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## Introduction

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I hang onto 'travel' as a term of cultural comparison, precisely because of its historical taintedness, its associations with gendered, racial bodies, class privilege, specific means of conveyance, beaten paths, agents, frontiers, documents, and the like. I prefer it to the more apparently neutral, and 'theoretical,' terms, such as 'displacement,' which can make the drawing of equivalences across different historical experiences too easy.

—James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures"

As James Clifford suggests, to talk about travel is to enter into a terrain redolent with markers of imperialism. In fact, it is almost impossible to think of travel in any historicized way separately from the various post-Enlightenment imperial projects in which it has been instrumental, whether as the motive force extending the reach of Western knowledge, the technological means enabling the implementation of a Western will to power, or the litmus test revealing the extent—or subversion—of Western cultural dominance. The unequal encounters, overdetermined routes, contested frontiers, and bureaucratic regulation to which Clifford gestures are all productive sites of analysis for any study in the field.

*In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire* brings together critical essays dealing with a range of issues arising from the historical nexus between travel and imperialism. As a whole, the book is premised on the assumption that Western imperial projects have been inextricably linked to developments in travel technologies and their attendant "styles" of travel performance, which, in turn, have

influenced imperial modes of perception, representation, and self-fashioning. At the same time, this collection reveals that imperial fantasies of exploration and conquest, whether actualized or not, irrevocably shaped the formulation of travel as a category of modern experience. It is this complex reciprocal relationship between imperialism and travel, registered in a variety of ways across both written and pictorial documents, that constitutes our primary object of study.

Our overall aim is to extend the politicized intervention into travel studies undertaken by books such as Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* (1992), David Spurr's *The Rhetoric of Empire* (1993), Nicholas Thomas's *Colonialism's Culture* (1994), Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan's *Tourists with Typewriters* (1998), and Steve Clark's edited collection of essays, *Travel Writing and Empire* (1999). Much has changed in the relatively short time since Pratt's study appeared. In her introduction to that book, Pratt describes her project as "a study in genre and a critique of ideology" (1992: 4), and states that "[s]cholarship on travel and exploration literature, such as it exists, has tended to develop along neither of these lines" (1992: 10). Since then, travel writing (in its broadest sense) has been taken more seriously as a potentially complex discourse, and a more precise critical vocabulary has been developed for its analysis, allowing a better understanding of travel practices and their textualization in various genres. At times, however, that critical vocabulary has threatened to evacuate travel (as an ontological category) of its historical, imperial content. The "traveling theories/traveling theorists" movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s is a particularly apposite example because it cast travel as a metaphor for the literal relocation of "third-world" intellectuals, while focusing on the more abstract vicissitudes associated with the importation and exportation of theories and theorists. The dialectic of travel was explored as a means of properly locating theory and its reception and/or reformulation in different sites.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, in its more densely post-structuralist formations, the notion of travel as a kind of free-floating signifier of the translocation of Euro-American sophistication tended to lose the historical and cultural specificities that we would argue are deeply embedded within the very nature of modern travel. The current fashion for using globalization as an explanatory model for diverse phenomena can be

seen as a continuation of this earlier critical moment, and one which similarly benefits from a reminder of its immediate precursor and progenitor: imperialism. It is at this juncture that a situated study of the ways in which travel has been undertaken and represented across a broad historical period seems requisite for a more nuanced intervention in debates about what kinds of social, cultural, political, and/or economic work it can perform.

While earlier imperial movements have undoubtedly provided an impetus for travel and travel writing, most of the essays gathered here specifically examine aspects of travel during, or shortly after, the period of Britain's "second empire" (approximately 1784–1867). Those contributors addressing more contemporary topics explore the after-effects of colonial travel and its attendant discourses, and/or their re-emergence in neo-imperial contexts. This collection has a decidedly Anglocentric focus and speaks mainly to British, and occasionally American, imperialism, although connections with broadly European understandings of travel and empire emerge throughout. The traveling subjects of most of the texts examined, therefore, are white, Western men and women with considerable degrees of social and economic privilege. While colonized or indigenous peoples and cultures are everywhere evident in these texts, the perspective provided of them is a very filtered, unreliable one. Because our interest lies in the ways in which travel under the aegis of imperialism affects the speaking and writing positions of Western subjects, we do not consider how it may be experienced on the other side of the intercultural fence—the side of those observed and analyzed by inquisitive Westerners, of those who carry, drive, and sail the imperial traveler through the "exotic" locations that are their home. Nor do we attempt to account for travel practices among indigenous groups in colonized regions. This is not to ignore Paul Gilroy's important point about "the folly of assigning uncoerced or recreational travel experiences only to whites" (1993: 133), but rather to avoid conflating the very specific kinds of travel that have pertained to different cultural groups during empire's diverse projects. Hence, we would argue that black/indigenous experiences of travel in the era of Western imperialism deserve a study independent from this.

Despite the relative cultural homogeneity of the travelers under examination, the locations to which they journeyed are

diverse. Collectively, the essays investigate travel at different historical moments and across a broad range of geographical locations, including Scotland, India, Borneo, the Caribbean, South Africa, Australia, the South Pacific, and Papua and New Guinea. Significantly, it is the apparatus of imperialism that enables such diversity; colonial networks of transportation, administration, and tourism crucially opened up the world for the white, Western traveler.

### Empire

To situate the particular essays included here in relation to Western imperialism, it is necessary to acknowledge the unevenness of that enterprise across a broad range of geographical areas, historical periods, and distinctive cultures. Even at their most coherent, imperial projects are typically marked by tensions and discontinuities. Moreover, within particular cultures, the imposition of colonial rule or less formalized structures of dominance is a complex matter, often modified by local resistance and underwritten by anxieties about incompleteness and even failure. As Nicholas Thomas argues, "Colonialism is not a unitary project but a fractured one, riddled with contradictions and exhausted as much by its own internal debates as by the resistance of the colonized" (1994: 51). In this respect, the usefulness of the term "empire" as a framework for the analysis of any cluster of texts or practices must derive from its ability to accommodate specific, particularized situations as well as broadly comparable ones.

Throughout this collection, such specificity is emphasized and detailed. Against a temptation to homogenize all colonial or imperial travel as innately similar, these essays posit radical differences between the ways in which aspects of empire have been conceived and experienced in various places, by different categories of travelers, and within diverse political and administrative regimes. The terms imperialism and colonialism are both employed: the former generally to address the formal, institutional policies developed in the metropolitan center/s, the latter to convey the ways in which those policies might be enacted in distant locations (often with slippage from, deliberate disregard for, or blithe ignorance of metropolitan dictates). David Spurr

argues that the distinction between the two terms tends to collapse when referring to the *discourse* of imperialism because its principles also constitute the discourse of imperialism (1993: 5). Nevertheless, such a distinction allows an understanding of the ways in which Britain's second empire can be seen as a "collective improvisation", enacted, in Thomas's terms, by "actors whose subjectivities [were] fractured—half here, half there, sometimes disloyal, sometimes almost 'on the side' of the people they patronise[d] and dominate[d], and against the interests of some metropolitan office" (1994: 60). Travel writing about the colonial world was a crucial way of attempting to cohere that improvisation, to insert clear-eyed, objective observers at the unstable colonial frontier, and to maintain, discursively, a homogenous and integrated understanding of the relationship between the metropolitan imperium and its colonial outposts.

As the essays in this book repeatedly note, travel writing was also a discursive mode in which such attempts at coherence frequently failed. These failures are sometimes the most interesting aspects of the travelogues analyzed here because of their potential to uncover the multiplicity of colonizing projects and the diversity of possible responses to them. Records of failure or frustration also remind us that imperial delusions of conquest were often realized only partially, and while the signs of colonial governance may have created an appearance of dominance and order, frequently control was only illusory, and transformation of the colonized land and people unlikely to be achieved (Thomas 1994: 15).

### Travel

For the purposes of this book, travel is understood as a broadly defined practice featuring human movement through culturally conceived space, normally undertaken with at least some expectation of an eventual return to the place of origin. While most of the essays examine actual journeys as they have been recorded in a range of textual forms, some contributors focus on projected or virtual journeys that use tropologies of travel as their central metaphors. Our emphasis throughout is on travel as a *voluntary* activity—however constrained by the parameters of a particular

journey and the contexts in which it is undertaken. This definition necessarily excludes those movements of individuals or groups that might be better understood as enforced displacements, for, as bell hooks reminds us, “[t]ravel is not a word that can be easily evoked to talk about the Middle Passage [or] the Trail of Tears” (1992: 173) or, for that matter, the forced relocations of indigenous peoples, or the plight of political exiles and refugees. Nor are we referring to travel in the sense of the perceived deterritorialization that has been said to characterize postmodern subjectivity, the critical disengagement from partisan affiliations to specific national spaces and cultural identities. Whereas such models of displacement emphasize cosmopolitan hybridity and a (generally) liberating sense of “homelessness” (see Kaplan 1996), “home” is an especially important reference point for imperial travelers, both in terms of the journey’s teleology and the imagined audience for whom it is recorded.

While the distinctive journeys analyzed here are all voluntary, they follow various itineraries, within a wide range of contexts, and for a variety of reasons. Amorous English couples seeking to legitimate their love, British ladies accompanying their brothers or husbands on tours of duty in the colonies, or wealthy Western eco-travelers may all be seen to be traveling predominantly for pleasure and adventure, but they nonetheless perform certain kinds of cultural work, albeit often inadvertently. Other journeys are undertaken for reasons of work itself, understood in its broadest sense, so that artists, missionaries, administrators, filmmakers, and writers experience travel within the context of their occupation or vocation, and in many instances use it to generate products. In general, then, we are looking at travel to do with exploration, trade, ethnography, governance, natural history, evangelization, scientific quest, self-discovery, and leisure, but not with migrancy, exile, or forced displacement. Our notions of travel are much broader than those considered in other recent studies of travel writing, which frequently look only at travel as a leisureable, pleasurable activity. Within the frameworks of empire, travel in itself becomes a particular form of duty as various imperial subjects undertake the symbolic work of embodying empire throughout the (colonial) world. On return, such travelers also serve to represent that colonial world, as experienced by imperial subjects, back to the home culture in books, lectures, reports, slide-

shows, or simple, privately circulated stories.

Most of the journeys analyzed in this book, whether “real”, virtual, or textual, emanate from centers of Western social and political power and speak to the imperatives of their home or cognate cultures. These journeys are undertaken in regions both peripheral and central to the Western metropolis—peripheral in the sense that they are geographically and culturally distant (or imagined as such); central in the sense that they provide sites of Otherness against which the very notion of a Western metropolis is constructed. As a function of travel, such peripheral regions become potential sites for the exercise of imperial power, whether deliberately or adventitiously. This is not to instantiate a rigid center-periphery model of travel (or imperialism) but rather to recognize that travel, as analyzed here, is powerfully inscribed with Western privilege. In this respect, we are influenced by Pratt’s notion of travel as a charged space of transcultural encounter “usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (1992: 6). Pratt terms this space of encounter a “contact zone” in so far as it registers the “co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect” (1992: 7). Her terminology is meant to evoke the interactive, improvisational aspects of colonial encounters, a dimension that is also crucial to our study.

Significantly, our focus on the period from the late eighteenth century onwards allows us to chart ways in which the rise of industrial capitalism profoundly altered the kinds of transportation used by colonial travelers and the possible scope and speed of their journeys. The modes of transportation that resulted from Western industrialization were more diverse, more effective, more rapid, more comfortable, able to carry more people than ever before. Not only did advances in travel technology bring distant colonizable regions into the purview of European expansionism, but, as Daniel Headrick argues, they also made possible the forging of more efficient communication and transportation networks—notably steamship lines and railways—thus helping to fortify colonial rule (1981: 10). It is important to remember, however, that the changes wrought by European modernity were experienced quite differently (and sometimes quite indirectly) in different parts of the world, so that, in the nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries, developments in transportation were often limited to imperial centers and/or the more accessible or populous colonies. Travel beyond these regions—via sedan-chairs, cyclos, barges, elephants, dugout canoes, and so forth—generally saw Europeans dependent on the laboring bodies of the colonized and expectant of their cooperation. In this respect, it could be argued that colonial travel has often been marked by a tension between pre- and post-industrial modalities.

Judith Adler's argument that changes in travel practices have been contingent upon (and constitutive of) changing modes of sensory perception draws attention to the ways in which movement through space is meshed with perceptual processes (1989a).<sup>2</sup> Taking a lead from Adler, we use the term *travel modalities* to suggest not just modes of movement or transportation but also the broad perceptual apparatus they encompass. This includes ideological assumptions implicit in specific kinds of travel and specific ways of accounting for empirical data registered by the senses. Conceiving of travel in terms of identifiable modalities returns certain issues to the foreground, even from earlier travel studies. Pratt's *Imperial Eyes*, for instance, focuses on the moment in the mid-eighteenth century when imperial effort shifted from maritime exploration (by ship and the occasional landfall) to interior exploration (by foot, local transport, and prolonged land-based excursions), arguing that this, in conjunction with the development of natural history as a structure of knowledge, marked a decisive shift in European "planetary consciousness" (1992: 9). It is exactly this vector between travel, perception, and the formulation of knowledge that concerns us here.

#### Text

Travel of all kinds has long been characterized by a compulsive recording of experiences in pictorial and written texts. Adler suggests that this may be due to the fact that "nonrepeatable encounters with strangers [or places] more easily serve metonymic functions" than the "open-ended" encounters of daily life (1989b: 1383), and so become both powerful and malleable signifiers for a variety of projects. In many instances, especially pertaining to travel undertaken outside the domain of leisure, some kind of

tangible record has also been part and parcel of the journey. As a result, travel has been textualized in diverse ways, not only in conventional literary genres, such as travel writing or memoir, but also in letters, government documents, institutional reports, medical surveys, political tracts, photographic and film images, tourism brochures, and the Internet.

Our inquiry into this extended textual field is somewhat aligned with notions of travel writing in earlier historical periods, when it was not as substantially limited to prose narratives of picaresque journeys as is currently the case. By the late twentieth century, travel writing had come to seem synonymous with the self-reflexive, literary works of specialists in the genre—Redmond O'Hanlon, Bruce Chatwin, or Paul Theroux, to name just a few. While this book does at times engage with such writing and its literary precursors (particularly the colonial adventure tale), we want to re-open the broader discursive field in which travel has been textualized. Many of the texts analyzed here are not authored by "professional" writers; they are intended, in the first instance, as private records or as correspondence with close friends or families, or with official bodies. Moreover, they are frequently formed by particular institutional demands (such as those of the London Missionary Society or the British Leprosy Commission), or they shift the narrative of travel into different generic modes according to the fashions of the time. While these texts may escape the disciplinary expectations of professional travel writing, it should not be assumed that they evade protocols altogether. Official reports and journals, for example, are especially prone to being mediated by the political and/or economic imperatives governing the travel, by the particular circumstances in which they were written/recorded, by the expectations of home audiences, and by the means available for publication and distribution.

Even in its more literary guises, what constitutes travel writing has been variable across historical periods and always open to debate. According to Tzvetan Todorov, travel narratives are characterized by "a certain tension (or a certain balance) between the observing subject and observed object." In his formulation, travel writing thus comes into being in a "fusion" between science and autobiography (1995: 67–68). Other potential textual fusions might include those with ethnography, geography, or romance, but theorists rarely agree on the boundaries and markers of the

genre. Jonathan Raban, for instance, asserts that travel writing "accommodates the private diary, the essay, the short story, the prose poem, the rough note and polished table talk with indiscriminate hospitality" (1987: 253), though some commentators prefer more narrow definitional parameters,<sup>3</sup> whether they stress "literary quality" or accurate reportage. In this respect, it is perhaps best to concur with Holland and Huggan's suggestion that travel writing "is generically elusive, as unwilling to give up its claims to documentary veracity as it is to waive its license to rhetorical excess" (1998: 12).

It is important to recognize common characteristics among the texts that, for us, constitute the diverse field of travel discourse, and to acknowledge that while these characteristics have specific meanings in colonial and postcolonial contexts, they may nonetheless occur in texts produced under other cultural conditions. In her study of imaginative geography in the early modern period, for instance, Chloe Chard locates exoticism and cultural tourism in narrative accounts of the European Grand Tour from 1600–1830—an itinerary restricted, in Chard's terms, to the territory ranging from Northern Europe to the southern side of the Alps (1999: 11–15). That these early travel narratives typically traded in images of cultural Otherness suggests ways in which to further historicize the almost ubiquitous image of the "exotic" in colonial (and even contemporary) travelogues. Similarly, we need to keep in mind that although travel writing absorbs events, places, and people into highly subjective accounts of the world, certain rhetorical patterns recur across broad categories in the field. Thus, Chard notes the persistent use of tropes of hyperbole and excess in proclaiming the foreign as foreign (1999: 4), while Steve Clark talks more broadly about the kinds of narrative produced when there is a transfer of previously gathered information to an experiential witnessing: "what has been absorbed from research or, more cynically, guidebooks, has to be absorbed into structures of anecdote, narratives of self-comprehension and parables of rectified ignorance" (1999: 14). These examples of the stock-in-trade rhetoric of travel writing remind us that certain textual strategies have a particular currency for writers (and presumably readers) and therefore need to be considered relationally—in general as well as specific terms.

Technologies of writing/recording travel have altered con-

siderably during the period under investigation, as the title of Holland and Huggan's book—*Tourists with Typewriters*—makes evident. But, more often, the crucial changes in textuality have arisen from changes in the modalities of travel, a point incidentally illustrated by the use of the steam engine in nineteenth-century European fiction as a textual device to dispose of "vile and not so vile bodies" (Lucas 1997: 41). The widespread Western democratization of travel, together with an increasing emphasis on visual perception, has had particular effects on the kinds of texts in demand. By the mid-eighteenth century, as Chard notes, a new genre of travel writing—the guidebook—came into being in order to offer readers practical, impersonally presented advice about sights to see (1999: 14). The popularity of colonial adventure stories, by contrast, can be seen to relate to the fact that most members of their British reading public were unlikely to be able to travel in the "exotic" regions depicted. More recently, a plethora of books has been published to appeal to (would-be) "alternative" travelers, those who find repugnant the mass tourism enabled by modern transportation systems. These few examples suggest that the discursive field energized by travel is both complex and dynamic.

What is increasingly clear, despite the intricacies of textual formations within the discursive field under analysis, is that the connective between travel and writing has been one of the major linchpins of imperialism. Thomas Richards persuasively argues that the second British Empire, with its diverse territorial geographies, was fundamentally made manageable through the collection, collation, and organization of information gathered by people in the colonies and sent back to the imperial center:

Unquestionably, the British Empire was more productive of knowledge than any previous empire in history.... The British may not have created the longest-lived empire in history, but it was certainly one of the most data-intensive.... In a very real sense theirs was a paper empire: an empire built on a series of flimsy pretexes that were always becoming texts. (1993: 3–4)

Travel writing by adventurous Britons played a crucial part in this information gathering and dissemination process. Such writing worked explicitly to domesticate the exotic colonial experience for a metropolitan, European market: it provided the frisson of colon-

ial difference that built upon, and added to, the usual pleasures of travel by investing them with the particular cultural politics of imperialism. Travel texts inevitably promoted and subsidized the exercise of imperial power even if, at the same time, they might also have critiqued it. Of course, as Richards suggests, it was "much easier to unify an archive composed of texts than an empire made of territory", although controlling that archive often proved surprisingly difficult: "for most of the time [the British] were unable to unify the knowledge they were collecting. It fell apart; ran off in many different directions" (1993: 4). Travel writing about the colonies, as the following essays demonstrate, was particularly vulnerable to such intimations of unruliness, of excessive information that threatened to escape the purportedly objective and distanced observer. The colonial environment often intruded in unexpected ways on the process of writing, on the author's body, and on the expected generic conventions of the text. As Thomas argues, "even when colonizers surrounded themselves with the persuasive scenery of possession and rule, the gaps between projection and performance are frequently betrayed by the anxieties of their texts, which reveal the gestural character of efforts to govern, sanitize, convert and reform" (1994: 16).

The diversity of travel modalities and forms of textualization addressed in this collection has led to a strong interest in the domain of practice<sup>4</sup>—be it exploration, leisure, medicine, imperial government, evangelization, or education—in which travelers undertake and record their journeys. Domains of practice delimit the field of objects to be spoken about, and the speaking positions that the traveling, narrating subject is able to assume in relation to people or objects encountered. This, in turn, substantially determines the potential narratives that can be formulated. Travelers in the earlier historical periods covered by our book tended to put themselves in the service of specific kinds of imperialism—military, commercial, spiritual, administrative—and their travel writing thus obviously overlaps with discourses germane to their colonial role(s). As the power and reach of the British Empire declined, twentieth-century travelers were apt to position themselves more ambivalently, and often more antagonistically, in relation to imperial domains of practice. This ambivalence continues as various neo-imperial structures change the configuration, but not the essential paradigm, of Western privilege.

When considering the contexts in which individual journeys and narratives took place, it is crucial to remember that technologies of travel, observation, and reportage developed in particular domains of practice, especially in the service of empire, are essentially modular and portable, as Robert Dixon's essay here demonstrates. This is the crucial, causal link between the colonial and postcolonial travel modalities explored in this volume. Contemporary travel writing may well be attempting to find a new way to encounter the world, based on less exploitative and hierarchical relations than those enacted in earlier periods, but traces of imperial endeavor haunt the very vocabulary, grammar, form, and subjectivities available to the Western traveler, which, in turn, makes possible the continued power, influence, and effect of imperial modes of experiencing and narrating difference.

#### In Transit

Following recent directions in postcolonial criticism, the following essays tend to focus on very particularized representations of travel as a means of exploring broader issues in the field. This approach allows for historicity and specificity while generating a range of fascinating topics that collectively demonstrate important trends in travel praxis over the last three centuries. One kind of dialogue between the essays might be traced through their analyses of rhetorical tropes—of the exotic, the picturesque, the savage, and so forth—that are, by now, well recognized as staples of imperial discourse. However, this is perhaps a less interesting endeavor than considering how travel and travel texts mesh with forms of governance, modes of subjectivity, gender formations, technologies of perception, and expectations of audiences. Such issues connect these essays in complex configurations and sometimes surprising ways, which we can only outline in brief here.

Questions about the ways in which forms of imperial governance initiate and/or constrain certain travel modalities occupy several of the essays, beginning with Lisa O'Connell's detailed study of the cross-border, clandestine marriage trade occasioned by changes in English matrimonial laws in the mid-eighteenth century. O'Connell situates modes of illicit nuptiality—enacted through tours to the tiny village of Gretna Green in Scotland—in

relation to a long history of Anglo-Scottish conflict, detailing, at the same time, how subsequent travelogues about the border region meshed with each group's nationalizing project. This opening essay serves well to remind us that colonial relations affecting travel have often pertained *within* Britain itself, rather than merely between Britain and its offshore colonies. Nevertheless, the issue of governance is more directly observable in the various texts generated by official "tours of duty" in colonial regions, be they written by imperial administrators or their companions (usually wives or close relatives). Typically, such tours were both occasioned and shaped by metropolitan dictates, since certain forms of governance—and self-governance—had to be practiced *in situ*, in the body, and in person. Lady Nugent's record of her experiences in early nineteenth-century Jamaica and Emily Eden's published letters about her travels within the Indian subcontinent in the 1840s both reveal ways in which individual travelers were subsumed into a mode of governance, as Claudia Brandenstein's and Jo Robertson's respective essays show. Through such tours, empire can be seen to mediate itself through travel diplomacy; yet, the argument for the partial, even farcical exercise of imperial authority is well made through the study of these two women, both of whom register risible failures in administrative protocol. In contrast, Leigh Dale's analysis of the memoir written by Harriet Ward about her five years in the Cape Colony shows a more confident negotiation of structures of governance as Ward constantly shifts between the positions of imperial traveler and colonial observer, deriving authority from both.

Certain modes of governance were exercised indirectly—within the domains of science or religion, for example. Anna Johnston's account of Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet's travels on behalf of the London Missionary Society (LMS) makes clear the ways in which evangelical travelers stood in for imperial institutions and authority. In this instance, the LMS's surveillance of missionary activity in Tahiti can be seen as an effort to codify and control local colonial practices. That such attempts at regulation were not always successful is suggested by a number of the texts analyzed here. As Robert Dixon's essay reveals, entrepreneurs such as Frank Hurley were able to fund, carry out, and represent their travels in ways that were not likely to be sanctioned by (neo)imperial rule. Hurley's deliberate and strategic

attempts to avoid being associated with the colonial order in Papua, even as he mobilized the visual rhetoric of imperialism in his popular films, represents, for Dixon, an intriguing example of the complex relationship between travel, governance, and representation.

The example of Hurley's film work introduces another issue that cuts across several essays in this book: the transferal of specific modes of visibility from colonial to postcolonial contexts. Historically speaking, the centrality of visual perception (as opposed to other kinds of sensory experience) is not necessarily as natural a part of travel practice as it might seem. Adler notes, in a fascinating account of the origins of sightseeing, that between 1600 and 1800, "treatises on travel method shifted from a scholastic focus upon touring as an opportunity for discourse, to enthusiasm for travel as 'eyewitness' observation" (1989a: 7). It is worth noting that this shift coincides with the phase of European expansionism in which travel became seen as a branch of history, focusing mainly on the biological, ethnological, and political features of foreign cultures (Adler 1989a 16). Imperial modes of seeing sedimented during this period have remarkable longevity, as the essays by Robert Clarke, Libby Macdonald, and Helen Gilbert demonstrate. Clarke juxtaposes John McDouall Stuart's journals of exploration to Bruce Chatwin's more recent travelogue, *The Songlines*, in order to examine the ways in which the sublime—a trope mediating notions of vision and time—has been used to depict the central Australian desert. Whereas Clarke looks at aspects of visibility as constructed in written texts, Macdonald is able to trace connections between verbal and visual representation in her study of *Star Trek's* reworking of one popular imperial genre: the maritime adventure tale. Both essays note contemporary efforts to resist and remodel imperial visualities, yet they also show how difficult this endeavor can be. Gilbert's account of modern-day ecotourism in developing regions of the Caribbean and South America confirms that while a chief fascination of contemporary Western travel writing lies in the project of formulating an acceptable or less culpable post-imperial voice/eye, actual travel practices remain bound, to some extent, by the perceptual apparatus of empire.

Travel writing of the more literary kinds—including personal diaries and descriptive letters—is typified by its concentration on



the individual traveling subject, the narrator whose experience is generally conceived of as singular, extraordinary, and exemplary. Thus the notion of subjectivity is central to many travel texts, and in this collection it is explored through an investigation of the ways in which specific experiences position travelers discursively, spatially, socially, and culturally. Travel is, of course, much more than just movement across space; it inevitably involves self-fashioning exercises that deconstruct and reconstruct the traveler in new environments, exercises that are particularly freighted with significance in colonial and postcolonial contexts. In the "new world" of the British colonies and the liminal spaces of non-European cultures, previous European subjectivities, and the ways of representing them, were called into question and often found wanting. Brandenstein's essay, for example, makes clear the simultaneous security *and* inadequacy that, for Maria Nugent, pertained to her role as Governor's Lady. In Nugent's narrative, then, we find a working example of the ways in which European travelers understood the essentially performative and highly stylized nature of their peregrinations through colonial space. In more recent travel writing, the issue of subjectivity (and subjectiveness) raises questions about the ethics and propriety of the genre. Gillian Whitlock's account of the fortunes of *Broomtime*, a recently published travelogue engaged in precise (re)formulations of its authors' subjectivities in response to contemporary currents in Australian cultural politics, demonstrates how easily ethical boundaries are overstepped, even among writers aware of their potentially fraught relationships with other cultural groups.

The sources of authority to which the narrating subject of any travelogue is able to lay claim are inevitably determined, in part, by the versions of masculinity and femininity that position them in relation to the objects of their commentary. The effect of gender, though, is not simply in the writing of the travel experience but in the very ways in which that travel is undertaken. Prevailing ideas about masculinity and femininity clearly inflect most of the journeys discussed in the following essays. Arguably, at least part of Hurley's rugged individualism, for instance, can be seen as deriving from (and helping to extend) the image of the heroic adventurer, particularly as articulated in popular entertainment. Explorers' journals such as those of John McDouall Stuart, along with popular adventure narratives of most kinds, similarly trade

in stereotyped images of masculinity, reminding us that the travelogue, as an epic of discovery, is traditionally male based. Even so, women travelers feature prominently in many recent studies of the genre, and this collection is no exception. As such studies demonstrate, it is important to be sensitive to the significance of gender for travel performances, to become alert to the use of travel as a vehicle for symbolically challenging and evading gender restrictions.

Travelogues written by women may attempt to stabilize inherently unstable gender conventions by requiring androcentric literary standards. Utilitarian travel accounts such as guidebooks mark their traditional gender neutrality by their insistence on objectivity, description, and order. But other texts, as Hsu-Ming Teo's account of discourses of femininity in Victorian travel writing amply illustrates, meet no such demands, and happily mesh admissions of "womanly weakness" with more descriptive prose. Not coincidentally, Lady Nugent's and Emily Eden's writing is also shown to conform to this pattern. While Teo's point about Victorian travelers *in general* being confined in their writing because of their femininity and its associated literary conventions is unarguable, Harriet Ward's book (written shortly before the period covered in Teo's essay) suggests that locations as unbounded as Southern Africa in 1848 allowed *some* colonial women writers access to a surprising diversity of discursive roles and modes. Turning to the writing of female travelers in the later, interwar period, Teo finds that many women adopted the discourses of hypermasculinity in order to claim access to realms of adventure travel previously reserved for men. Her observation that this shift in the gendering of women's travelogues was accompanied by a marked increase in the use of overtly racist rhetoric suggests an unexpected crossover point with Dale's study of the Harriet Ward memoir.

All of the issues discussed here in brief have implications for the intended (and coincidental) readers of travel texts. But, the notion of a "home" audience is always already implicated in travel writing itself, which can be seen, in Gikandi's terms, as a "referential gesture" that brings the foreign back to the familiar (1996: 90). Helen Tiffin's account of the ways in which head-hunting figures in nineteenth-century travel narratives set in Borneo explores precisely this dynamic. Focusing on exoticism as

a mode of encounter designed to mediate relations between the traveling subject and his or her home culture, Tiffin locates a schism between the "boy's own" adventure stories that typified the period and the more self-reflective *fin de siècle* travelogues by such authors as Alfred Haddon and Joseph Conrad. At a more straightforward level, issues of audience expectation shape not only the content, genre, and rhetorical language of the texts examined in this volume but also their ultimate fate, as Whitlock shows through the spectacular example of *Broomtime's* withdrawal from circulation.

The site of travel experience and the site of textual consumption by the armchair reader are considered to be in a dialectical relationship. Ann Laura Stoler contends that colonial histories and textualities thus need to be read back into metropolitan concerns in order to trace their full meaning. Asking why European and colonial histories "have treated bourgeois 'civilizing missions' in both metropole and colony as if they were independent projects" (1995: 12), Stoler insists on contingencies between the two sites:

As we have begun to explore the colonies as more than sites of exploitation but as 'laboratories of modernity,' the genealogical trajectories mapping what constitutes metropolitan versus colonial interventions have precipitously shifted course. With this redirection, the hallmarks of European cultural production have been sighted in earlier ventures of empire and sometimes in the colonies first. (1995: 15)

The "laboratories of modernity" to which Stoler refers are everywhere evident in the texts under analysis here, as the essayists well understand. By bringing such texts into dialogue with each other via the analytical apparatus recently developed within postcolonial studies, we hope to enlarge the critical readership for this fascinating field while keeping in view the micropolitics of travel at discrete historical moments.

### Notes

- 1 To trace the characteristics of this movement, see James Clifford and Vivek Dhareshwar (1989) and Kaplan (1996: 101-42).
- 2 Wolfgang Schivelbusch's work on the industrialization of travel has also been influential to our thinking about this issue: he argues that the railway

put an end to the intensity of pre-industrial modes of perception because the "speed and mathematical directness" with which a train crossed territory "destroy[ed] the close relationship between the traveler and the traveled space" (1977: 53). According to this dynamic, "[d]ullness and boredom resulted from attempts to carry the perceptual apparatus of traditional travel with its intense appreciation of landscape, over to the railway" (1977: 58).

- 3 For a fuller discussion of the ways in which the literary genre of travel writing might be described, see Holland and Huggan (1998: 8-13) and Clark (1999: 3-9).
- 4 The concept of "domains of practice" has been drawn from Robert Dixon's work on colonial travel and governance (2001).

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