writing as a continual rewriting and retraveling of the text of Montaigne. The belated discovery, in 1774, of the latter's journal of his trip to Italy historically closes the period under study here even as the writing of that travelogue pinpoints its beginning. And, as if to underscore this Montaignian frame, it is by citing from the *Essays* that de Jaucourt closes the *Encyclopédie* article, "Voyage," with which I chose to begin these introductory remarks:

> The main thing, as Montaigne says, is not "to measure how many feet there are in the Santa Rotonda, and how much the face of Nero on some old ruins is bigger than it is on some medallions; but what is important is to rub and polish your brains by contact with those of others." It is here above all that you have an occasion to compare ancient and modern times, "and to fix your mind upon those great changes that have made each age so different from every other, and the cities of this beautiful country [Italy], once so populated, now deserted and seeming to subsist only to mark the places where those powerful cities, of which history has said so much, were."[40]

The above passage from the *Encyclopédie* also demarcates a geographical limit that doubles the historical frame of this book: all four of the writers studied here traveled to Italy, and their relation to Italian (especially Roman) culture is particularly charged with intellectual and emotional energy. A veritable subgenre of European travel narrative, the voyage to Italy enjoys an exemplary status among travelogues, as it does in de Jaucourt's text. Not only does it appear as the first example given of a voyage ("One makes the *voyage* to Italy") but the article's close reinforces Italy's prestige as a prime locus of historical, aesthetic, and moral reflection as well as the stereotypical place to finish off a young gentleman's education. The early modern and secular equivalent of the medieval pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the voyage to Italy was a cultural institution that accredited transalpine travelers (typically but not exclusively from England, France, and Germany) with a knowledge both exotic and familiar. No longer the religious, economic, or artistic center of Europe, post-Renaissance Italy became the

continent's internal other, a place where Northerners could come to gawk at the evidences of Roman decline, and thus feel smug in the superiority of their nationalities, and could acquire the cultural sensibility to assume positions of power at home. Whence their delight in the spectacle of Italian decadence, a traveler's commonplace passing itself off as a bit of historical wisdom, as in the passage de Jaucourt attributes to Montaigne. Acquiring some bit of the *imperium* Italy had lost, these travelers drew a high revenue from the relatively low-risk excursion to the peninsula, and with rarely any other experience abroad these same travelers returned home to help formulate their countries' political and cultural responses to the discovery of vast new lands, peoples, and cultures beyond the confines of Europe. Montaigne never visited the America he describes, nor Montesquieu Persia, nor Rousseau Oceania, yet their writings are of obvious significance in the history of European colonialism. Critics of the latter typically fail to draw the relations between these texts and their authors' experiences in Italy, as well as their powerful fantasy investments in that country as a privileged exotic locale. Countless more French travelers made the trip to Italy than ever set foot outside Europe. By insisting on the dialectics of the relation between home and abroad in the texts I analyze, I hope to resituate some of the givens in our understanding of European expansionism.

Finally, my reading of theoretical or philosophical texts through the play of a certain figure or motif—that of travel—raises the question of the status of those texts as literature. This is especially the case when the figure in question is one that not only permeates the history of literature but can even be construed as fundamentally characteristic of literary discourse. This book can be read then as an embarkation upon a poetics of philosophical or theoretical writing.

As the very drift of these remarks should demonstrate, it is difficult to stay in one place when meditating on the issue of travel. To talk about travel is inevitably to engage in it, to mime through the movement of one's words that which one is trying to designate with those words. Discourse on travel is thus inexorably contaminated by its object. It is not sufficient, however, to conclude that a rigorous analysis of travel is a fundamental impossibility. Rather, it should be acknowledged that the voyage (even when it appears to be well restrained within the limits of an "economy," or even when it is but an object of contemplation) has a powerful ability to dislodge the framework in which it is placed or understood, to subject it to critical displacement—although that displacement is not always to where one expects, nor is its criticism necessarily what one expects to find. The voyage, in other words, always takes us somewhere. The following study can also be read as an adventure to see what some of those "somewheres" might look like.

Notes

Introduction: The Economy of Travel

1. In fact, the very movement between the voyage and other *topoi* itself suggests a reading of the history of literature as a voyage. For one of these *topoi* or stopping places on this itinerary to be what signifies that journey as a whole cannot be without consequences. As we will see, the motif of the voyage is an exemplary locus of literary self-reflection.

2. Louis de Jaucourt, "Voyage," *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers par une société de gens de lettres* (Neufchâtel: Samuel Faulche & Compagnie, 1751–65), XVII, 476.

3. Extensions of the concept of economy have been a key feature of much recent French critical discourse, since at least Georges Bataille, *La part maudite* (Paris: Minuit, 1949), especially the section entitled "La notion de dépense," initially published in 1933. For an incisive analysis of Bataille's notion of economy, see also Jacques Derrida, "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve," in *Writing and Difference,* tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 251–77. Among others in this tradition, see especially: Jean-Joseph Goux, *Symbolic Economies: After Marx and Freud,* tr. Jennifer Curtiss Gage (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), and *Les monnayeurs du langage* (Paris: Galilée, 1984); Jean-François Lyotard, *Economie libidinale* (Paris: Minuit, 1974) and *Des dispositifs pulsionnels* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1973); Jean Baudrillard, *For*

a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign, tr. Charles Levin (St. Louis, Mo.: Telos Press, 1981); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus,* tr. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983) and *A Thousand Plateaus,* tr. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). In a more sociological vein, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste,* tr. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); and in regards to literary history, Marc Shell, *The Economy of Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), and *Money, Language, and Thought: Literary and Philosophical Economies from the Medieval to the Modern Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

4. Jean de La Fontaine, "Les deux pigeons," *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Seuil, 1965), 140. The poem was first published in 1679.

5. François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Candide, ou l'optimisme* in *Oeuvres complètes,* ed. Louis Moland (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1877–85), XXI, 137–218.

6. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976); see also Jonathan Culler, "The Semiotics of Tourism," *American Journal of Semiotics* 1, no. 1–2 (1981), 127–40, and my "Sightseers: The Tourist as Theorist," *Diacritics* 10 (Winter 1980), 3–14. For more properly ethnographic discussions of the journey as a mode of cultural, or even political, empowerment, see Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques,* tr. John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 26–34; and Mary W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge, and Geographic Distance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

7. The most celebrated account of the Spanish conquest is Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Brevissima relacion de la destruycion de las Indias* (Seville, 1552). For the influence exerted on early European liberal attitudes toward colonialism by Las Casas's horrifying descriptions of Spanish atrocities, see Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières,* rev. ed. (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), 94–95, 149–54. See also, on the "discovery" of the "New" World, Edmundo O'Gorman, *The Invention of America: An Inquiry into the Historical Nature of the New World and the Meaning of Its History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961); J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New, 1492–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other,* tr. Richard Howard (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), and Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), especially 165–266. A crucial recontextualizing of Las Casas and the subsequent notoriety of the Spanish conquest can be found in Roberto Fernández Retamar's brilliant and moving "Against the Black Legend," in *Caliban and Other Essays,* tr. Edward Baker (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 56–73. Unlike other critics of Las Casas, Retamar is less interested in disputing the numerical accuracy of the atrocities alleged by Las Casas than in exposing the racism that has inspired his northern European readers, who fail to perceive that the earliest criticism of Spanish colonialism was itself Spanish in origin. On the other hand, this oppositional voice turns out to be virtually absent from the perhaps quieter but no less efficient genocide carried out in North America (and elsewhere) by English, French, and Dutch colonialists. On early French colonialism and reactions to the Spanish conquests, see Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l'expansion et de la colonisation française I: Les voyages de découverte et les premiers établissements* (Paris: PUF, 1948); and Tom Conley, "Montaigne and the New World," *Hispanic Issues* 4 (1989), 225–62.

8. *The Poetics of Aristotle,* ed. and trans. S. H. Butcher (London: Macmillan, 1936), 31.

9. *La syntaxe narrative des tragédies de Corneille* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1976). See also his more recent *Poetics of Plot* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985) and *Fictional Worlds* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986).

10. *L'invention du quotidien I: Arts de faire* (Paris: 10/18, 1980), 206. While de Certeau's statement may sound excessive out of context, one can find considerable support for his hypothesis in theoreticians of narrative, who almost invariably draw on the voyage as either the model narrative or the model for narrative. Witness Georg Lukàcs for whom the novel is the form that expresses "transcendental homelessness" (*Theory of the Novel,* tr. A. Bostock [Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971], 41 and passim). As for the system of character functions put forth by Vladimir Propp, it is possible to read the entire sequence of functions as constituting a journey begun by the very first function, the departure of someone from the home, and ending when all the complications surrounding the hero's return home are resolved: *Morphology of the Folktale,* tr. L. Scott, rev. Louis A. Wagner (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968). A literary historical argument concerning the relation between the early modern vogue for travel literature and the rise of that most elaborate of narrative genres, the novel, is made by Percy Adams in *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983).

11. No doubt the most eloquent expression of the imbrication between text and travel remains Michel Butor's "Le voyage et l'écriture," in *Répertoire* IV (Paris: Minuit, 1974), 9–29. Similar insights can be gleaned from Louis Marin, *Utopiques: Jeux d'espace* (Paris: Minuit, 1973); Normand Doiron, "L'art de voyager: Pour une définition du récit de voyage à l'époque classique," *Poétique* 73 (1988), 83–108, and "De l'épreuve de l'espace au lieu du texte: le récit de voyage comme genre," in Bernard Beugnot, ed., *Voyages: Récits et imaginaire, Biblio 17* 11 (1984), 15–31; also, Bernard Beugnot's preface to this same volume, ix–xvi; Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs,* tr. Richard Howard (New York: Braziller, 1972); Roland Barthes, *S/Z,* tr. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 105; Michel de Certeau, *L'invention du quotidien,* 171–227.

12. Such a critique of metaphysics is the one offered by Jacques Derrida, and the entire corpus of his work could be cited in this regard. In reference to the argument I am trying to make here, suffice it to mention in particular *Of Grammatology,* tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), and *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs,* tr. David Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

13. A variant of the *relation de voyage* is that of the voyage recounted through letters. Here, the steps in the voyager's itinerary are brought back or related to the addressee (stereotypically positioned at the traveler's point of departure) in the concrete form of the missives marked by their changing dates and place names. The dateline thus designates its addressor's progress even as it measures the distance the letter itself must retrace on its way back to the addressee. La Fontaine's *Relation d'un voyage de Paris en Limousin* (1663) and Mme. d'Aulnoy's *Relation du Voyage d'Espagne* (1691) exploit this possibility, as do, albeit in a very different register, the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses de Chine* (1702–76), compiled and edited by Jesuit missionaries. The device is also widely exploited precisely to obtain an (often facile) effect of cultural and geographical alienation in such eighteenth-century exotic novels as Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721), Poullain de Saint-Foix's *Lettres turques* (1730), and Mme. de Graffigny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747).

14. On the translation or transformation of topography into topic as it relates to the constitution of narrative, see Louis Marin, "Du corps au texte: propositions métaphysiques sur l'origine du récit," *Esprit* 423 (1973), 913–28.

15. Such a minimal voyage narrative is the one left behind by Jean-Jacques Rousseau as a "Road Notebook," dated 1754, whose text can be cited in toto:

> Dined Sunday on the grass close to Hermance.
> Slept at the château of Coudrée.

Dined Monday on the grass close to Ripailles.
Slept at Meilleraie.
Tuesday slept at Bex.
Dined at Pisse-Vache.
Slept at Saint-Maurice.
Dined at Aigle.
Frugal meal offered out of hospitality.
Is there not something Homeric about my voyage?
Dined Tuesday at Villeneuve.
Slept at Vevai.
Dined Wednesday at Cuilli.
Slept at Lauzanne.
Dined Tuesday and slept at Morges.
Dined Friday at Nion and slept at Eaux-Vives.

The place names for meals and overnight rests describe an itinerary around the most celebrated of Swiss lakes, an *excursus* whose circle can be closed by the addition of the implicit point of departure and return, the city of Geneva. The only nondesignative sentence raises the question of a Homeric allusion putatively capable of dignifying this modest outing. This text, if it can be called one, is then placed back into the literary tradition of epic travel, comfortably anchored in the name of its inaugural poet, even as Rousseau's Alpine odyssey brings him back home to the "living waters" (Eaux-Vives), not of Ithaca, but of Geneva.

16. Such a marking would extend even to so-called unmarked places, which are nonetheless marked as unmarked. Cf. Barbara Johnson, "Quelques conséquences de la différence anatomique des textes: Pour une théorie du poème en prose," *Poétique* 28 (1976), 465.

17. The topological conception of language can be as explicit as in Ludwig Wittgenstein's metaphor of language as a city (*Philosophical Investigations,* 3rd ed. rev., trans. G. E. M. Anscombe [New York: Macmillan, 1958], 8) or as implicit as the spatial metaphors endemic to structural theories of language with their horizontal and vertical axes of signification, positions of the speaking subject and synchronic projections. Indeed, the very notion of language as a structure implies its conceptualization as a space.

18. Cicero, *Topica,* tr. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, and London: Heinemann, 1960), 382; translation modified.

19. For a detailed discussion of *memoria* as well as of the use of topography as a memory aid in general, see Michel Beaujour, *Miroirs d'encre: Rhetorique de l'autoportrait* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), 79–168; and Frances Yates's classic, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

20. César Chesneau Du Marsais, *Traité des tropes ou des différents sens dans lesquels on peut prendre un même mot dans une même langue* (Paris: Le Nouveau Commerce, 1977), 7, my emphasis. Cf. Quintilian: "A trope is the advantageous removal [mutatio] of a word or a discourse from its proper signification over to another. . . . Now, a name or a word is transferred from that place in which it properly is [*ex eo loco in quo proprium est*] into another place, where either the proper name is in default or an improvement is made upon the proper term as a result of this removal [*tralatum*]." *Institutio oratoria* 8.6.1–8.6.6, ed. M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), my translation and emphases.

21. Roland Barthes, "The Old Rhetoric: An Aide-Mémoire," in *The Semiotic Challenge,* tr. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1988), 88, Barthes's emphasis.

22. Aristotle, *Poetics,* ed. and tr. Butcher, 77. Cf. Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology," in *Margins of Philosophy,* tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), 231 and

passim. On the attempt to establish a hierarchy of tropes, see Hans Kellner, "The Inflatable Trope as Narrative Theory: Structure or Allegory?" *Diacritics* 11 (Spring 1981), 14–28.

23. On the complexity of the problems posed by such metaphors of metaphor, see Richard Klein, "Straight Lines and Arabesques: Metaphors of Metaphor," *Yale French Studies* 45 (1970), 64–86.

24. Derrida, "White Mythology," 241.

25. An argument similar to the one I have made concerning the ambiguous entrapment-liberation in travel and in critical thought could also be advanced in relation to that political doctrine which came to full fruition with the Enlightenment, namely, liberalism. The liberal's position has traditionally been that of the bad faith of supporting progressive reform only to the extent that such reform does not jeopardize his or her own privileged status. On the other hand, liberal largesse must at least make the gesture of what it claims to be doing if it is not to be immediately unmasked as hypocritical imposture. To an extent that remains to be determined, the liberal must support the very reforms he or she dreads, and one might offer by way of an emblem the famous night of August 4, 1789, when the French nobles in the National Assembly vied with one another to give up as many of their feudal privileges as possible. There is room here for a study of the historical relations between critical thought, travel literature, and liberalism. On the events of August 4, see Jean-Pierre Hirsch, ed., *La nuit du 4 août* (Paris: Gallimard/Julliard, 1978).

26. The historical importance of the literature of exploration for the development of French critical thinking has been variously argued since Gustave Lanson's influential essay, "Le rôle de l'expérience dans la formation de la philosophie du XVIII[e] siècle en France," *Revue du Mois* (1910), 4–28 and 404–29, rpt. in *Essais de méthode de critique et d'histoire littéraire,* ed. H. Pèyre (Paris: Hachette, 1965); see also, in this tradition, Geoffroy Atkinson, *The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature Before 1700* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1920), *The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature From 1700 to 1720* (Paris: Champion, 1922), and *Les nouveaux horizons de la Renaissance française* (Paris: Droz, 1935); Gilbert Chinard, *L'exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI[e] siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1911), and *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVII[e] et au XVIII[e] siècle* (Paris: Droz, 1934); Paul Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680–1715* (Paris: Boivin, 1935), especially chapter one: "De la stabilité au mouvement," 3–25; René Pomeau, "Voyage et lumières dans la littérature française du XVIII[e] siècle," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 57 (1967), 1269–89; Henri Pèyre, "Reflections on the Literature of Travel," in *Travel, Quest, and Pilgimage as a Literary Theme: Studies in Honor of Reino Virtanen,* ed. F. Amelinckx and J. Megay (Ann Arbor: Society of Spanish and Spanish-American Studies, 1978), 7–23. On the correlation between scientific progress and the aesthetic gaze as articulated in early modern travelogues, see Barbara Maria Stafford, *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760–1840* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984). For a rendition that insists instead upon the function of voyage literature as an expression of bourgeois class consciousness, see Erica Harth, *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 222–309. Other recent critics who likewise insist on the ideological complicities between travel narrative and the legitimation of colonialist aspirations include Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières;* Michel de Certeau, "Writing vs. Time: History and Anthropology in the Works of Lafitau," tr. J. Hovde, *Yale French Studies* 59 (1980), 37–64, and *The Writing of History,* tr. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 3–5, 215–48, and passim; and Georges Benrekassa, *Le concentrique et l'excentrique: Marges des Lumières* (Paris: Payot, 1980), 91–153, 213–24, 239–84; and, of course, Edward Said's monumental *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978).

27. Charles Dédéyan, *Essai sur le Journal de voyage de Montaigne* (Paris: Boivin, n.d.), 35, 215.

28. Among many possible examples, see Derrida's deconstruction of the ethnocentrism that lies beneath Lévi-Strauss's putatively benevolent attitude toward the Nambikwara Indians he studies (*Of Grammatology,* 101–40). The range of historical possibilities for the critique of Western representations of otherness can be gauged by a number of recent works whose various subject matters span the gamut from the ancient to the modern world: François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus; Representations of the Other in the Writing of History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Mary Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic Travel Writing, 400–1600*; Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America*; and *Nous et les autres: La réflexion française sur la diversité humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1989); Edward Said, *Orientalism;* and Christopher L. Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

29. In the case of American literature, at least one critic has explicitly connected the theme of the voyage with the evasion of sexuality: "The figure of Rip Van Winkle presides over the birth of the American imagination . . . the typical male protagonist of our fiction has been a man on the run, harried into the forest and out to sea, down the river or into combat—anywhere to avoid 'civilization,' which is to say, the confrontation of a man and a woman which leads to the fall into sex, marriage, and responsibility" (Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* [New York: Criterion Books, 1960], xx–xxi).

30. The best-known French women writers of travel literature are Anne-Louise Germaine Necker, Mme. de Staël (*Corinne, ou l'Italie* [1807] and *De l'Allemagne* [1810]), and Flora Tristan (*Pérégrinations d'une paria* [1833] and *Promenades dans Londres* [1840]). For the Classical period, one should also especially note Marie de l'Incarnation (a nun whose experiences in Quebec are recounted in her *Relations spirituelles* [1653]), Marie-Catherine Jumel de Berneville, Mme. d'Aulnoy (*Relation du Voyage d'Espagne* [1691]), and Marie-Anne Le Page, Mme. Du Boccage (*La Colombiade, ou la foi portée au Nouveau Monde* [1756] and *Lettres sur l'Angleterre, la Hollande et l'Italie* [1762]).

31. Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film and Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 38 and passim.

32. Melanie Klein, "Early Analysis," and "The Role of the School in the Libidinal Development of the Child," in *Love, Guilt, and Reparation, and Other Essays, 1921–1945* (London: Hogarth Press, 1975), 59–105, especially 92–100.

33. Cf. Louis Van Delft, *Le moraliste classique* (Geneva: Droz, 1982), 173–91; and Jurgens Hahn, *The Origins of the Baroque Concept of "Peregrinatio"* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973).

34. The definitive study of the problem is, of course, Pierre and Huguette Chaunu's monumental eight-volume *Séville et l'Atlantique: 1504–1650* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1955–59).

35. See Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450–1800,* tr. David Gerard (London: New Left Books, 1976), especially 159–66; Henri-Jean Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société à Paris au XVIIesiècle,* 2 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1969); John Lough, *Writer and Public in France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the* Encyclopédie (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1979), and *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

36. The term "death of the author" derives from Roland Barthes's famous article of the same name, in *Image—Music—Text,* tr. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977),

142–48. Also see Peggy Kamuf, *Signature Pieces: On the Institution of Authorship* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).

37. On the symbolic dimension of absolutist monarchy, the key studies are Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); Louis Marin, *Le portrait du roi* (Paris: Minuit, 1981), and *Le récit est un piège* (Paris: Minuit, 1978); and Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le roi-machine* (Paris: Minuit,1981). More properly psychoanalytic insights are drawn by Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body* (New York: Random House, 1966), especially 3–31; and by Mitchell Greenberg, *Corneille, Classicism, and the Ruses of Symmetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). On the important relations between theatricality and royal power, see Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); and Timothy Murray, *Theatrical Legitimation: Allegories of Genius in Seventeenth-Century England and France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

38. Sarah Kofman, *Le respect des femmes* (Paris: Galilée, 1982), especially 71–83. Since Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1894), histories of the family and of the division of labor under preindustrial patriarchy have burgeoned. Among recent work, see especially Joan Kelley, "Family and State," in her *Women, History and Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 110–55; Eli Zaretsky, *Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life,* rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1986); Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978); Philippe Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Seuil, 1973); Jacques Donzelot, *La police des familles* (Paris: Minuit, 1977).

39. In addition to the previously mentioned publications by Duchet, de Certeau, and Campbell, also see the articles collected in *Histoires de l'anthropologie: XVI–XIX siècles,* ed. Britta Rupp-Eisenreich (Paris: Klincksieck, 1984); Margaret Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964); and Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau, fondateur des sciences de l'homme," in *Anthropologie structurale* II (Paris: Plon, 1973), 45–56.

40. De Jaucourt is either citing from memory or intentionally abbreviating and altering the passage from Montaigne, which can be found in "Of the Education of Children," *Les Essais de Michel de Montaigne,* ed. Pierre Villey, 3rd ed. (Paris: PUF, 1978), I, xxvi, 153. As for the last sentence of the quotation, it is not to be found in Montaigne and is either de Jaucourt's invention or taken from a text I have so far been unable to identify.

1. Equestrian Montaigne

1. Michel de Montaigne, *Journal de voyage en Italie par la Suisse et l'Allemagne en 1580 et 1581,* ed. M. Rat (Paris: Garnier, n.d.), 1. Unless otherwise noted, all subsequent page references are to this edition. English translations, with some modifications, are taken from Donald M. Frame, *Montaigne's Travel Journal* (1957; rpt. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1983).

2. Maurice Rat, "Introduction" to *Journal de Voyage en Italie* by Montaigne, ed. M. Rat (Paris: Garnier, n.d.), iii–iv. Cf. also Charles Dédéyan, *Essai sur le Journal de voyage de Montaigne,* (Paris: Boivan, n.d.) 27–32, 98–99; Paul Bonnefon, *Montaigne et ses amis* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1898; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1969), II, 1–46; Louis Lautrey, "Introduction" to *Journal de Voyage* by Montaigne (Paris: Hachette, 1906), 1–51; Donald Frame, *Montaigne's Discovery of Man: The Humanization of a Humanist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 110–20; and Donald Frame, *Montaigne: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965), 201–22.

The Morals of History

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6 / The Journey and Its Narratives

I

What is *not* a journey? As soon as one attributes an extended figurative meaning to the word—and one has never been able to refrain from doing so—the journey coincides with life, no more, no less: is life anything more than the passage from birth to death? Movement in space is the first sign, the easiest sign, of change; life and change are synonymous. Narrative is also nourished by change; in this sense journey and narrative imply one another. The journey in space symbolizes the passing of time, physical movement symbolizes interior change; everything is a journey, but as a result this "everything" has no specific identity. The journey transcends all categories, up to and including that of change in oneself and in the other, since as far back as the most remote antiquity, journeys of discovery (explorations of the unknown) and journeys home (the reappropriation of the familiar) have been found side by side: the Argonauts were great voyagers, but so was Ulysses.

Travel narratives are as old as journeys themselves, if not older. The first great wave of modern journeys occurred at the end of the fifteenth and in the sixteenth centuries; and although it seems paradoxical, at that time the narratives preceded the journeys. From the High Middle Ages on,

the public favored narratives that were more or less fanciful and that aroused their curiosity. One learns in these narratives, for example, how it took the Irish monk Saint Brendan seven years to reach the Terrestrial Paradise after having braved every danger and met a variety of supernatural beings. Then there is Marco Polo's *Book of Marvels,* written in the early fourteenth century after his return from China, which, although it does not lapse into the supernatural, still lives up to its title. Soon afterward John Mandeville wrote his *Travels,* an inextricable blend of real facts and fabulous inventions; he too described the Terrestrial Paradise. During this time a number of compilation books also appeared, cosmographies or images of the world (Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly's famous *Imago mundi,* for example), inventories of all that was known about countries and peoples. These works were well known, and they paved the way for the narratives of later travelers, who in fact believed them to be reliable sources of information. Columbus, for example, took on his journey letters for the Great Khan who had been described by Marco Polo. And Vasco da Gama carried letters for Prester John, a legendary character who, according to Mandeville's narrative, lived in the Indies.

The public was not really surprised, therefore, by the first narratives of the new discoveries, and it is easy to imagine that the travelers themselves—who had also at one time been part of the reading-and-listening audience—were not shocked by their discoveries. In addition to the popularity of the ancient narratives, there is another reason for this lack of surprise, which has to do with a characteristic specific to European history. The geography of the Mediterranean enabled contact among populations that were physically and culturally quite varied: Christian Europeans, Muslim Turks and Moors, animist Africans. During the Renaissance, the Europeans' consciousness of their own historical diversity was added to this multiformity as they began to think of themselves as heirs to two quite separate traditions: Greco-Roman on the one hand, Judeo-Christian on the other; and this latter was not monolithic, since it offered the unique example of one religion that was built on another (Christianity and Judaism). In other words, the Europeans were already aware, through their own past and present, of the plurality of cultures. They had, in a sense, an empty slot where they could place newly discovered peoples without upsetting their general worldview.

This becomes obvious, for example, during the Spanish conquest of America. When the conquistadors saw the Indian temples, they spontaneously called them "mosques": the general procedure becomes obvious here, since the term begins at this point to designate any non-Christian place of wor-

ship. When the Spaniards discovered a somewhat larger city, they immediately called it "Great Cairo." In order to make his impressions of the Mexicans clear to his reader, Francisco de Aguilar, one of the first chroniclers, began his narrative with the following: "As a child and adolescent, I began reading many histories and tales about the Persians, Greeks, and Romans. I also knew, from reading, the rites carried out in the Portuguese Indies." The illustrations of the time also attest to this projection of the familiar (even if it is somewhat strange) onto the unknown.

II

If one cannot isolate the journey from what it is not, one can, somewhat more successfully, attempt to distinguish within this vast confused medley several kinds of journeys, several categories that allow us to clarify particular types of journeys. The most general opposition we can establish is between the spiritual and the material, between interior and exterior. Two well-known examples of these categories from medieval narratives are Mandeville's *Travels* and the quest for the Holy Grail. The first describes two journeys (composed of real and imaginary elements, but let us leave this distinction aside for the time being), one in the Holy Land and one in the Far East. Here, the author discovers, to his readers' great delight, all kinds of fantastic beings in addition to Terrestrial Paradise itself. The second narrative describes the adventures of the Knights of the Round Table who set out from King Arthur's Court in search of a sacred and mysterious object, the Grail. Little by little these knights realize that the quest in which they are engaged is of a spiritual nature, and that the Grail is impalpable; this is why only the purest among them, Galahad and Perceval, can reach it.

Already one can see from these examples that, although the spiritual and material categories are opposed, they are not incompatible, nor do the narratives belong exclusively to one genre or the other. On the contrary, both categories are almost always present simultaneously; only the proportions and the hierarchies vary. Mandeville's book is primarily read as a tale of adventure, but, at the same time, it is a didactic work. The story of the Holy Grail, on the other hand, is an example of spiritual reinterpretation, a Christian reclaiming of legends that had originally had a different meaning. But whatever the original intention of the authors, the new readers and their guides — the commentators — can always provide a spiritual meaning where there had been none, or a meaning different from the one originally intended. In fact, journeys lend themselves particularly well to this reinterpretation.

Thus, from Hellenistic times on, Ulysses' return to Ithaca was viewed only as an image of flight from tangible beauties toward ideal beauty: Homer became an illustration of Plato. Particular narratives can thus occupy every imaginable point along an axis that leads from the purely exterior to the purely interior. Amerigo Vespucci's letters fall somewhere in the middle of this axis: they contain the narrative of some actual journeys, but they also contain the myth of the golden age. Although he was influenced by these letters, Thomas More is infinitely closer to the spiritual pole; on the other hand, Pigafetta, the narrator of the first journey around the world, is closer to the material pole: rather than constructing a utopia, he was content to recount a lengthy expedition.

If the opposition between the spiritual and the material does not allow one to classify narratives, but simply to understand them better, the same cannot be said of a second opposition to which these categories contribute, this time within one and the same text. In the new opposing categories, the relation between interior journey and exterior journey moves from complicity to hostility. This means that in our civilization, which favors the spiritual over the material (although it is not the only civilization to do so), the actual journey is at times valorized because it is the incarnation or prefiguration of the spiritual journey, and at times belittled because the interior has become preferable to the exterior.

At first, Christian religion seemed to lean toward complicity, and therefore it favored the establishment of a metaphorical relation between the exterior and the interior journey. Didn't Christ say "I am the way," and didn't he send his disciples into the world? Things changed rapidly, however, and as soon as Christianity was established as official doctrine, the motionless quest was favored over movement in space. An ancient Christian author speaking to other monks said: "Remain in your cell and it will teach you everything. Just as fish die if they are on dry land, monks perish outside of their cell." To venture forth was to participate in the spirit of worldliness that Pascal would castigate much later. In the late seventeenth century, in his *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (Adventures of Telemachus), a Christian variation of the *Odyssey,* Fénelon seemed to have forgotten that he was writing a narrative of a journey (even if it was an imaginary one), and it was within the very framework of material journeys that he succeeded in stigmatizing them. The inhabitants of Bétique, a country that embodies the golden age, are clever navigators, yet they scorn the results of their art, that is, journeys, as well as those who undertake them. "If those people — they say — have in their own country enough of what is necessary for life, what are they

seeking in another country?" (270). More recently, at the end of his *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* (Memoirs from beyond the grave), Chateaubriand concludes in a spirit faithful both to Christianity and to the old Stoicism: "Man does not need to travel in order to grow; he carries immensity with him" (2:966).

If the journey is only vanity, the same will be true of its narrative. In Fénelon's book, this is what Telemachus learns at his own expense once he has enjoyed talking to Calypso about her wanderings. " 'Love of vainglory has made you speak without prudence,' Mentor scolded him. 'When, oh Telemachus, will you be wise enough not to speak from vanity alone?' " (177). The very existence of a narrative necessarily implies the valorization of its subject (because it is worthy of mention), and therefore also implies a certain satisfaction on the part of its narrator. Fénelon is unambiguous as far as his own narrative is concerned. What interests him in these "adventures" is not the pleasure to be derived from the journey, but the "truths necessary for government" that are presented in amusing fashion to the future prince, to whom the work is addressed.

Such an attitude is not exclusive to the Christian tradition. If we take another journey, this time to China, we see that the *Tao* of Lao Tzu also designates the way; but again, mere movement in space is belittled here. And in Chuang Tzu's work the men of the golden age hardly differ from Fénelon's Betiquians: "They are satisfied to stay at home. It can happen that the neighboring village is so close that one can hear the dogs barking there and the cocks crowing, but people can grow old and die without ever having been there" (quoted in Waley, 71–72). Like Chateaubriand, Lieh Tzu, another Taoist author from the fourth century B.C., preferred interior journeys:

> Those who take great pains for exterior journeys do not know how to organize visits that one can make inside oneself. He who journeys outside is dependent on exterior things; he who makes interior visits can find himself everything he needs. This is the highest way to travel; while the journey of the one who depends on exterior things is a poor journey. (ibid., 43)

In our own time, cultures that were previously isolated from one another have come into contact (yet another result of journeys!), and it is difficult to distinguish with precision the various sources—Eastern or Western—of this mysticism that belittles journeys in the name of the superiority of the interior over the exterior. During one of his very first journeys, to Latin America, the poet Henri Michaux discovered the vanity of travel and

concluded: "You can just as easily find your truth staring for forty-eight hours at some old tapestry" (86). He did not follow his own advice, however, and set out again, this time to Asia; yet he arrived at the same conclusion, even if this time the filiation is oriental:

> And now, said Buddha to his disciples,
> at the time of dying:
> In the future, be your own light, your own
> refuge.
> Do not seek any other refuge.
> Do not go in quest of any refuge other than
> near you.
> . . . . .
> Do not trouble yourselves with others' ways of thinking.
> Stay on your own island,
> *Stick to Contemplation.* (*Un Barbare en Asie,* 233)

Alongside these traditions, which can be considered dominant and which disparage the journey, there are others—equally abundant if less glorious—in which the journey is praised, not because the material is preferable to the spiritual, but because the relation between them can be one of harmony rather than of conflict. Here again, it is the education of the soul that is the goal of these movements of the body: "If the water of a pond remains still, it becomes stagnant, muddy, and fetid; it only remains clear if it moves and runs. The same is true of the man who travels": so ancient Arab wisdom teaches us. Dante's Ulysses, while condemned to suffer in the eighth circle of hell, seems to have established a perfectly balanced relation between interior and exterior journeys: he moves in space in order to know the world, in particular, human vices and virtues; and he exhorts his companions to follow him since they were not "made to live like brutes / But to follow both science and virtue" (Canto XXVI). Along the same lines, Montaigne writes that the journey offers us the best means "to rub and polish our brain by contact with those of others" ("Of the Education of Children," 112). Although the goal is self-knowledge, the journey is no less indispensable: it is by exploring the world that one begins to discover oneself. "This great world . . . is the mirror in which we must look in order to recognize ourselves from the proper angle" (116). And countless travelers have proved by their example that they share these same convictions.

Must one be content simply to acknowledge the dialogue between these two traditions, or can one legitimately prefer one to the other? It is easy to see in what sense the contemplation of the wall hanging can offer

the same knowledge as movement in space, or even greater knowledge, since it encourages concentration and meditation. Nonetheless, the limits of this solipsism are quickly reached. The existence of others around us is not purely accidental. Others are not simply solitary subjects comparable to the *I* plunged in solitary meditation, they are also part of it: the *I* does not exist without a *you*. One cannot reach the bottom of oneself if one excludes others. The same holds true for knowledge of foreign countries and different cultures: the person who knows only his own home always runs the risk of confusing culture and nature, of making custom the norm, and of forming generalizations based on a single example: oneself. The Betiquians must visit countries other than their own (and therefore undertake journeys) in order to seek what is necessary to the life of the mind, not of the body. The villagers described by Chuang Tzu can discover in the neighboring town more than dogs and roosters (which, in fact, probably do greatly resemble the ones they already know). They can discover other men and women whose vision of the world is different, even if only slightly, from theirs. This, in turn, could change them and lead them to be a little more just.

The relationship between spiritual and material journeys was modified with the advent of modern times. If we start from the mass of existing narratives, rather than from preestablished categories, we can say that the most general opposition concerns the *use* to which they are put rather than their *nature,* and that this change is in accordance with the increased subjectivization of the world in which we live. Rather than speaking of a spiritual journey, we would speak today of an allegorical narrative (since allegory points to something other than what it signifies), in which the journey is only a pretext the author uses to express his opinions. Still, there is no consecrated term; the Romantics spoke of a genre that, in order to distinguish it from allegory, they called *tautegory,* something that speaks only of itself. As we can see, the opposition is the same one that has structured Western identity for several centuries: the two kinds of travel narratives are opposed as autonomy and heteronomy, finding one's raison d'être inside or outside oneself; or again as those forms of social organization, modern individualism, or traditional holism, a society of individuals that judges itself to be free and equal and a community of members of a group who depend for their fate on the habits and decisions of this group. The most appropriate term with which to designate the nonallegorical travel narratives would perhaps be *impressionist,* since it has been historically tested and clearly suggests that the traveler is content to offer us his impressions, without attempting to teach us "something else."

In Western Europe there has undoubtedly been a movement away from allegorical narratives toward impressionistic narratives. There are numerous examples of this movement, yet none seems more eloquent than the works of Chateaubriand. Chateaubriand undertook two great journeys or, as he himself said, pilgrimages, to the West and to the East. As a young man, he went to North America and brought back a journal of his journey and an epic poem entitled *Les Natchez* from which he took the two pieces that brought him fame: *Atala* and *René*. Fifteen years later, he set out in the opposite direction, traveling to Athens, Jerusalem, Egypt, and Tunisia. The narrative of this journey, now called *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem,* provides the prototype for countless later narratives. Chateaubriand himself sought to formulate the relation between these two journeys. At times he says that it is nature versus culture, or the civilization of the future versus that of the past. But from our point of view the most meaningful opposition lies in the genre of the two narratives: the one on America is allegorical, and the one on the Orient, impressionistic. The former submits the traveler's observations to a preconceived design that they are used to illustrate; the latter neglects the world and concentrates on the self, recounting the successive impressions of that self.

III

If one were to ask uninitiated readers today what they expect from a travel narrative, they would no doubt find it difficult to give a detailed answer; and yet an expectation exists, and it constitutes one aspect of what is called a literary genre (the other being the internalizing of this same norm by the writer). This expectation is not the same today as it was in the sixteenth century: the texts themselves have not changed, but we read them with different eyes. I would like to propose a hypothesis regarding the nature of our contemporary expectations.

The first important feature of the travel narrative as it is unconsciously imagined by today's reader seems to me to be a certain tension (or a certain balance) between the observing subject and the observed object. This is what, in its way, the term *travel narrative* designates: narrative, that is, personal narration and not objective description; but also travel, and therefore a framework of circumstances exterior to the subject. If only one of the ingredients is present, we are no longer within the genre in question, but are sliding toward another. For example, *De la démocratie en Amerique* leans too heavily toward the description of its object to be considered a travel narrative, even

if Tocqueville sporadically refers to the circumstances under which he obtained a certain piece of information. Conversely, if an author speaks only about himself, we once again find ourselves outside the genre. On one side, the boundary is science; on the other, autobiography. The travel narrative comes into being from the fusion of the two.

There is also a second feature of the genre, which its name does not indicate, but which is just as important: the situating in time and in space of the experiences reported by the narratives. In space: the "true" travel narrative, from the point of view of the contemporary reader, recounts the discovery of *others,* either the savages of faraway lands or the representatives of non-European civilizations—Arab, Hindu, Chinese, and so on. A journey in France would not result in a "travel narrative." It is not that such narratives do not exist, but they clearly lack the feeling of alterity in relation to the people (and the lands) described. There are journeys in Italy (a French speciality, though not exclusively) by Montaigne, de Brosses, and Stendhal. Yet here one must cite proper names, whereas typical authors of travel narratives are not professional writers; rather, they are people who take up their pens almost in spite of themselves, because they believe themselves to be the bearers of an exceptional message. Once this message has been delivered, they rush to return to their normal existence as nonwriters. A good number of these narratives are in fact anonymous; on the other hand, a journey in Italy is unexceptional in and of itself, and the Italians are not radically different from the French. It is the author alone who can justify the existence of the narrative.

The situating in time is perhaps more difficult, but I believe it is just as real. Travel narratives are written in our day; the next serialized article in *Le Monde* could easily be a travel narrative. Still, one senses a difference between books published in travel series and those strictly contemporary texts. And that difference is a lack of a certain distance in the latter (even if the financial means that the undertaking demands are not lacking) between the author of the narrative and his or her reader. I think therefore that, in addition to the first relation of alterity—the one that exists between the narrator and the object of his narrative—there exists another, less obvious no doubt, between reader and narrator, who must not share the same ideological framework. The narrator's discovery of the other, his object, is repeated in miniature by the reader in relation to the narrator himself; the process of reading imitates to a certain extent the content of the narrative: it is a journey within the book. The distance between narrator and reader cannot be

precisely determined, but I would say that, in order to mark the boundary, at least one generation separating reader and writer is necessary.

And at the most? Travel narratives have been around forever... or at least since Herodotus's time. Yet here again I sense a boundary. The first "true" travel narrative (still from the point of view of today's reader) seems to me to be Marco Polo's; and I do not think it was by chance that this book played a decisive role in the departure of Columbus, who in his turn influenced so many other travelers. Before Marco Polo, in antiquity and the Middle Ages, there were of course travelers who told of their experiences, but they are *too* foreign to us: as foreign as the lands they visited. Herodotus's Greece is no less foreign to us than is his Egypt, even if the narrative perspective favors the former over the latter. And this is where I would view the essential feature of our genre to be: the narrator must be different from us, but not too different, not, in any case, as different as the people who are the subject of his narrative. The typical narrator would therefore be a European, belonging to the long period that extends from the Renaissance to about 1950.

If my reader has followed me up to this point, it is now necessary to take one more step. And that is that this same period, in the history of Western Europe, has a name: colonialism. If this structural feature were to be taken into account in the naming of the genre, it would be called: narrative of colonial journeys.

This becomes obvious if one examines the question from another angle. Who are the authors of these narratives? They are conquering warriors, merchants, missionaries, that is, the representatives of three forms of colonialism: military, commercial, and spiritual. Or they are explorers who put themselves in the service of one or the other of these three categories. They are not the only ones to travel, however, or to relate their journeys. But when the members of other groups write, the results are not "travel narratives." Scientists produce descriptions of nature or of people that, even if they are still imbued with a colonialist ideology, push personal experience into the background. Poets write poetry, as it should be, and at bottom we care little whether it was written during a journey or not. Adventurers in their turn can write tales of adventure without being concerned with the populations they encounter. In order to ensure the tension necessary to the travel narrative, the specific position of the colonizer is required: curious about the other, and secure in his own superiority.

Is it justified, however, to bring up colonialism in order to explain readers' present reactions, since colonialism can be considered dead, at least in its classic form? Granted, old-style colonialism is no longer exactly our problem; nor, however, and as a result, is decolonization. We are all in favor of people's right to self-determination, and we all profess faith in the natural equality of races. Yet for all that we have not stopped believing in the superiority of our civilization over "theirs"; and why would we, since they all seem to want to imitate us and dream of coming to work in our countries?

This could explain the popularity that travel narratives from earlier times still enjoy today. These texts are imbued with the sense of our superiority from the first line to the last. I am not speaking only of openly racist authors, such as Stanley, but even of more well-meaning travelers, even those who, like Cabeza de Vaca, Staden, or Guinnard, were conquered, made prisoners or slaves; the essential is not in the content of a statement, but in the very fact of its utterance, which is always from our side. In Marx's terms, they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented. Thus, as today's readers, we retain the advantage of colonialist ideology; but at the same time we derive the benefit brought about by the period of decolonization since we can still say to ourselves: but we are *not* those authors. The alienation so dear to Brecht, occurring here in relation to the narrators of these tales, allows us to retain our pleasure without having to face the criticism that could be leveled at our elders.

As I prepare for my trip, or upon arriving in a foreign country, I purchase, in addition to a practical guide, a slightly older travel narrative. Why? Because it offers me the prism I need in order to really take advantage of my trip: a slightly caricatural image of others that allows me to note with satisfaction the entire path that has been traveled; an image that separates me from the narrator, but that is sufficiently accurate on several counts to reassure me of my own superiority; an image of the traveler with which I identify while at the same time distancing myself from it, and which thus absolves me of all guilt.

"But in the end," my exasperated reader will say, "does it really matter so much if the vision of the Indians in these narratives does not conform to reality? You can't spend your life crying over the fate of the natives of every country! Let's change subjects already. How about going to see a western tonight?"

7 / Some Remarks on Contacts among Cultures

A specific difficulty arises when one attempts to consider intercultural relations: everyone already seems to agree on what the ideal state of these relations should be. This is somewhat surprising: although racist behavior abounds, no one seems to admit to racist ideology. Everyone favors peace, coexistence in mutual understanding, balanced and fair exchanges, efficient dialogue: international conferences proclaim this, congresses of experts agree on it, and radio and television programs repeat it. And yet we continue to live in a state of incomprehension and war. It seems that the very consensus about what is "politically correct" in this area, and the widespread conviction that good is preferable to evil, deprive this ideal of any effectiveness: banality results in paralysis.

We must, therefore, rid our ideal of its banality. But how? Obviously, not by embracing an obscurantist and racist credo so as to be original. I, for my part, see the possibility of action taking two directions. On the one hand, the ideal is effective only if it bears a relation to the real. This does not mean that it is necessary to lower our ideal in order to make it attainable, but that it must not be separated from the workings of knowledge. We must not have neutral scientist-technicians on one side and moralists who are unaware of human realities on the other; we must have scientists

TRAVELING THEORIES
TRAVELING THEORISTS

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NOTES ON TRAVEL AND THEORY

James Clifford

Travel: a figure for different modes of dwelling and displacement, for trajectories and identities, for storytelling and theorizing in a postcolonial world of global contacts. Travel: a range of practices for situating the self in a space or spaces grown too large, a form both of exploration and discipline. Theory: returned to its etymological roots, with a late twentieth-century difference.

The Greek term *theorein*: a practice of travel and observation, a man sent by the polis to another city to witness a religious ceremony. "Theory" is a product of displacement, comparison, a certain distance. To theorize, one leaves home. But like any act of travel, theory begins and ends somewhere. In the case of the Greek theorist the beginning and ending were one, the home polis. This is not so simply true of traveling theorists in the late twentieth century.

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Paul Fussel's *Abroad*: a reading of British "literary traveling" between the two world wars. Fussell distinguishes three types: explorers, travelers and tourists. Explorers, he writes, like Francis Drake and Edmund Hillary, often end up with knighthoods.

> No traveler, and certainly no tourist, is ever knighted for his performances, although the strains he may undergo can be as memorable as the explorer's. [I read the male pronoun in Fussell's account as generally descriptive rather than generic.] All three make journeys, but the explorer seeks the undiscovered, the traveller that which has been discovered by the mind working in history, the tourist that which has been discovered by entrepreneurship and prepared for him by the arts of mass publicity. The genuine traveler

> is, or used to be, [Fussell's is a requiem for the good traveler] is in the middle between the two extremes. If the explorer moves toward the risks of the formless and the unknown, the tourist moves toward the security of pure cliché. It is between these two poles that the traveler mediates, retaining all he can of the excitement of the unpredictable attaching to exploration, and fusing that with the pleasure of "knowing where one is" belonging to tourism. (*Abroad* p. 39)

There's an assumed topography, an already "worlded" world (as Gayatri Spivak might put it) underlying Fussell's vision. The explorer "seeks" the undiscovered; he and the other voyagers "move toward" different experiences, discoveries. However formless or unknown the places an explorer visits (and this is a relative matter: how "unknown" was the summit of Everest for Hillary?, or the moon for Neil Armstrong?), the explorer's point of departure is clear. Home is a stable place to tell one's story, show one's photos, get one's knighthood. In Fussell's topography, home and abroad are still clearly divided, self and other spatially distinct. How *far* this is from the heterocultural situation of Britain today!

The title, *Abroad*, has an old-fashioned ring. Abroad was once simply "out there," over the Channel, a distanced but known set of places. And here Fussell's emphasis on the pleasure of orientation, of knowing where one is while traveling and while experiencing a domesticated *frisson* of adventure, rings true. The Eurocentrism, let alone andro- and Anglocentrism, of Fussell's definitions is all too clear. The genuine, reflective traveler, "mediating" extremes, seeking what "has been discovered by the mind working in history," moves across a landscape where things are in place—home and abroad, us and them—where one can go "out" and "return" with a representable experience or a discovery of interest to a stable community of readers. "The mind working in history?" There is no need to ask whose mind, whose history. . . Fussell is right that these preconditions for the "genuine traveler" are no more.

In the late twentieth century the community, the polis, of the Greek traveller-theorist loses its centrality as a "home" base. It is more and more difficult to ignore what has always to some extent been true—that

every center or home is someone else's periphery or diaspora. The most remote "native" lands are tourist attractions. The great cities and suburbs of what used to be called—with a confident sense of spatial integrity—"the West" are occupied by immigrants and *Gastarbeiter* from the Third World and former colonies.

Such a scrambling of locations brings a repositioning of cultural "theory"—a contested term I use to denote simply any developed comparative knowledge about the histories and forms of collective life. This postcolonial confusion (as Daniel Defert has called it) involves a new marking of "the West" as a site of ongoing power *and* contestation, of centrality *and* dispersal.

Theory, a product long associated with Western discursive spaces—a status that permitted it to speak confidently of "human" history, culture, psyche, etc.—now is marked by specific historical centers and horizons. Since Fanon at least, non-Western theorists have encroached regularly on the territories of Western theory, working oppositionally, with and against (both inside and outside) dominant terms and experiences. Since the sixties and seventies, diverse non-Western and feminist writers have challenged the status of traditional theory, particularly its aspiration to potent overview, its suppression of location and of its genealogical, storytelling functions.

Theory is no longer naturally "at home" in the West--a powerful place of Knowledge, History, or Science, a place to collect, sift, translate, and generalize. Or, more cautiously, this privileged place is now increasingly contested, cut across, by other locations, claims, trajectories of knowledge articulating racial, gender, and cultural differences. But how is theory appropriated and resisted, located and displaced? How do theories travel among the unequal spaces of postcolonial confusion and contestation? What are their predicaments? How does theory travel and how do theorists travel? Complex, unresolved questions.

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Conventionally, theory has been associated with big pictures—trans-cultural and trans-historical. Localization undermines a discourse's claim to "theoretical" status. For example, psychoanalysis loses something of

its theoretical aura when it is found to be rooted in bourgeois Vienna of the turn of the century and in a certain male subjectivity for which woman is object and enigma. The same is true for Marxism when a critic like Foucault remarks, somewhere in *The Order of Things*, "Marxism swims in the nineteenth century like a fish in water."

Psychoanalytic claims to speak for "the human" across cultures, classes, genders, and sexualities are now very much in question. Yet psychoanalysis is, nonetheless, considerably more than a local act, a male Viennese ethnoscience. It has travelled—with inevitable displacements, revisions, and challenges. For example, in the United States during the 40s and 50s psychoanalysis was appropriated as "ego psychology," itself contested in the name of a different Freud by Marcuse and Brown, theorists who found their mass audiences in the radical sixties. The theory's original route into England, and recent re-arrival by way of Paris, is another story. So is Fanon's use and displacement of its terms. There are places in the world where psychoanalysis may never travel with any degree of comfort.

It would be interesting to explore how "major" theorists, like Freud or Marx, actually travelled in ways that helped establish a "Western" centrality for their theory, and its ability, for a time, to escape location and partiality. We might consider Freud's early travel to Paris, his vacations in Rome, his interest in Shakespeare, all giving a broadly "European" feel to a discourse written in German, in bourgeois Vienna. Moreover, his passionate collecting of antiquities was a kind of travel in time and space to specific origin sites--Egypt, the near East, Greece. All of these displacements within an unmarked "Western" place and history situated his theorizing. They helped construct that "theoretical" place that is noplace and thus potentially everyplace.

In the case of Marx, we might attend to the theorist's actual travels from the (marginal) Rhineland to the political center of Europe, Paris, and then to the emerging source of industrial-commercial dynamism, Manchester-London. Germany's "backwardness" was, of course a constant theme for the young Marx. By moving to Paris and then to England he modernized, politically and economically. Written from these places, Marxism made its theoretical claim to centrality and thus to a place at the cutting edge of History. Could Marx have produced Marxism

in the Rhineland? Or even in Rome? Or in St. Petersburg? It is hard to imagine, and not merely because he needed the British Museum and its blue books. Marxism had to articulate the "center" of the world—the historically and politically progressive source.

Center/periphery—Home/abroad—past/future. . .

At the same time, a doubt about this historical topography exercised the Slavophile intelligentsia in Russia—as in the twentieth century it has troubled a range of "Third World" intellectuals. A profound attraction-repulsion to the West and Europe was felt by a Hertzen or a Dostoevski (traveling in and out of the "center"), the feeling that Russia must inevitably take that route while hoping that another path to modernity might yet be possible. One thinks of Vera Zasulich's question to the old Marx (Could Russia produce an indigenous socialism?) and his famous "maybe." Such ambivalences and alternative paths have long been expressed by "marginal" theorists, but only in postcolonial contexts have they begun to seriously disrupt the (chrono)topographies underlying Western theoretical claims to represent "human" diversity and history.

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Of the many recent writings that, in preliminary ways, articulate and analyze postcolonial locations and displacements of theory two have been particularly influential in the United States: Adrienne Rich's often-cited "Notes Toward a Politics of Location" (1984) and Edward Said's "Travelling Theory." (1983) The first is collected in *Blood, Bread and Poetry*, the second in *The World, the Text and the Critic*.

Rich's "Notes," along with several other important essays of the early eighties registers the contestation of a political/theoretical category "woman" and of a common female "experience" that had emerged in the seventies as part of a largely white, first-world, middle-class feminism. Rich was among the first to react to a disruption of this too-homogenous category and experience around differences of race, culture and sexuality. Works like Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga's collection, *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981), Barbara Smith's collection, *Home Girls* (1983), and Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider* (1984) or *Zami* (1982) were complicating, in concrete personal *and* theoretical ways, the

intersection of specific and unequal experiences too quickly subsumed under the term "Woman."

> The problem was that we did not know whom we meant when we said "we." (Rich: 217)

> It was in the writings but also in the actions and speeches and sermons of Black United States citizens that I began to experience the meaning of my whiteness as a point of location for which I needed to take responsibility. It was in reading poems by contemporary Cuban women that I began to experience the meaning of North America as a location which had also shaped my ways of seeing and my ideas of who and what was important, a location for which I was also responsible. (Rich: 219-20)

In light of such decenterings, to "theorize" becomes a newly problematic activity. For it cannot simply dissolve into—or, put more positively, be "grounded in"—the local, "experiential," and circumstantial. To theorize about "women" or "patriarchy" one must stand in some experience of commonality or political alliance, looking beyond the local or experiential to wider, comparative phenomena. Indeed, how can feminism as a distinct discourse and politics exist without the possibility of broad theorizing? And yet, if "woman," must be allowed to fracture into "women," into different historical experiences of gender, cross-cut by race, culture, class, and nationality, how are the commonalities and differences at stake to be theorized?

"Location," here, is not a matter of finding a stable "home" or of discovering a common experience. Rather it is a matter of being aware of the difference that makes a difference in concrete situations, of recognizing the various inscriptions, "places," or "histories" that both empower and inhibit the construction of theoretical categories like "Woman," "Patriarchy," or "colonization," categories essential to political action as well as to serious comparative knowledge. "Location" is thus, concretely, a *series* of locations and encounters, travel within diverse, but limited spaces. Location, for Adrienne Rich, is a dynamic awareness of discrepant attachments—as a woman, a white middle-class writer, a lesbian, a Jew. When, in a much-quoted passage from *Zami*, Audre Lorde writes of inhabiting a "house of difference," she refers to a

constrained, empowering locus of historically-produced connections and differences: woman, Afro-American, lesbian, North-American, Caribbean.

Karl Mannheim's free-floating intellectual is no more. With different degrees of comfort and privilege, he or she moves around in complex, constrained travel trajectories. And the same is true of the post-modern primitivist figure of the "nomad," whether the source is Deleuze and Guattari, or Bruce Chatwin's recent *Songlines*. Indeed, far from an experience of escape or flight, actual "nomadism," past or present, is a regulated practice of travel within a known world. (It is interesting to speculate on the current appeal of the nomad metaphor—an image of dwelling-in-travel, of inhabiting, with mastery, a "place" that's too large.)

The word "travel" suggests a more everyday, institutionalized activity, inviting historical specification. Perhaps it is why Edward Said titled his essay "Traveling Theory" rather than "Nomadic Theory", or "Displaced Theory," or "Disseminating Theory." This sense of worldly, "mapped" movement is also why it may be worth holding on to the term "travel", despite its connotations of middle class "literary," or recreational, journeying, spatial practices long associated with male experiences and virtues. "Travel" suggests, at least, profane activity, following public routes and beaten tracks. How do different populations, classes and genders travel? What kinds of knowledges, stories, and theories do they produce? A crucial research agenda opens up.

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Said's "Traveling Theory" challenges the propensity of theory to seek a stable place, to float above historical conjunctures. He proposes a series of important questions about the sites of production, reception, transmission and resistance to specific theories. The essay centers on a limited travel story: the transmission and alteration of Lukacsian Marxism from Hungary in the post WW1 period to the Paris of Lucien Goldmann, to the England of Raymond Williams. Said's general pespective is summed up in the following paragraph, following on a contrast between Lukacs the "participant in a struggle" (the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919) and Goldman, "expatriate historian at the Sorbonne."

> In measuring Lukacs and Goldmann against each other, then, we are also recognizing the extent to which theory is a response to a specific social and historical situation of which an intellectual occasion is a part. Thus what is insurrectionary consciousness in one instance becomes tragic vision in another, for reasons that are elucidated when the situations in Budapest and Paris are seriously compared. I do not wish to suggest that Budapest and Paris determined the kinds of theories produced by Lukacs and Goldmann. I do mean that "Budapest" and "Paris" are irreducibly first conditions, and they provide limits and apply pressures to which each writer, given his own gifts, predilections, and interests, responds. (p. 237)

Said's essay is an indispensable starting place for an analysis of theory in terms of its locations and displacements, its travels. But the essay needs modification when extended to a postcolonial context. The Budapest, Paris, London itinerary is linear, and confined to Europe. Said's delineation of four "stages" of travel—an origin, a distance traversed, a set of conditions for acceptance or rejection, and finally a transformed (incorporated) idea occupying "a new position in a new time and place" (p. 227)—these stages read like an all-too-familiar story of immigration and acculturation. Such a linear path cannot do justice to the feedback loops, the ambivalent appropriations and resistances that characterize the travels of theories, and theorists, between places in the "First" and "Third" worlds. (I'm thinking about the journey of Gramscian Marxism to India through the work of the Subaltern Studies group, and its return as an altered, newly valuable commodity to places like Durham North Carolina or Santa Cruz California in the writings of Ranajit Guha, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakravorty, etc. When I began these notes Guha was a visiting professor at Santa Cruz.)

Intellectuals such as Gayatri Spivak, Cornel West, Aijaz Ahmad, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Chandra Mohanty, Renato Rosaldo, Said himself, the writers in this volume, to name only a few, move theories in and out of discrepant contexts, addressing different audiences, working their different "borderlands." Theirs is not a condition of exile, of critical "distance," but rather a place of *betweenness*, a hybridity composed of distinct, historically-connected postcolonial spaces. Lata Mani's essay in

this volume is a case in point. A traveling theorist addressing audiences in both India and the United States, she risks misappropriation at every moment of speaking and writing.

Lukacs, Goldman and Williams had pretty clear notions of who would read them—a relatively stable audience. This is not true in a complexly literate, politicized, global system of cultural flows (the world of "public culture" currently being investigated by Carol Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai, among others). Theorists such as Mani—indeed, with varying degrees of risk, all of us—are exposed to discrepant audiences in very different "locations." Historical or cultural theory written today must expect to be appropriated by readings, local experiences and political agendas from several "third world" and "minority" as well as feminist locations.

If Said were expanding on "Traveling Theory" today he would no doubt grapple with such non-linear complexities. (Lukacsian Marxism in his essay seems to travel by immigrant boat; theory nowadays takes the plane, sometimes with round-trip tickets.) Said's work in the eighties, along with that of many postcolonial intellectuals moves between several locations, between first and third world, "central" and "marginal," places. Such traveling theorists see their productions as inescapably political, written against and for, in concrete situations of indentification, opposition, alliance. The "experiences" described and explained by theory are nonsynchronous, exclusive of one another in hierarchical ways. Theory is always written from some "where", and that "where" is less a place than *itineraries:* different, concrete histories of dwelling, immigration, exile, migration. These include the migration of third world intellectuals into the metropolitan universities, to pass through or to remain, changed by their travel but marked by places of origin, by peculiar allegiances and alienations.

«

Location Exercise

A place on the map is also a place in history. (A. Rich)

I've always felt slightly disoriented in Santa Cruz. Even after ten years. The sunsets are particularly disturbing. Here I am on The West Coast, yet the sun sinks into the ocean, off to my right, behind the land. That mountain in the view is not an offshore island but Monterey peninsula. We are looking south, across the arc of a wide bay. Ten miles up the coast, beyond the Northern lip of Monterey Bay, the shoreline turns from East-West to its proper coastal alignment. The setting sun behaves itself. I can stand on the clifftop or beach and look westward to the east, to China and Japan. The look is familiar. It poses no immediate perceptual problems. I know where I am, as Charles Olson said: "where we run out of continent."

In Santa Cruz I can never quite reconcile this "cartographic" location, on The West Coast, with the evidence of my senses registering more land "out there," and the sun going down to my right, behind the hill. There's a permanent discrepancy between the realities of map and experience, with the first always (never quite) overriding the second. Were I one of those people who situate themselves concretely, by means of the four directions. . . But I'm not. The map—the great abstract coast, the hemisphere—is more real to me than the local curve of shore. I'm "looking west to the east," despite my senses.

This is where I am on the world I learned to represent to myself long ago puzzling over maps where California, Oregon, and Mexico occupied the margin, the last "continent" before a scattering of tiny islands and the map's left edge, an edge where mysteriously west stopped and started up again as east on the right hand side. I always wondered about the Aleutian Islands, connecting somehow the two edges, directions, of the world.

This orientation, perhaps particularly North American, looking west to the east, came to seem natural to me. Even its founding paradoxes—an east both "behind" and "ahead," past and future, near (at the Bosphorous) and far (across the Pacific), expelled and desired—made

sense to me, as a Westerner. In Santa Cruz, looking west but seeing only south, I resent the everyday dis. . . occidentation.

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South: the other half of Santa Cruz county: Watsonville, Castroville, lettuce fields, Latino migrants, . . . and drifting in, the new, nomadic, computer plants.

I, my parents, my grandparents, did not come to this remote coast from China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, Guatemala, Samoa, Cambodia, Vietnam. . .

«

Before moving to Santa Cruz I lived in the center of the world. The center was the North Atlantic Ocean—for the capitalist West what the Mediterranean had been for Europe, from Rome to the Renaissance—a body of water to gather around, a known space to travel over. My first homes were in New York City and Vermont (migratory map for a modernist intellectual). I studied and lived for a time in London, Philadelphia, Boston, Paris. My parents, born in Indiana, were Anglophiles. We travelled to and fro across the North Atlantic, by boat, book, memory, genealogy. White Anglo Saxon Protestants.

To know who you are means knowing where you are. Your world has a center you carry with you. For the Oglala Sioux Black Elk, the Black Hills of North Dakota and especially Harney Peak formed the center of the world. Black Elk traveled to Chicago, New York, Paris and London. He also said that wherever you are can be the center of the world. Centers and borders, homes and other places, are already mapped for us. We grow, live across and through them. Locations, itineraries: helping us know our place, our futures, while always having to ask. . . "Where WE run out of continent?"

«

Time would pass, old empires would fall and new ones take their place, the relations of countries and the relations of classes had to change, before I discovered that it is not quality of goods and utility that matter, but movement: not where you are or what you have, but where you come from, where you are going and the rate at which you are getting there.

—C.L.R. James, 1901-1989