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ABROADLESSNESS: THE SENSE OF WONDER AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN TRAVEL WRITING

By

Paul Q. Kucera

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

ABROADLESSNESS: THE SENSE OF WONDER AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN TRAVEL WRITING

By

Paul Q. Kucera

This project means to reinvest travel writing with distinctive literary qualities. Emerging from a set of texts written between 1824 and 1863 is an awareness and acceptance of the inability to have certainty, mastery over their subjects. Along with this there occurs an accommodation of wonder. Wonder is a key to these texts: it counteracts the certainty assumed and asserted by the perspective of "Home."

Chapter One examines travelers to the Near East (David Porter, John Lloyd Stephens, Bayard Taylor and Caroline Paine), wrestling with the thought of Paradise. Three themes become of special interest: purity and eternity, mortality and desolation, and pleasure. Set against images of purity and eternity are images of mixture, things run wild. A process of effacement and reinscription emerges. Pleasure functions to "extraduce" wonder, a means of going on without certainty, without Home.

Chapter Two takes up England as presented by Cooper, Emerson, Stowe, and Hawthorne. Nationality (a substitute for Home) becomes a focal point. The aristocracy and cathedrals act as thematic loci, occasioning considerations of power, nationality, and mixture. England's power (nationality), denying wonder, fails. Recognizing this, these texts see nationality absent its powerful certainty; the result is "England's" inability to authorize certainty, Home.

Chapter Three turns to travel narratives of American Wests, examining Irving, Fuller, Parkman, and Taylor. The "half-breed" fosters consideration of the ambivalences of belonging. These Wests also are presented as a region of mixture, where harmony is an ever-present concern. Rather than deploring the intricacies of mixture, these travelers find high value in it.

The final chapter takes up liberty, in the context of travel in Central America and Mexico, a region caught up in civil war during this period. The result, for Joel Roberts Poinsett and Stephens is extended contemplation of fictions of justification (certainty, power, Home), the precariousness of peace, and the mystery (wonder) of liberty. Travelers in Cuba--William Henry Hurlbert, Richard Henry Dana, Jr. and Julia Ward Howe--respond to like issues as they consider, for example, the invalid and the "gathering sadness" of unjustifiable being there.

At each turn is a world that does not explain itself. Current criticism often sees in travel writing the "explanations" of a self-interested resistance to complexity. Occurring diversely, wonder at last is an awareness of the intricate complexity of things. In contrast to the criticism just mentioned, my approach revalues these texts through readings that show them to be very much aware of, fascinated by, and involved in exploring this intricate complexity. I argue for the literary value of these texts because to emphasize their sociopolitical instrumentality at the expense of the literary is to deprive these writers beforehand of the opportunity to speak on their own behalf.

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Sumpta sunt vocabula, ut intellegi aliquantus posset quod comprehendi non poterat.

To those who made these words a realized possibility.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
Abroadlessness: The Sense of Wonder and Nineteenth-Century American Travel Writing.....1

Chapter 1
"Emphatically a Paradise Lost": The Near Easts of David Porter, John Lloyd Stephens, Bayard Taylor, and Caroline Paine.....42

Chapter 2
"The Inscrutable Temple": The Englands of James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne.....106

Chapter 3
"Through Dried Grasses, Blooming Fields": The American Wests of Washington Irving, Margaret Fuller, Francis Parkman, and Bayard Taylor.....159

Chapter 4
The Certainty of Revolution: The Latin Americas of Joel Roberts Poinsett, John Lloyd Stephens, William Henry Hurlbert, Julia Ward Howe, and Richard Henry Dana, Jr. 225

Notes.....293

Works Cited.....354

Introduction: Abroadlessness--The Sense of Wonder and Nineteenth-Century American Travel Writing

The most worthless literature of the world has been that which has been written by the men of one nation concerning the men of another.

--- Stephen Crane, c. 1895

Places are odd and call for interpretation. They are the venue of the traveler.

--- Paul Fussell

I might say: if the place I want to get to could only be reached by way of a ladder, I would give up trying to get there. For the place I really have to get to is a place I must already be at now.

--- Ludwig Wittgenstein

1. The Field of Travel Criticism

The study of American travel literature cannot really be said to have flourished prior to the 1990s. Except for a brief period from the late '70s to the early '80s, there was only a quite small production of criticism. There was no body of core critical texts, no substantial conversation. Philip L. Nicoloff made a study of Emerson's English Traits (1961), yet suggests that "[t]he similarities between English Traits and the popular tradition of travel literature appear to be largely superficial" (241). Percy G. Adams (1963) studied the dilemma in Europe of establishing the truth of travelers' and explorers' claims during the eighteenth century. He later considered the role of travel writing

(more precisely exploration) in the development of the novel (1983). William C. Spengemann similarly placed American travel writing within the context of the development of the American romance (1977). His work may be called the first full critical study of American travel writing.[1] Charles L. Batten, Jr. studied the "form and convention" of eighteenth-century English travel writing, seeing the genre as a merger of entertainment and instruction (1978). Janis P. Stout studied the role of the journey in American literature (1983), but nonfictional travel texts did not play a significant part in her study. Christopher Mulvey examined Anglo-American travel "dialogue" between the two countries (1983 and 1990).

This brief overview may after all give the impression of steady production and interest in travel writing. The latter impression seems justifiable. In retrospect, this "moment" just reviewed may be seen as a particular period or phase in the development of this field of study. The scale of production changes around 1990, beginning what might be called the next phase. There is no need to be precise about the particular year; the crucial event for this second phase occurred with the publication of Said's Orientalism in 1978.[2] As Sara Mills noted in 1991, "[i]t was not until the advent of colonial discourse as a legitimate field of research in the 1970s that travel writing began to be considered worthy of academic study" (2). The reason for this surge of interest has much to do with the British scholarly environment and the currency of postcolonial studies.

Mills provides a succinct account of the rise of

criticism of travel writing. For postcolonial critics, "along with more clearly 'literary' texts, travel writing is essentially an instrument within colonial expansion and served to reinforce colonial rule once in place" (2). As a result, the political instrumentality of travel writing has been a primary focus of current criticism. Mills's comments on the importance of travel writing apply very neatly to British travel texts, but not, perhaps, so neatly to American travel texts because of different historical circumstances.[3] Mills does not read American travel texts. The point, however, is that the way of looking adopted by recent American critics of American travel writing (e.g., William W. Stowe, Mary Suzanne Schriber, Malini Johar Schueller) has very much been in the spirit of the British way of looking at British travel texts.

Mills's way of approaching travel writing is as much a response to how travel writing (and literature) had been treated earlier as to the rise of postcolonial studies and the growth of Critical Theory and Cultural Studies within the academy. Her response to earlier criticism of travel writing results from this growth. Hers and subsequent work is set in opposition to what she sees as "those who read travel writing from a fairly uncritical political position" where "travel writing is approached less in terms of its subject-matter than in terms of its literary qualities" (2). A reader should not pass too lightly over this last comment, for to do so is to grant an important and suspect premise. Mills asserts that to study the "literary qualities" of travel writing is to give comparatively less attention to that

genre's "subject-matter." Also, and more interestingly, this is to suggest that a (textual) subject can and ought to be studied with separation from the "literary." What this in turn suggests is that literary qualities--indeed, the consciousness fostered through literary techniques--is an obstacle to understanding, to truth. For much current criticism, at best style seems a willed blindness in the face of human suffering.[4] It is not necessary that the majority of travel texts <u>be</u> of any substantial literary value. It may even be an advantage to their critics that many are not. The critic dispels the "fiction" (the literary text), and "truth," different from and resistant to the text, emerges. While such postulates pave Mills's path to a critical political position, the logical result is a binarism (literary/subject), irresolvable and in constant conflict.

While different from each other, it is a mistake to view subject and the literary as polarities. To deal with the literary (manner of presentation) is never to lose sight of the subject (that which is presented, which, if given, is hardly therefore self-evident), and dealing with the subject cannot be accomplished without also dealing with the literary: each occurs through and is the occasion for the other. The connection between subject and text seems better represented as symbiotic, in the sense of mutual dependence, mutual benefit. Conflict may indeed be involved, but it is a healthy competition rather than a blood-feud. American criticism of travel writing, following the British lead, has tended to neglect and even forget this mutual dependence.[5] The "subject" of these travel texts, consistent with the

critical emphasis and interest brought to bear upon them, has been taken to be the rather straightforward application of power to foreign peoples and cultures. The effects of such application include subjection, distortion, and the suppression of what might be called life truths that others have to express, to share. Mills says as much above. Mary Louise Pratt expresses this same view when she points to the "celebratory narratives of European superiority" that form at once the backdrop and focus of her subject: "the critique of empire coded ongoingly on the spot" (xi, 2).

Hence, the literary comes to be seen as something of an evasion or a failure of vision ("inauthentic" could also work). The literary serves as a technique of mystification; indeed, it is a tool of imperialism. It seems somewhat surprising, then, when Mills claims that she "will be analysing travel writing in its complexity, and paradoxically, despite its superficial readability, in its indecipherability" (5). There is something unaccountable, even mysterious, in the travel texts she studies. This mysterious something is mysterious (complex, paradoxical) precisely because it escapes the logic by which Mills hopes to pin down and dissect travel writing. By emphasizing the complicity of travel writing with imperialism and colonialism, to that same degree, Mills's critical logic requires her to submerge other possibilities of the genre. The inherent buoyancy of the literary, however, finally renders such submersion difficult at best. The literary can be employed, consciously or not, to submerge complexity, or "the real situation," but the literary also serves to

approximate and express complexity. The role of the literary in this latter manifestation thus insists upon fuller attention, precisely because the "indecipherability" of travel texts happens through the literary.

The literary qualities of the nineteenth-century American travel texts considered in the following study serve in sum to give expression to wonder. The sense of wonder, minimally, is a mood that is both a product of and a lens through which to ponder encounter, as opposed to other terms seemingly related to encounter such as the "authentic," or "the real."[6] Encounter is treated in what follows as a phenomenon in which certainties are challenged, in some cases shaken, and in still others abandoned. Encounter thus offers an opportunity for reflection, enriched perception, for change.[7] In encounter the sense of wonder may emerge, providing in its turn an opportunity for the fostering of a particular feeling of security, an acceptance of uncertainty. This security is a special expression of a concept I wish to call "abroadlessness." For now, let it be enough to say that abroadlessness is something like an attentive acceptance of the near and the local in their complexity, ambiguity, and reticence. The travel texts that will be considered here show a keen awareness of and indeed an interest in the complexity of their subjects. Further, they demonstrate an appreciative awareness of the ultimate impossibility of doing full justice to those subjects in their full complexity.

2. The Place of Change

The near and the local ordinarily constitute precisely the realm in which things appear simple, clear, laid open. It becomes necessary somehow to obtain distance from the near and the local, so that these may finally become visible in a way they had not nor could previously. The value in this is not so much that things are then seen differently, though that is not valueless. Rather, the value is in seeing more clearly or complexly: this is not so much a logical seeing as an ethical, promoted conjointly by the logical and the pathetic involvement a given person makes in his or her own existence. I use these terms here in their rhetorical sense. The travel texts to be considered, and those writing these texts, are connected in a concern Ludwig Wittgenstein expresses in the epigraph: "the place I really have to get to is a place I must already be at now." The way to that place can begin in the "dislocation" of travel and the new attitude towards what is "near" that travel writing may bring forth.[8]

The wonder "extraduced" in these travel accounts (various as it and its occasions certainly are) has much to do with a renewal of or recollection to attention. Such attention is sufficient in itself and can also be a means to other ends, just as the experiencing individual sees fit. I will rely upon the primary texts themselves to guide my understanding of the sense of wonder. Still, some common initial development of the terminology I have been employing is called for because of the importance of these terms in thinking about encounter and travel writing.

As Mills's comments suggest, what has presently made

travel writing of interest--its value--has not been a matter of literary excellence or even, really, literary qualities. Jeffrey Alan Melton observes that "Twain's travel books have been analyzed as failed examples of fiction or as practice pieces that served only to illustrate his development into a 'better' writer--that is, a novelist" (4).[9] "Travel abroad," writes Terry Caesar, "or the narrative of what moved Americans to depart from America, is...most emphatically not part of American discourse (any more than travel writing is prominent in its literature)" (10).[10] Stowe describes travel writing as a "relatively undemanding literary genre" (11). Schriber calls travel books "compendia of obligatory talk about obligatory sites inscribed and prescribed in guidebooks and canonical literature" (49). James Buzard sees the travel text as a "selective construction that elides what challenges its definitions" (12). Batten suggests that "many travel accounts lack real literary merit: instead of providing readers with pleasant instruction, they simply furnish dull trivialities" (26).

In considering the sense of wonder, this study contends that the travel texts taken up demonstrate literary merit. Indeed, it is precisely the having of that value that makes them rewarding and even important texts to continue to read. Van Wyck Brooks's World of Washington Irving (1944) commends John Lloyd Stephens's travel writing. Brooks calls Stephens "the greatest of American travel-writers" (473). A "popular writer...largely perhaps because of the contrast between the scenes that he portrayed and the nervous energy and bustle of American life," Stephens's prose did more than feed the

specific hungers of the time (475). His writing demonstrated "the author's freshness of manner and his freedom and sound feeling and good sense" (475). Importantly, along with these qualities (the ethical aspect of literary style) there was "an infectious feeling of awe, a sense of the sublime that made his accounts...singularly impressive" (475). So impressed is Brooks that he finds "in style, in the quality of his imagination, in his sombre sense of the flight of time, Stephens was one of the few great writers of travels" (478).[11]

From greatest American travel writer to "one of the few great writers of travels" is a significant leap. Brooks can make that leap because of his confidence in the importance of style and "quality of imagination" for his audience. While such confidence can no longer necessarily be presumed, the discussion that follows primarily contemplates style and imagination as these dramatize the response of writer to material. Style, for the purposes of this study, is understood as something ethical: it enacts relation. At the most basic level, this relation is the relation to difference, that which evokes wonder. Larzer Ziff contends that "the power of great travel writing resides...in the author's capacity to present his heightened self-awareness in a manner that serves to move readers to question the unexamined familiarities of their own lives" (7). This is, in part, to bring the near near once more, to pay attention, to remember life's mystery. Travel writing begins with the portrayal of distant life: it enacts and contemplates the bringing of that life near.

3. Boundaries of the Present Study

The emphasis on style and imagination in the examination of the way the sense of wonder is employed in the texts studied here limits this project in specific ways. I do not concern myself with the question of what should be considered the "first" "American" travel narrative.[12] I am not convinced of the need to make a nice distinction on this point. My interest in wonder and the literary lead me to begin at a period just after that ordinarily proposed (see previous note). So far as chronology alone goes, Hawthorne's Our Old Home, published in 1863, is essentially the endpoint of this study. In like manner, Joel Roberts Poinsett's Notes on Mexico, Made in the Autumn of 1822, published in 1824, is the starting point. The organization of this study, though, is by region. I do tend to follow a chronological pattern within the chapters: not because later narratives are always aware of earlier, but because the movement toward an increasingly literary engagement by these writers with the subject then becomes clearer. More will be said about structure below.

I do not, however, propose to trace an "Evolution" in the genre. Nor do I take the texts selected necessarily to be "representative" of their time, nor necessarily "foundational" for American travel writing. Discussing the "representative" or "foundational" seems needlessly magisterial. Essence and origins, the "representative" and "foundational," respectively, feed the discourse of the "new" so crucial, for example, to the value of the other in David Spurr's Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism,

Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration (1993) and to the value of wonder in Philip Fisher's Wonder, the Rainbow, and the Aesthetics of Rare Experiences (1998). A narrative of strict "turning points" will not be pursued here.

A basic historical framing context is certainly in order, and it shall shortly be provided. The study itself, though, does not rely on a "grand" narrative. In Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel (1983), Adams makes two observations that have also subtended almost all subsequent criticism of the genre.[13] He points out that, by the eighteenth century, history, as a discipline, "was becoming not just a collection of facts about princes and wars but an analysis of human nature, of the manners of a people and a time" (30).[14] Somewhat later, he notes that "[a]s propaganda for international trade and colonization, travel accounts had no equal" (77). Critiques of the analysis of "human nature" and the concomitant advance of international trade in company with colonization map out the fraught territory in which readers find themselves today. That territory has been well explored.[15] My interests lead me to begin with the observation that wonder is central to travel texts. Nigel Leask, in support, argues that "it would seem...that concepts of wonder and curiosity survived longer in the discourse of distant travel than in many other fields" (24). My concern has been to consider specific ways in which the travel texts studied here invoke the sense of wonder, ways that call for a fuller--better--understanding of these texts than that offered by much current criticism.

So what criteria have I used in selecting the texts considered in this study? I wanted to select texts that ranged widely across the world. The range in previous studies has tended (often needlessly) to be geographically narrow. I wanted also to provide a diverse range of texts, from those around which a small knot of criticism has developed (Tour on the Prairies, English Traits), to those that are known in American Literature/Studies circles but not often discussed (Our Old Home, Sunny Memories), to those becoming increasingly well known in criticism of nineteenth-century American travel writing (texts by John Lloyd Stephens and Bayard Taylor), and finally works that are forgotten (Constantinople and Its Environs, Gan-Eden). I hope also to show that travel texts by writers well-known in American literature can fruitfully be read as travel texts, and not necessarily primarily as works within a given writer's corpus.[16] Organizing the study around particular locales (the Near East, England, the American West, Latin America) affords the opportunity to consider the range of reactions of these authors to these regions and the role of wonder in these encounters. It is this entire phenomenon, rather than origins, turning points, or historic chronologies, that most intrigues me.

It is undeniable that these texts were written within particular sociocultural moments. The general contours of the historical situation with respect to foreign travel prior to the Civil War can briefly be sketched out. Opportunities for encounter, for travel, increased over the nineteenth century. After the War of 1812, and through the onset of the

Civil War (the wars being periods when civilian travel was very greatly curtailed), travel around the world--no longer to Europe alone--was becoming a possibility for more Americans. Foster Rhea Dulles notes that a "regularly scheduled transatlantic service was first made available in 1818 when the popular Black Ball Line began to operate between New York and Liverpool, soon putting its sailings on a fortnightly basis" (26). By 1838 steamship service began, cutting the passage from three weeks to two (see Dulles 43, 45). Dulles goes on to observe that "[a]nywhere from two to eight thousand [passengers]--the number varying according to economic and other conditions--took off every year between the 1820's and the 1850's" (27).[17] Melton quotes an observer from 1859 who sums up a result of this trend: "This would seem to be the age of travel literature" (17).

Western Europe was a primary destination, but others were roaming farther afield. Despite three centuries of exploration and an increasing American foreign trade, much of the world remained obscure to Americans during this time. This lack of experience of the world should not, however, be taken to mean that travelers had no expectations or preconceptions. Travelers can make the "inscrutable" itself an expectation, as for example in expecting the "exotic" or "primitive." For all the expectations forming the traveler's intellectual baggage, a persistent feature of the works considered here is transformation of expectations. Where expectations so generally undergo transformation, tolerance, accommodation and acceptance--a wider appreciation for mixture--seem to be cultivated. Such transformation is not a

convergence of the imagined with the experience itself so much as a measure of the way in which the experience itself continually both exceeds and fails to meet the imagined, the expected. This is part of what the travel texts considered dramatize.[18] In these texts, the world offers something different, precarious and precious. Accepting, accommodating what is offered, is a central thematic concern of these narratives, no matter where they are set.

The remainder of this introduction now divides into a few major tasks: first, to sketch out the sense of wonder; then, to give some attention to the contours of the common current critical attitude toward travel texts; next, to consider what seems one of the particularly grave charges of this criticism against travel writing; then, to try to say something about abroadlessness, a concept opened up by travel writing via the sense of wonder in its various occasions; and, finally, to provide an overview of the chapters.

4. Why Wonder?

It is necessary first to introduce the sense of wonder in somewhat greater detail. The travelers considered in this study, in ways specific to themselves, seem at some point to ask, and attempt to work out via the travel text, the question of what ought to be the relation to what Cornelis Verhoeven calls "the mystery of things." To experience wonder is to experience the something more and something else that always seems to remain after explanation, beside knowledge. An important problem of the travel writing considered here is the problem not only of encountering

distant places and peoples but also of experiencing and conveying wonder.

If style has been addressed as primarily an ethical medium, wonder itself ultimately seems not so much a moral as a nearly spiritual category, coming face to face with "the mystery of things" (Verhoeven 42). Verhoeven contends that "[t]he wonder one wonders about is the event of the revelation of things. It is the sudden revelation of the sacred, the marvelous, originating from another world" (41). For travel writing, there is certainly "another world": the world of the foreign. Yet <u>that</u> world is strangely, marvelously <u>this</u> world, the familiar world. Because of this metaphysical quality, wonder is frequently something that can be discerned and discussed only indirectly, as, for example, through figures of speech.

There is an incommensurability inherent in wonder that, while it does not preclude interaction, does necessarily preclude <u>certainty</u>. "Wonder," Verhoeven observes, "is not a house in which it is possible to live; it is not even a well-defined state. It is, in a way, the opposite of familiarity and thus hardly a condition one could be introduced to: it would require that a man be extra-duced from his sense of being at home" (13). Caesar asks "[w]hy go abroad? Why write or read of it?" His observation, in the spirit of Verhoeven's remarks, is that "[t]he questions were enacted rather than pondered" (29). I would wish to alter this only slightly, suggesting that the questions were pondered as they were enacted, by virtue of being enacted: this is "extraduction," a function of literature.

Because wonder requires this being "extra-duced" from the "sense of being at home," a related problem is how to go on. Knowing what something is permits knowing how to relate to it. The epistemological aspect here precedes and conditions the moral. "Home" is what a person may be said to know and, in its pervasive ordinariness, is anything but mysterious. Home is where a person is most certain. Because travel, to whatever degree, disrupts the sense of being at home in placing the writer in a foreign place, knowing how to go on can become particularly challenging, frustrating, and so a potentially illuminating task. Not knowing can induce a sort of stupidity or, worse, a manner of intellectual or, even worse still, spiritual paralysis.

Under more favorable conditions, this not knowing may also lead to the acknowledgement that one never did "know" in the first place. This renunciation of mastery, as it were, opens upon a more fundamental concern with relation. In considering these texts, it is not the difficulties of control, of "mastery," but an existential problem of communion that proves critically rich. "Knowing" is itself, in a quite real way, the problem. In light of what has just been said, consider two things Spurr has to say. He is very interested in alternatives to colonialist/imperialist discourse. Playing upon such discourse even as he proposes a possibility for its supersession, he writes of "the tribesman in darkest Africa," who "suggests to us a different way of being alive" (60). Adams makes a point similar to this in his 1962 study of travel writing, when he addresses the influence of travel writing on Enlightenment thought: "In a

period when tolerance, democracy, and relativity become important, no thinker or historian could do without the voyagers, who taught that each nation had a distinctive, even appropriate, way of life" (Travelers 224).[19] Spurr, however, takes that "lesson" further. Listening to and learning from this (the) African, encountering the possibility of "a different way of being alive," which must become then a possibility--in fact, a pattern--for the West's own living, minimally requires some capability of communion. In a visionary moment, Spurr holds that it may become "possible to live both in and beyond the West, knowing the boundaries of its language, and looking southward or eastward as if toward regions of the unthought" (196). Theologically considered, Spurr is talking about salvation, the salvation of the West through turning "southward or eastward." Communion is here secularized. The body the West is to unite in and be saved through is the body of the non-West(erner). To receive its "way of being alive" (to go on with it, in it, of it) is entirely in its hands. The non-Westerner offers grace to the Westerner. Knowing how to go on without certainty is thus resolved by restoring certainty in the form of the salvific power of the non-West.[20]

The character of the relationship sought after in such thinking does not appear especially complex. The travel narratives taken up in this study, in contrast, read as extended enactments of and reflections upon the complexities of transformation and change, the deep resonances of these things. The danger in the underlying tenor of Spurr's remarks is a loss of reflection that results from a loss of

distance. This, in its turn, appears to result from a need for the non-Westerner to play a particular role in a given writer's agon. This role may be as guide or as antagonist, but seems in any event always more closely tied to personal needs and preconceptions than to attentive curiosity and imaginative openness. The emotive response tends, then, to predominate. In the travel texts considered here, the writers more often seek balance between feeling and reflection: the path to literary "discovery."[21]

Ziff argues that "[d]iscoveries depicted by an astute traveler invoke emotional as well as intellectual responses, and familiar scenes when passed through the sensibility of an accomplished writer become matters of thought as well as occasions for feeling" (6). "Discovery" should be taken in a very wide sense, rather than in the narrower sense of exploration per se. Melton observes that "[t]he time-honored and socially respectable art of traveling, in and of itself, connoted self-improvement, whether or not tourists actually changed substantially or learned anything" (19).[22] The critical readings that follow will not rank writers by some standard of "actual change": the transformations involved here are much more subtle. "Self-improvement" should be understood as a deepening of appreciation resulting from the reflection that is the effect of travel, the sense of wonder it invokes and the expression of these in the travel text, no matter the particular form an instance of wonder may take.

Spengemann and Ziff see travel writing as having at least the potential for being a particularly self-reflexive contemplation of personal change, self-discovery. (This

remains in the work of so strict a critic of the genre as Spurr.) Spengemann views openness to change as a defining characteristic of Romanticism, a dominant interpretive structure of at least the first half of the nineteenth century. He defines Romanticism as "an acceptance of change --of movement, time, and process--as an ineluctable dimension of reality, and hence the ground upon which reality is to be apprehended" (2). If Spengemann particularly seems often to speak of transformation in terms of the traveling ego rather than in terms of sociopolitical commitment (the focus of more recent criticism), it must be remembered that this "ego" continually comes into being through interaction, attention, contemplation, and expression.[23]

Stout, in considering Whitman (who published no travel accounts but for whom the journey was an important concept), finds that "in his insistence on seeing the journey as the right pattern of life and as an act of liberation and community, Whitman captured and resoundingly interpreted the one best image of American aspiration" (21). This comment provides the reference point for the common understanding of change and transformation evident in more recent studies of American travel writing. Stout's observation thus serves as a transition into an overview of the critical presuppositions of these studies. If the journey, travel, is about change, transformation, it is also about a narrative of "the right pattern of life" and "an act of liberation and community." These, in their turn, figure as "American aspiration": the true being and identity of the United States and its citizens. That pattern and that act intermingle with change

and transformation, becoming their goal, reason, and value. Change and transformation then come to be examined through liberation, itself interpreted from a specific political perspective.

Spengemann claims only that the poetics emerging from travel writing offer the beginning of a vision of "the right pattern of life": change as "the ground upon which reality is to be apprehended." Building upon Spengemann's analysis, Stout provides what looks like a provocative opportunity. Her comment seems to locate the right pattern of life <u>in</u> acts of "liberation and community." Where Spengemann values travel primarily for the individual vision of transcendence (in the sense of self-discovery) that it may enable, Stout opens the door for using travel (writing) as a means to social transformation and progress.

5. Understanding Change in Current Criticism

Dennis Porter observes that "there is a sense in which our desire to leave a given home is at the same time the desire to recover an original lost home" (12). Where travel becomes a search for this "lost home," ultimately serving the purpose of social transformation, the traveler (and more precisely, the travel writer) may become the figure who will carry out this purpose. The traveler becomes a forceful figure for social transformation, recovering at least something of the "original lost home" and bringing that something back to the "given home."[24]

Spengemann discusses the importance of a transformation of the attitude toward change in the development of a new

thinking about the individual (the importance of individual liberty) and the gestation of that thinking within travel texts. Contemporary criticism of travel writing, in contrast, often demonstrates a distinct concern with changing the world rather than with a change in "our attitude to the things of our world" (Bearn 156). This has much to do with the presentation of specific travelers writing as figures for sociopolitical progress, as defined from the specific political perspective of the critic concerned.

The "politically" progressive aim of travel (writing) has often to do with reinfusing creativity, expressivity, and possibility back into sociopolitical life at home. Much of Spurr's commentary makes plain this perspective. Schriber suggests women's "[t]ravel writing is about home in three of its dimensions: home as ideally imagined prior to travel, home as found to be in contrast with other lands, and home as it might be if women were allowed to implement the lessons of travel" (134).[25]

The individual seeking her freedom is the primary concern of Schriber's analysis, even as social transformation is the ultimate goal. What interests her is the fact that, although travel writing itself seems an entirely moribund genre (recall her estimation near the beginning of this chapter), "[w]omen's travel writing often offers personas who, in the act of freeing themselves physically from geographical constraints, free themselves from less tangible ideological boundaries hemming them in" (8). While travel itself may provide the opportunity for such expansion, such self-discovery, by itself travel is insufficient. Travel

provides only the conditions in which individual qualities come into wider and deeper action. Not travel per se, therefore, but the consciousness of the one who travels, is at issue. Schriber later speaks of the way the women travelers she studies "constructed linguistic expressions of freedom and creativity in books of travel which, like the genre itself, are 'an implicit celebration of freedom...a poetic ode, an ode to freedom,' as Paul Fussell describes those written by male travelers" (47). These "linguistic expressions of freedom and creativity" seem to be one and the same with the "personas" mentioned above. The function of both is instrumental: they allow the transgressions of boundaries which in turn empower the transgressor for subversion and thus the furthering of the purposes of social progress.[26]

Stowe describes travel as a rite of passage and Schriber follows him in this. As a rite of passage, travel becomes a space for performing transgression. The traveler becomes open to the power of subversion (change, creativity), and thus becomes an agent for social progress. Stowe employs Victor Turner's idea of the liminoid phase, which is

> not a conventionally (and illusorily) subversive period between two normative states, but an actually subversive period between a conventional, conservative view of the world and one's place in it as fixed, and a new perception of the world as changeable and the self as capable of effecting change.[27] (21)

This distinction between reality and illusion seems a

recapitulation of the basic distinction in travel criticism between traveler and tourist, sufferer and enjoyer. The "actually subversive" changes the view of the world and empowers the individual in order to change that prior view. Freedom and creativity serve change. Yet that which is to be changed is pregiven: change itself is not at liberty.

It is the "conventional, conservative view of the world" that stands as an obstacle to freedom and creativity. It is also the "institutions" of that view that are to be directly opposed, that the force of new creation will specifically target and attack. It becomes evident, for example, that for Spurr the greatest obstacles to freedom, creativity, and change are "'policies of corporate and state authority'" (109). It is resistance to the dictation of such policies that Schriber cites as the opportunity presented by travel and travel writing. "[T]ravel," she writes,

> is a provocateur. It jostles the traveler out of her habitual round, confronts her with new data and visions of life, confirms or violates the expectations created by predecessor travelers and their accounts, and persuades her that she has something to say and an audience to say it to. (134)

Travel's subversion of the traveler's "habitual round" and "expectations" facilitates the returned traveler's subversion of the "conventional, conservative view" of the world: Home. The possibility inherent in freedom, opened to the traveler, is turned upon home's destructive sameness. The resulting transformation is creative--it produces something else,

something more--thus valued as good. This something else, more, new, works for the nearer approximation and fuller achievement of utopian goals: the realization of liberation and community.

6. Wonder and "Superficial" Encounter

While travel texts dramatize transformation and change by enacting and reflecting upon these, enactment and reflection (much like subject-matter and the literary, to recall Mills) cannot be separated. This impossibility of clean separation accompanies encounter and accentuates the uncertainties of existence that, time and again, present themselves in encounter.[28] Certainties about how the world must be (or what it should be), what a person must do, and about what a person is (or ought to be), to the extent that anyone is ever certain about these things, may become less certain within encounter. Following this interregnum in certainty, this loss of the heretofore presumed finality of explanatory power, the sense of wonder arises.

Perception of and reaction to wonder as an erosion of grounds vary. One possible reaction perceives that vanished ground as a site where value appears anew, in the precarious and precious quality of what is near, contingent, ephemeral. The sense of wonder, as a dramatically heightened awareness of the value of the near, is the mood in which this new valuation thrives.

To relate wonder to a new valuation for the near is neither to define wonder nor to limit it to just this activity. In discussing Plato's Theaetetus, Philip Fisher

offers the basic definition of wonder, as announced in that dialogue: "the famous Socratic moment of knowing one's ignorance, knowing that one does not know" (10).[29] Descartes, who also explicitly discusses wonder, offers a modified version of this definition: "Wonder is a sudden surprise of the soul causing it to consider with attention those objects which seem to it novel and unexpected" (308). As for Socrates, for Descartes wonder is an impetus to solving the "puzzle" about which a person wonders. Unlike Socrates, for whom wonder is the starting point for philosophy, for Descartes, wonder is the impetus of modern science. Critics of travel writing may then be said frequently to emphasize the Cartesian rather than the Socratic view of wonder.

Both versions lead to thought, thought that encompasses and orders (for itself) ever more of the world it encounters. Yet the questions and the range of responses engendered out of wonder are in each case quite different. The Socratic version is ethical and existential, where the Cartesian is instrumental. Wittgenstein suggests the danger resulting from favoring the Cartesian view when he notes that "Man has to awaken to wonder--and so perhaps do peoples. Science is a way of sending him to sleep again" (CV 5e). As Sam Keen remarks, "[k]nowledge destroys mystery and wonder only when it is used hostilely to reduce the dimensions of meaning in an object to those that can be manipulated and controlled" (26). Shortly thereafter, he goes on to point out that, "in one sense, wonder adds nothing to our knowledge about an object. It is rather that the object comes into focus and is

respected and relished in its otherness" (30). This coming into focus is another way of pointing to a revaluation of the near, specifically the nearness and, indeed, the conditional availability of what is other.

In order better to understand the value of the nearness of what is other, and thus the sense of wonder, it will be helpful to preview a moment from one of the travel texts considered in this study. This is useful also because I will shortly take up a primary charge of current criticism against travel texts that is related to this matter of nearness and wonder. Visiting the ruins of the Egyptian temple at Edfu by night, John Lloyd Stephens writes:

> Some of the Arabs proposed to conduct me to the interior, through a passage opening from the ruined huts on the top; but, after searching a while, the miserable village could not produce a candle, torch or taper to light the way. But I did not care much about it. I did not care to disturb the strong impressions and general effect of that moonlight scene; and though in this, as in other things, I subject myself to the imputation of having been but a superficial observer, I would not exchange the lively recollection of that night for the most accurate knowledge of every particular stone in the whole temple. (102)

This passage, from Stephens's Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and the Holy Land (1837), gets to the heart of what the travel texts in this study regularly turn toward and contemplate. How has Stephens "encountered" the temple at

Edfu? What has it made available to him? The passage is a study in contrasts. The ancient splendor of the nearly buried temple is in contrast with the "miserable village" currently occupying the temple site. The interior of the temple promises great reward, but the villagers can produce no light with which to see it. Yet Stephens "did not care much about it," not because he has no interest in seeing the interior but because what he does see more than makes up for what he cannot. Caesar notes that "[t]ravel writing thrives on the quick, impressionistic, and ephemeral" (6). Impression and ephemerality make this moment memorable, irreplaceable.

At issue here is another use of the word knowledge that has more to do with experiences than facts. "I would not exchange the lively recollection of that night for the most accurate knowledge of every particular stone in the whole temple." "[L]ively recollection" has a greater significance than "the most accurate knowledge." Under the conventional view Stephens indirectly invokes, "knowledge" of the temple would be the sum "of every particular stone" in it.[30] To know the temple is to know precisely how it is put together, to know it "whole," "truly." Only through exhaustive, factual inventory can the temple, in its entirety and totality, be said to be "known." Used this way, exacting, rigorous measurement is the criterion for "knowledge."

Stephens's experience at Edfu will not permit of any such certainty. He realizes he does not and is not likely to have that sort of knowledge. The crucial point is that he is not disturbed as he recognizes this. Stephens questions the

division between "knowing" and "superficiality." He encounters the temple in the desert by moonlight, and it is just that "superficiality," that lack of certainty, which opens to him as wonder: momentary, precarious, precious. He is secure in that "superficial" experience, "quick, impressionistic" and decidedly "ephemeral." This is a literary moment, not an empirical moment.

"[S]trong impressions" and "lively recollection": these are essential to style and quality of imagination. Telling a tale can only take place where allowance is made for the many things the story cannot tell and will not. A reader can doubt the story, but doubting the style or the imagination is to ask for a different story. Stories take shape and direction in an atmosphere electrified by doubt and belief. Travel writing itself, as Lucian's, Marco Polo's, or Mandeville's accounts, as well as the work of Adams shows, retains something of the fabulous.[31] Travel writing can never quite escape the risks and charges of this element. The reader is never free from the temptation to break the story and require another because the story so often verges upon the fabulous, upon what can only be false (because it cannot possibly correspond to the reader's vision of reality). The travel text has no defense here but silence.

That travel writing misses or ignores what is true is taken as one of the heaviest charges against it.[32] To miss or ignore what is true is to distort and silence the truth. Truth, of the kind involved with travel writing, though, is truth relative to a certain perspective. Facts are not really at issue, but rather ethical beliefs conjoined to

political commitments, and the consequences of those beliefs upon those commitments.

Describing the "true condition" of the place visited (the raw facts), what a reader may initially assume would be the overriding purpose of the travel account, while remaining the narrative's material, and important for that, is not primarily what the travel texts considered here concern themselves with. Travel narratives are not <u>about</u> facts but <u>use</u> (what sometimes are and what sometimes look like) facts to get at "something else," literally: the <u>mysterium tremendum</u>, Rudolf Otto's descriptive term for wonder.

7. Independent Verification and Subjective Truth

Because a travel book is a product, and thus something like a commodity, and because travel abroad was most available to the affluent, a current argument looks at the purchase of a travel book as a purchase of social prestige. Like other prestige items, though, authenticity is indispensable and "certificates of authenticity" are required prior to closing the sale. Speaking of characteristics of Bayard Taylor's travel writing (assurance, deep learning, the inclusion of foreign words and phrases, literary references, quotes from famous authors), Paul C. Wermuth conjectures that these "no doubt helped convey the impression to naïve readers that they were acquiring culture" (47). This impression would be an attractive feature of travel writing to a credulous audience ostensibly hungry for "culture."[33] Certainly, the tradition of the European Grand Tour was taken to be involved precisely in "acquiring culture," in

completing the youthful phase of education prior to entering upon the educations of adulthood and full social responsibility. The Tour was in principle a preliminary finishing, an ingathering. Ingathering, however, is a different activity from accumulating, from collecting.

Taken as something to be collected or acquired, though, a commodity, the denotation of "culture" seems restricted to only those things which are (as it were) preapproved. Culture in this sense appears to be something already completed rather than a field for vital encounter and exchange. It is well to acknowledge Hilton Obenzinger's observation that what travel writers, specifically in the Holy Land, "'saw' often spoke to the formation of American cultural structures and had little to do with what was actually...before their eyes" (xvii-xviii). This is a note also struck by Robert J. Allison when he argues that "Americans who used the Muslim world as a reference point for their own society were not concerned with historical truth or with an accurate description of Islam, but rather with this description's political convenience" (59). The essence of this criticism could likewise be applied to travel accounts of England, the American West, or Latin America. The cautionary note here, though, is not to apply this critical observation too broadly or too thickly, as if such "use...as a reference point for their own society" and the "political convenience" of such use is the sole possible critical focus of travel writing, the sole possible interest in it and the only thing to be gotten from it.

To sum the line of thought Allison's comments represent:

travel, much less travel writing, was not about "seeing," and travelers, much less the readers of travel writing, were not positioned so as to take in the "truth." Change was not a possibility, nor was an altered perspective. The popularity of travel, and by extension travel writing, was the pursuit of a social goal: becoming "cultured." Becoming "cultured," this line of reasoning would have to say, was more a matter of "political convenience" than of self or social cultivation. Becoming cultured was not so much a learning from as an expropriation of others.[34]

Allison and Obenzinger, in line with other critics of travel writing and the representation of foreign peoples, clearly draw upon Said, who argues that the Orientalist's "Orient is not the Orient as it is, but the Orient as it has been Orientalized" (104).[35] "The Orientalist," however, seems to have been extended to include those from the West and North of Greece who write about all that is to the East and South of Greece. Drawing attention away from the ego and toward the others with whom any ego always exists has its value, but to devalue proportionally the aesthetic consciousness, imaginative engagement, or concerned attentiveness of the writer is to miss much of the richness and fascination of this literature.

If one of the goals of travel writing is to refamiliarize writer and reader with, or "extraduce" them to, the wonder of the near, then the "truth" of what the travelers encountered must be understood in a more complex way than either chauvinism, sociopolitical convenience, or professionalism will allow. This is not, however, to deny

chauvinism and such convenience a place in encounter. Compared to us today, these nineteenth-century writers will (naturally) necessarily seem bigots, barbaric. The views of Obenzinger and Allison, certainly, and perhaps Wermuth as well, agree that what the reading public was getting was not authentic, not the "real thing." The epigraphs to this chapter each comment on this difficulty, either to be in accord with it (Crane), to acknowledge it while suggesting its surmountability (Fussell), or to suggest the importance of surmounting it (Wittgenstein).

By refusing to adopt any particular "authorized" or "pregiven" method, the American travel texts considered here achieve a diffuse effect that becomes a peculiar strength. The difficulty under consideration here (essentially, what the genre of travel writing has the power to do and what it does not have the power to do) is presented in a somewhat different form in Constantinople and Its Environs (1835), in one of David Porter's several assessments of travel accounts:

> Travellers in general write to make a book, and to get it sold. The purchaser buys it for its style, not for its truth of representation, of which he can never know any thing, as he never can visit all the countries he reads about, and leaves off reading just as wise as he commenced as to their true condition. (1: 42)

This apparent indictment exposes more clearly than I could (or have!) in as many lines several issues directly concerning this study. If the "true condition" of the places visited is something "of which [the reader] can never know

any thing"--an acute observation indeed--then there must be something other than that "truth" that is the truth of travel writing. For travel writing does have truth, and this cannot be the result of the reader having visited the same geographic place or even of the writer presenting the subject in some ethnographically comprehensive or otherwise "scientifically" authoritative (i.e., professionally recognizable) way.

The reader, just as the writer, has to rely upon some other truth, then, because the writer will write and the reader will read to apprehend something true, meaningful, valuable. In the texts under consideration by this study, this something true is true only to the extent that it corresponds to something a reader feels or knows or believes about their own life and their own living in the world. This truth of travel writing, I wish to argue, is the effect of bringing the near near once more, of the way travel writing can provide a means to see the near, the mystery of life, again. In essence, this is awakening to a more comprehensive wonder. The "there" of this being, this wonderful wakefulness, does not necessarily map neatly and cleanly onto socio-geographic coordinates. Nor should it.

Much as with Stephens, the "true condition" Porter speaks of seems to be a matter of facts. Is it true that there are such a number of people in such and such a city? Is it true that such and such a place is called by this name? Is there such a tribe and is this, in fact, one of their customs? This may be the realm of the travel guide or, perhaps, ethnography. The truth of travel narrative,

however, cannot possibly be "verified," as if the narrative laid out a procedure for a science experiment: follow these steps and obtain the same results every time for everyone (who can follow the directions). For this reason, as Porter so keenly observes, it is the "style" which influences, persuades, the reader. Where readers at one time certainly did often read travel books for the information contained there, the advent of literary travel (roughly during the second half of the eighteenth century) shifted the reader's attention away from information (which now could be gotten from almanacs, encyclopedias, scientific journals, and so forth) and toward the presentation of the experience of travel, and of the person traveling, in specific locales among particular people.[36] Batten, speaking of the blurring between objective and subjective features of travel narrative, notes how the effect is a situation in which "observation is itself a form of reflection...words showing not what [an object] is like, but how it struck [the writer] emotionally" (113). Response is the crucial element.

The relation between wonder and facts (information) is difficult; indeed, facts are not the best medium whereby to convey wonder. Recent critics of travel writing (e.g., Spurr, Stowe, Schueller) are in their particular ways not finally after empirical truths (facts) but political "truths." The end result, however, seems comparable: wonder, if it enters discussion in any form at all, comes in low on the list of critical priorities. When seen as a matter of style and the literary, this cannot be otherwise for them. Their particular preunderstanding, their liberationist

hermeneutic, prefers the very opposite of what wonder has to offer a reader through these texts.

What the texts studied here demonstrate is a travel writing that deals with something beyond "knowledge" per se. Representation of the foreign is its starting point, but not its end or fulfillment. This does not mean that travel is thus "fiction," but neither is it an entirely disengaged, disinterested account of "whatever" sort of conditions, material or otherwise. In reading a travel text, the reader, in addition to the travel experience, also encounters the traveler in that traveler's admixture of prejudice and insight, narrowness and breadth. The truth of a travel narrative is very much the subjective truth (to borrow from Kierkegaard) of the experiencing traveler. This truth is expressed not through the events recorded so much as in the manner in which events are recorded: style.

The travel writing to be considered in this study will be seen as accurate, then, truthful, but not with respect to the desiderata of any strict empirical or political "Truth." The most conventional lament of travel writers, it should be remembered, is the impossibility of conveying the true sense of the subject to the reader. This seems another way of acknowledging the justness of Porter's observation.

8. Life Abroadless

Thinking of the importance of acceptance and receptivity with regard to wonder leads to considering the potential significance of "abroadlessness": what these travel texts seem to open upon through the sense of wonder. In Forgiving

the Boundaries: Home as Abroad in American Travel Writing (1995), Caesar contends "Americans have never been very certain how to accommodate the experience of homelessness, and the manner in which they write travel books continually demonstrates this insecurity" (7). The crucial concept here is "homelessness": being without that which "home" explicitly and implicitly provides. Among the possible things provided, routine, certainty, and stability seem prominent: standards, grounds for (right) judgment.

Home is a grounding-point from which to survey the world. Spengemann sees in travel writing the potential for eroding the ground of that grounding-point. Caesar rather begins with the argument that being "American," whatever that might ultimately encompass, minimally includes this sense of homelessness as well as the difficulty (uncertainty) of accommodating that feeling. Caesar's own language moves from uncertainty to "insecurity." This strengthens the claim being made in this study that issues of certainty and security are crucial. American travelers are necessarily going to look differently--more critically perhaps or more longingly--at those places where a sense of "home" seems to permeate local life, whether in England, the Ottoman Empire, Mexico, or wherever. That particular "home"-feeling is precisely what the United States could not offer.[37] Abroad, then, as also mentioned above, becomes the theatre in which the travel writer gathers the materials for constructing Home, or else, much more interestingly, wrestles with and perhaps even moves beyond the need for Home.

The utter prevalence of the binary relation Home/Abroad

marks travel criticism. These endpoints, ideal destinations, certainly do more than merely suggest themselves: they become absolutely insistent.[38] Caesar, however, poses the contrast in order to argue that, in the case of American travel writing, Home/Abroad applies only to the extent that we first understand that "Home" does not exist. Home is not Home in American travel writing. Yet if home relies upon abroad in order to understand itself, be certain of itself, and abroad likewise relies upon home, how is that relationship affected when homelessness substitutes for home? Homelessness/Abroad is not a recognizable relationship, nor are the terms synonymous. If a person has no Home--no ultimate sense of certainty, no absolute knowledge, no guarantee of right action--then Abroad cannot be understood as it ordinarily would be. This is perhaps part of the meaning of Caesar's subtitle, with emphasis added: "Home <u>as</u> Abroad in American Travel Writing."

This home as abroad can be understood in at least two ways. Abroad either becomes an equivalent for "Home," or else "Abroad," like "Home," no longer functions in conventionally meaningful ways. Caesar provides an opening through which to set aside what had seemed the inevitability represented in the Home/Abroad pair. Displacing those categories, dispensing even with homelessness, it is as if a new concept arises upon the horizon, something that might be called <u>abroadlessness</u>.

Perhaps more than anything, abroadlessness speaks to a particular change in attitude, an alternative way of seeing, encountering, and interpreting--valuing--difference and

existence. This point has been emphasized in this introduction. To bring the near near once more is to see the world as a place of wonder, both beckoning and deflecting close attention. This renewed seeing is not to gain Home finally, nor once again to feel acutely homeless. Wonder can have the power to lead a writer beyond, out of, the Home/Abroad binary, even as--because--wonder manifests itself so variously in various texts. This change of attitude, of awareness, this seeing differently as a result of wonder, may be summed up and expressed within the single word: abroadlessness.

Homelessness, in retaining the word it cannot possess, continues to pine for Home, and this keeps attention on its unattainability, on the desire to attain it. It is, in essence, a sort of narcissism and, like that fascinated and doomed youth, solipsistic, hopelessly bound to death. Abroadlessness, on the other hand, seems to set aside the lethal fascination inherent in homelessness. In doing so, abroadlessness sets aside the Home/Abroad distinction as an ultimate measure of existence.

9. Charting the Course

This introduction has set out the general concerns of this study. Now comes a word about what follows. Chapter One takes up lands under (or formerly under) Ottoman rule: Greece, Turkey, the Levant, Egypt and what is now Sudan. Because of deep spiritual resonances, this region affords an opportunity to examine the sense of wonder further, and also to begin to consider situations in which this sense emerges.

David Porter, John Lloyd Stephens, Caroline Paine, and Bayard Taylor each contemplate the stark ethnic divisions that seem often for them to characterize the region. Yet these divisions, and the violence they frequently incite, are largely a starting point, not an ending point for their narratives. Images and monitions of death make their impression on these writers, but these texts ask readers finally not to see this as a land of death but instead to marvel at the persistence and resilience of life lived constantly under death, whether at the hand of unforgiving people or unforgiving nature. This particular wonderful apprehension educes for each writer an altered relation to the idea of Paradise: a reference point for travel in the region. Thus, comments on gardens and garden-like spaces become of particular interest, and especially as occasions for these travelers to reflect upon ethical wisdom. Such wisdom comes into constant tension with insistent and violent rhetorics of identity, which base themselves upon a code of purity/pollution. This identity/intolerance pair will become one pattern that emerges in the remaining chapters as well.

England, the subject of Chapter Two, presents a specific complication in the discussion of rhetorics of identity, because here the issue of mixture rather than purity asserts itself. English history becomes a story of the effects of mixture, and mixture rises as a possible alternative to those rhetorics of identity (the most typical) that insist upon purity. Wonder emerges in reflecting upon the manifestation and application of this power, as well as in the awareness of the peculiar similarity and difference between American and

English "worlds," which make different uses of the concept and continuing value of mixture. Gleanings in Europe: England, English Traits, Sunny Memories, and Our Old Home each dwell upon approaching the intricate Anglo-American relation. Two differences that become negative and positive reference points, respectively, for this chapter are the aristocracy and cathedrals. If the aristocracy demonstrates a poor understanding of and appreciation for mixture--albeit for comprehensible reasons--the cathedral offers to Stowe and Hawthorne especially the exemplary symbol for comprehensive mixture and for tolerance.

Where Chapters One and Two consider travel texts in which being at home is a problem (whether spiritually, as with the Near East, or nationally, as with England), the remaining two chapters thematically take up the difficulties involved in rhetorics of making home. In Chapter Three, mixture again becomes a point of fascination and wonder, as traced through texts by Washington Irving, Margaret Fuller, Francis Parkman, and (once again) Bayard Taylor. Whether in their own persons or in their comments on others whom they encounter in their travels, each offers instances of American Wests where harmony, between land and people, between people themselves (particularly of different "races"), and between persons and life, is a central concern. This search for and investigation of harmony presents challenges that cannot be met by a sense of being at home, nor by the conviction of the power to make Home.

Finally, Chapter Four once again but more deliberately takes up the matter of rhetorics of identity, now as such

rhetorics are asserted in the process of making Home, here through civil violence. Democracy, it becomes clear, is not so much the goal of this violence as ethnocracy, an envisioned regime exacerbated by three centuries of ladinization. Thus, liberty becomes a focal point for travel texts by Joel Roberts Poinsett, John Lloyd Stephens once more, William Henry Hurlbert, Julia Ward Howe, and Richard Henry Dana, Jr. Liberty itself becomes a mystery, an occasion for wonder, in encountering Mexico, Central America, and Cuba. In Central America especially, Stephens observes efforts to control change by giving it a particular identity embedded in race and intolerance. Cuba, in contrast, evokes a relatively more contemplative response to freedom, power, and existence, in counterpoint with observations on the island's slave economy.

The diverse settings of these travel works all speak to the fact of a mixed world. They do so more, and often much more directly, than other, more familiar works of literature of the period. One heretofore underdiscussed contribution of these travel texts, then, to American literature, would be in this speaking, this reminder. If not, admittedly, always, these texts nonetheless do often bring along with this reminder a word of tolerance, a word of patience, an encouragement to wonder.

I: "Emphatically a Paradise Lost": The Near Easts of David Porter, John Lloyd Stephens, Bayard Taylor, and Caroline Paine

If you look at things too long, they grow familiar, stale, and commonplace; and as the mind becomes accustomed to them, they seem too trifling to mention.

--- Commodore David Porter

In half an hour I was ashore, and the moment I touched it, just as I had found at Constantinople, all the illusion of the distant view was gone.

--- John Lloyd Stephens

It is the great good-luck of travel that many things must be seen to be known.

--- Bayard Taylor

But ignorance and imagination are very poor guides to truth....

--- Caroline Paine

1. Convention, Essence, Wonder

Perhaps it is the constant interplay between hope for and despair of communion that helps to make travel writing engaging. The hope of going on moves this study to the consideration of a set of travelers, beginning with the anonymous author of Constantinople and Its Environs (1835). It could not have been much of a secret that the author was Commodore David Porter (1780-1843).[1] Midway in his life's journey, weary and not a little disenchanted, Porter came to Constantinople with both the outlook of a cosmopolitan by

experience and the seeds of a debilitating depression. Constantinople and Its Environs flows through these channels. Porter's narrative is concerned to show the accomplishments and fullness of Ottoman life, as well as some of the human cost to people subject to Ottoman authority. The "truth" of the "Orient" is to be found as much in these images as in conventional images of despotism, indolence, and the bliss of unperturbed decay. Rather contra Said, the "dominating frameworks" that "represented" "the Oriental" (40), do not necessarily also succeed in containing that material.

In the same year that Porter's collected letters were published, 1835, Charles Fenno Hoffman began to publish in his American Monthly Magazine letters by John Lloyd Stephens (1805-1852) recounting his Near Eastern travels. Stephens was a New Yorker, graduate of Columbia and Tapping Reeve's law school, with a law practice apparently never especially diligently pursued, set aside more or less in favor of politicking for Jackson and the Democrats.[2] Not yet thirty when he set out from the United States in 1834, Stephens was a relatively ambitious man with a promising public future.[3] Worn out haranguing for the Democrats, Stephens was traveling to improve his health. As in the case of so many other American convalescents during this period, a change of scenery and rest in another climate were prescribed to effect a cure. In Stephens's case a throat infection was the impetus to foreign travel (EAPHL xix).

Stephens's Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and the Holy Land (1837) was soon after followed by Incidents of Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland (1838).[4]

Recording impressions and experiences he had prior to the material of EAPHL, his letters were written in a somewhat self-consciously literary persona, representative, perhaps, of "Jacksonian" man.[5] This persona calls to mind some of Melville's sailors, a hail-fellow-well-met sort. In contrast with this devil-may-care voice of youth is a voice more mature with respect to tone, less cavalier. It would be tempting to call this other voice the traveled as opposed to the parochial voice. It is primarily this voice that speaks in EAPHL, the first book published, though recounting the second stage of Stephens's travels. It is this Stephens that Poe, among other contemporary critics, found so commendable.[6] More recent critics have also given him high praise. Victor Wolfgang Von Hagen commends Stephens's "delightful style overflowing with anecdote and salacious adventures" (xiii). Of EAPHL he says that "[i]t has remained one of the most delightful travel books in American literature" (68). Van Wyck Brooks, writing at the same time as Von Hagen (1940s), identifies Stephens as "the greatest of American travel-writers" (473). Larzer Ziff contends that "Stephens owed his wide readership to the attractiveness of the personality that shone through all of his books" (61).

This focus upon the role of the narrator is nicely commented upon by Jeffrey Alan Melton, specifically discussing Mark Twain as travel writer. "What makes Twain special..." he points out, "are not the experiences themselves but how he responded to them in his travel books" (15). Such a point must be at or very near the heart of any attention to the literary qualities of travel writing. David

F. Long, Porter's most recent biographer (1970), nods in this very direction when he characterizes Constantinople and Its Environs as "a reasonably interesting, thorough, and readable guide book" (292). David Dixon Porter, the Commodore's son, claimed the elder Porter's work "did well" (Long 292). "[T]he proceeds of its sale were devoted by the Commodore to the education of his eldest daughter [Evalina]" (David Dixon Porter, qtd in Long 292). Stephens's work, though, was a sensation. David H. Finnie, in Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East (1967), writes: "In an age when the British held undisputed first place in travel literature generally, both of Stephens' books were phenomenally successful in America and Europe" (5).[7] In Von Hagen's biography of Stephens (1948), he notes:

> Arabia Petræa was so popular that it went through six editions in a single year, and within two years sold 21,000 copies, this at a time when America's population was not yet twenty million....The British liked Incidents of Travel in Arabia Petræa so much that they were still reprinting Stephens' popular book on the Near East in 1866. (69)

Though several factors combine to account for the great success of his work, undoubtedly one of these, and not the least, is the text's voice, which ultimately is comprised of more, to quote from Poe's review, than its "good sense and sound feeling" alone (25). Melton notes the importance for American readers of "an avowed American perspective": "Scott and Dickens might entertain a massive audience with their novels, but they could never give American readers the

picture of an English countryside or the 'real' London that an American travel writer like Irving could" (22). The exuberance of Stephens's language, its contemplative moments, and its moments of wry candor, affect the reader in a way that Porter's work, which has these elements also but in different degrees, does not. Porter's work, rougher, frequently offers a less self-conscious authorial presence. Its outlook tends to be more cosmopolitan, most likely in large part because Porter had the life's experiences that would enable him to write from a cosmopolitan vantage that Stephens, in his earlier travel works, at times can only wish for. Though published within two years of each other, Porter's and Stephens's are works of different generations, of men at different times in their lives. Distinct though they are from each other, these works together still provide a grounding and basis for comparison among American travel accounts of the Near East.[8] They set and act upon the stage where accounts published a generation later by Bayard Taylor (1825-1878) and Caroline Paine also play themselves out.[9]

There is always something slightly contrived about a beginning; and beginning with Porter and Stephens is not to suggest they are writing in a vacuum, without precedent. American writers had a healthy body of preexisting and contemporary European work to turn to for models, as Finnie's account and Robert J. Allison's work suggest. Charles L. Batten, Jr. points out, though, that while the travel account had been "one of the most characteristic forms of the [eighteenth] century," by the beginning of the nineteenth century, what had been the genre's "rigid criteria" had

become porous (8, 29). Becoming more common in the last quarter of the century, accounts by the "picturesque traveller" had disrupted not only how travel writing was done, but also, potentially, why. From having been an account of history and geography (facts)--presented in a rhetorically pleasing manner--the travel narrative had become something much closer to an essay in subjective truth and wonder. Ziff observes that this "counternarrative... emphasized traveling as an art rather than a science" (8).

By the time his letters were published in book form, Porter had been in Constantinople four years, perhaps long enough to lend a certain weight, a certain texture of credibility to his observations. The experience at first-hand, troubled and uncertain as it is (indeed, because it is) still matters. The title page promises the letters will be "exhibiting the actual state of the manners, customs, and habits of the Turks, Armenians, Jews, and Greeks, as modified by the policy of Sultan Mahmoud."[10] As four-line advertisements go, this one is fairly packed. It also appears to offer something rather different from the "disquisitions on...'the Negro mind' or 'the Jewish personality'" or "'the Arab character'" that Said castigates (262). While Porter, nor any of these travelers for that matter, does not entirely separate what a people <u>are</u> from what they <u>do</u>, there is an effort to focus on what people do, rather than on what they "are." This is first of all a focus on behavior and circumstances. Without understanding this, grave errors might be made. Saying a person "<u>is this way</u>" is an imprecise and drastically misleading way of saying a

person "does these things." "Essence" is not a fact but a story with complex motives and complex results. To search out "'the Arab personality'"--that "essence" to which all instances will conform--is to fall to a seductive misprision seemingly permitted by ordinary language use.

Porter makes plain early on that the old manner of travel account shall not be his model, insisting he "shall not scrape up the rubbish of antiquity to look for what Constantinople was. I shall show you what it is" (1: 53). The anonymous editor of the letters (James Kirke Paulding, friend of Porter and close associate of Washington Irving), in his preface, makes a related point, claiming

> the editor is greatly mistaken if the reader does not perceive at once, that whatever is described is drawn, not from books, but from actual observation and practical experience. The writer frankly gives us his immediate impressions, without aiming at any thing but communicating them directly to the reader.[11] (1: 3-4)

Porter makes his stand upon his own authority, his own witnessing, and Paulding lauds the qualities of this stand: "actual," "practical," "immediate." Yet while the author aims for this direct communication, the reader is precisely in the position of obtaining the "whatever" from these books. That is, the reader encounters the description and the drawing, the impressions: the "whatever" it is that style attempts and reattempts to convey. The reader gets the observed, indirectly. Without wishing to be clever, what is being said here is that what is given to the reader directly

is the writer's indirection. Indirection is the best way to get at what cannot be gotten at directly: the sense of mystery, the hallowed, wonder. It is the travel writer's dilemma, challenge, to be confronted with the task of conveying such "things."

One source of wonder (dismay perhaps fits better) in the Near East is identity, that vehicle of "essence."[12] "Identity," the pervasiveness and seeming purity of it, the seeming eternity of it, makes a very great impression on Porter and Stephens, and on Taylor and Paine. In a land peculiarly caught up in "identity," regulated and governed through its pronouncement, the purity of the community must be made essential: an inalienable value. The purity of the community ensures its eternity, its continuance, and its eternity in turn assures its freedom, which in this sense means something like the certainty of its existence. Freedom from difference might be another way of putting this. For the certainty knowledge affords is primarily freedom <u>from</u>, and only secondarily the freedom <u>to</u>: the freedom from doubt permits the freedom to act with minimal concern about how to act, how to go on. This is the freedom of a paradise--Home--throwing up rather than tearing down boundaries. Paradise/Home offers many things (e.g., jubilation, fulfillment, <u>otium</u>) but not wonder, not the disturbing apprehension of an all-pervading tremendous mystery. It is vastly easier to attempt to control, to regularize and to know what has been bounded and encompassed than it is to control what lies beyond, outside. The garden is all the sweeter for its boundaries, a garden because of its boundaries.

The environment Porter, Stephens, Taylor, and Paine find in the Near East impels them to reflect upon issues of Certainty, Home, and Paradise, Uncertainty, Abroad, and Going On, through accounts which demonstrate an attunement to three general areas of comment: purity and eternity, mortality and desolation, and pleasure. These are also conventions of Near Eastern travel, fascinated and perplexed by the "essence" of "the East." The reflections of these writers begin with apparent identities, but conclude--provisionally--with an altered relation to the very idea of Paradise. It is from this idea that these travelers find themselves freed through their experiences, their encounters.

2. "Identity": Purity and Eternity

As a ready example of the way in which apparent identity governs all in "the East," consider what Porter and Stephens record of Turkish justice. The corporeality of punishment, certainly not unfamiliar to early nineteenth-century Americans, North as well as South, makes a deep impression on both. After a series of fires broke out within a short period of time in the cities of Pera and Constantinople, Porter notes

> that a stop was put to them with blood--the universal panacea....How many were put to death I know not, but on one occasion, when I was at Constantinople, twelve headless trunks were exposed in the streets, and the same day the Reis Effendi informed me there would be no more fires.[13] (1: 87)

Entering a court of justice in Cairo, Stephens finds "an Arab lying on his face on the floor, with two men standing over him, one on each side, with whips, like cowskins, carrying into effect the judgment of the munching governor" (EAPHL 26). While Porter seems rather more phlegmatic than Stephens in his reporting, both take the time to note such incidents. The body is common to all humans. Nothing, seemingly, could be more common, universal. Yet Porter notes in another instance that even in its radical commonness, its seeming universality, punishment here is entirely bound up with apparent identity:

> The Greeks, when they have their hands [heads] chopped off, have them placed between their legs, far up the body, on the back. The Jews', dans pareil circonstance, are laid on their belly, the head between their legs far up. The Turk is laid on his back, with his head under his right arm, and appears to be marching off to Paradise with great dignity and composure. (1: 73)

In this instance, the legal sentence has marked the bodies in the same way: all are decapitated. Yet punishment, reflecting the local order of justice, law, or custom, marks the bodies according to a rule of "identity." In death as in life the "purity" of apparent identity must remain intact. One reason for this, at least, is because a religious truth is embodied in that identity. The Turk, "marching off to Paradise" enters eternity marked as a Turk. The marked bodies of Greek, Jew, and Turk also serve as reminders to the living. The people to whom such corpses are exposed see the

immutability of purity's eternity, a ghastly though seemingly not extraordinary reminder that this society is, has been, and shall remain organized along "clean" lines. Those executed have lost their personal, temporal names and are identifiable now only by the generalized, "eternal" names of "Greek," "Jew," "Turk."

The headless trunks Porter refers to in the first passage, presumably those of arsonists, offer a similar lesson. Headless, they are without apparent identity. Within the social system these executed have suffered the worst fate: entire removal from the social system: ostracism, "excommunication." Unidentifiable, they are a palpable nothing. They do not "exist" as they dangle, a fearsome contradiction promoting the certainty and desirability of purity and eternity: all of which can only be maintained within set boundaries. Purity and eternity produce violent, mortal reactions.

While this object lesson in purity and eternity may produce a bad impression of the injunction to purity, purity is not always seen as productive of more harm than good. In certain instances, purity even seems to become an admirable quality. Stephens strongly responds to what seem the positive aspects of purity and eternity in the case of the Jews. At a home in which "a son was going through his days of mourning on the death of his father" (GTRP 1: 198), Stephens writes:

> and there they sat, with stern visages and long beards, the feeble remnant of a fallen people, under scorn and contumely, and persecution and

> oppression, holding on to the traditions received from their fathers, practising in the privacy of their houses the same rites as when the priests bore aloft the ark of the covenant, and out of the very dust in which they lie still looking for the restoration of their temporal kingdom. (GTRP 1: 199)

A powerful element of Stephens's prose is its ability to make an impression, an association, deftly rather than crudely. Although "the feeble remnant of a fallen people," the feebleness Stephens refers to does not seem so much a sign of decrepitude as of dwindling, like the flame of a candle about to expire. There is a certain dignity Stephens wishes to draw out through his observation: a nobility of purity and eternity. Through ages of "scorn and contumely, and persecution and oppression" the Jews remained and remain Jews, "holding on to the traditions received from their fathers."[14] At a gathering met in mourning for the death of a father, among believers in a prominently patriarchal religious system, this has additional resonances. This purity of practice, of eternity (essence) through the Law, stretches back through the ages of persecution. These Jews practice "the same rites as when the priests bore aloft the ark of the covenant," symbol and receptacle of an agreement and a promise made in eternity for eternity. The ark encases the Law in its purity, carved in stone.

It is this law, this source of identity, which in its eternity guarantees ultimate freedom: restoration of the Jews' "temporal kingdom," a space which can only, until its

restoration, be represented within "the privacy of their houses." This ultimate freedom will mean freedom from persecution, freedom to live openly according to their own Law. This note of restoration is a concluding motif that Stephens also employs in EAPHL: "and now, as in the days of David, old men may be seen at the foot of Mount Zion, teaching their children to read from that mysterious book on which they have ever fondly built their hopes of a temporal and eternal kingdom" (367). Paradise will be had, in time, here and forever. It would not be amiss to construe the relationship between fathers and children metaphorically, a sealed community in which the fathers are fathers to all the children, the children are children to every father. Such relationship appears especially fit where the sons, "with stern visages and long beards," seem indistinguishable from the fathers. All are one, united. As Hal Bridges observes, "Unity--Oneness--this quality of mystical experience is stressed again and again by the great mystics" (3). (It ought to be kept in mind here, however, that this unitive experience is also involved with a loss of identity.)

The seeming agelessness of the scene blurs boundaries of time, so that "now" and "then" cease to operate. It is in the breakdown caused by that cessation (that silence, as it were) that a feeling as of a seepage of eternity takes place, leaking through into the present. It is in that moment or situation, a moment of renewal as much as of continuity, that a feeling as if a person were in fact witnessing eternity may emerge. This, at least, seems to be the direction of Stephens's language. Here is the power of the rhetoric of

purity of "identity."

Like Stephens, Porter is not indifferent to the condition of the Jews; but Porter approaches from another perspective.[15] "The humble and despised Jew," he writes, "can look back to the past with pride, and to the future with hope" (2: 163). Their history of messianic rulers, "and the full faith and confidence with which they look forward to the fulfilment of prophecy, generates much of that national pride and attachment which we call patriotism" (2: 163). But that patriotism, what might also be called a strong and assured sense of destiny, eternity, seems all that the Jews Porter encounters, much as those Stephens encounters, have left to them: a rhetoric of purity their sole inalienable property. While moving towards the harbor as part of a traveler's itinerary which Porter puts together, in which he acts as a manner of guide, he points his reader's attention to the quarter of Constantinople "called by the Turks, Balata,...one of the most filthy of the whole city. Let it suffice to say, that it is the quarter of the Jews; they are every where the same throughout the East" (2: 70).

Part of the evidence that Porter's letters could not in every case have been written with general publication in mind is found in the unclear syntax and mistakes, lapses indicative of the casual way in which people write for a private audience.[16] Such a lapse occurred earlier, in the example where "hands" was used in place of "heads." To what does the "they" above refer? The nearest referent is "Jews," so it is possible to conclude Porter means Jews are the same everywhere. The subject of the sentence, though, is the

Jewish quarter, and "they" could also refer to that: the living conditions of Jews. This same grammar construction occurred earlier, when Porter was describing the placement of heads on the trunks of Greek, Jew, and Turk. Using that as a guide, it seems Porter is referring to the quarter itself.

So much argument might not be necessary, however, for Porter appears somewhat equivocal on the causes of the filth and unhealthfulness of the Jewish quarter. He notes that a substantial portion of the Jewish population in Constantinople were descendants of Jews expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella: "eight hundred thousand wanderers, destitute of a home" (2: 159). Stephens also notes this history (GTRP 1: 195). The Ottomans took them in "after having been refused an asylum in every Christian city of the west [sic]" (Porter 2: 159). Although Porter does not find that the Jews in Constantinople are treated in any essentially different way from other groups of a similar status (e.g. Armenians), and though he reports that some suppose "they [the Jews] are treated with greater kindness than the rest" (2: 160), they do not have much political power. The "Jewish nation in the Ottoman empire [sic] has a very feeble political influence" (2: 166):

> There is no appearance of comfort, no appearance of competency, among them; every thing, where sight and smell are concerned, among them is extremely disgusting, and in passing through their quarters, the sounds that assail the ears prove that they are a querulous race, destitute of domestic peace and comfort. (2: 167)

The degree of the powerlessness and poverty of the Jews seems matched by the sound of their misery. While circumstances play a large role in this poverty and wretchedness, as Porter himself appears to suggest, he also appears to make a gesture toward eternity when he identifies the Jews as a "querulous race," as if it were in the very nature, the "essence" of the Jews as Jews to be as Porter found them. Porter's language does not cut off further consideration, though, instead appearing to invite it. That they seem to him querulous is not to be explained simply by reference to what would now be called genetic predisposition: the way the anti-Semite would dispose of the question. How the Jews here seem to Porter is a matter of their circumstances and what they seem to do in or as a result of those circumstances.

Porter has associated lack of political power with the condition of the Jews in Constantinople, and this analysis may be opened further. It is intriguing that Porter should locate the destitution of the Jews in their want of "domestic peace and comfort," because a Home is precisely what the Jews lack. They are, as Porter has earlier noted, "destitute of a home." Jews live in Constantinople; they even live in Jerusalem, but the land is not theirs. As Stephens pointedly puts it: "In the city of Jerusalem the wind could scarcely blow without the leave of Ibrahim Pasha" (EAPHL 342). Caroline Paine, after having visited several synagogues, writes that "[t]he buildings were miserable and dingy, and the descendants of Israel have all the marks of poverty that characterize them everywhere in the East" (299). Yet, "coming to Jerusalem, we fully realized that, notwithstanding

their abject condition, they must have a consciousness, while hovering about the tombs of their ancestors[,] that no common blood flows in their veins" (Paine 299). Part of the circumstances for Jews living in the region is the keenly painful evidences of being dispossessed in their own homeland. The desire for and profound belief in the ultimate restoration of the "temporal kingdom" that both Porter and Stephens note, and Paine perhaps alludes to, is the desire for the restoration of that home(land). This desire is all the more poignant, painful, because of that "consciousness... that no common blood flows in their veins." Their querulousness, so the rhetoric seems to lead, stems from homelessness, woeful and galling, hanging over them "while hovering about the tombs of their ancestors," ghost-like, displaced. Thus, the rhetoric of purity and eternity emerges because the promise of the return for purity and eternity (Home) has failed (or has not yet been fulfilled: a promise can be and perhaps usually is something to be fulfilled).

The return home is perhaps a familiar enough motif: the arrival in the Promised Land preceded by the Exodus. This is an eschatologically powerful motif that informs travel writing to a greater or lesser degree, as critics (William C. Spengemann and Georges Van Den Abbeele among them) have noted.[17] But while identity is on the one hand derived from home, on the other hand apparent identity can also serve as a substitute for Home. For it is "home" that, as Spengemann puts it, inculcates "the predominantly social and familial values of stable perpetuity, resignation, prudence, modest ambition, acceptance, conformity, and reconciliation" (69),

and while not all of these apply equally in every case, Spengemann makes a strong point when he argues that "domesticity," the home spirit, "always seeks an end to action and silent contentment" (69). The stillness that Spengemann associates with "home," particularly in its relation to travel, makes home out to be a site of purity and eternity--"stable perpetuity"--and these in their turn grant freedom from the lacerations of the world outside or beyond. The stillness of homelife, though, soon becomes nearly impossible to distinguish from a living death, granting everything within its boundaries (freedom <u>from</u>) but producing nothing, no further thought, and certainly no wonder (freedom <u>to</u>). Home, and the purity of apparent identity, may thus be said to be something nearly akin to a reflex of fear.

3. Mortality and Desolation

Images of mortality and desolation figure in Porter's and Stephens's narratives as a nonhuman nothing that stands in a relationship to the "something" guaranteeing certainty. While purity and eternity offer certainty, mortality and desolation offer nothing of the kind. Certainty promises to resolve the problem of identity, while that problem is dissolved by wonder. Wonder reveals the momentariness of identity. Thinking of identity as a problem is to think of identity in terms of certainty, knowledge, definitions, facts. Cemeteries, the "homes" of the literally dead, provide a ready example for considering such images of mortality, desolation, and the attitudes informing both. Both Porter and Stephens are very impressed with the

cemeteries they encounter, finding in them locations of happy resort for the Ottomans, and not pensive neglect alone. Stephens describes some of the features of a graveyard which particularly strike him:

> Instead of the cypress, the burying-ground is shaded by noble plane-trees; and the tombstones, instead of being upright, are all flat, having at the head a couple of little niches scooped out to hold water, with the beautiful idea to induce birds to come there and drink and sing among the trees. (GTRP 1: 235)

Porter notes another image: "Imagine to yourself a village of sixty houses, and to show its antiquity, a grave-yard, containing the bodies of six thousand times its present population" (1: 241). Stephens makes a similar observation speaking of what awaits the traveler at Ephesus: "enormous burying-grounds, with thousands of headstones shaded by the mourning cypress, in the midst of a desolate country, where not a vestige of a human habitation is to be seen" (GTRP 1: 177). The feral peace of the last observation (complete with cypress tree) acts as a manner of endpoint on a continuum beginning with the longer passage quoted above. The first passage is, if anything, pastoral: describing a place of leisure and pleasure not so much haunted by death as in a complementary and accommodating relationship--reconciled--with it. "Et in Arcadia ego" is not so much a gloomy warning or terrible refrain as a statement of existential fact.

Here it seems helpful for a moment to recall the evaluation of Georges Van Den Abbeele regarding "the ultimate

task of philosophy": "to be able to preempt death without being able to experience it" (24). Van Den Abbeele arguably has in mind here the actual moment of physical death--the limit passing which forever forbids return. While he makes an intriguing case for the way in which the four French philosophers he examines use metaphors involved with travel to fulfill that task, the narratives of Porter and Stephens suggest an alternative view.[18]

Rather than arriving at the method for preempting death, Porter and Stephens seem more interested in the sense of presence of death around them. In a landscape where graves outnumber living inhabitants, where ruins are surrounded by acres of graves, death is present in a way not previously encountered by either writer. Caroline Paine, making her way through the ancient Edom, exclaims: "How many have perished here! Indeed, one may fancy the whole of this valley to be a vast mausoleum, over which the sands of the desert have blown for ages" (286). Stephens has this to say about Alexandria:

> Riding over that waste, the stranger sees broken columns, crumbling walls, and fragments of granite and marble thrusting themselves above their sandy graves, as if struggling for resurrection....He is riding over a mighty sepulchre, the sepulchre of a ruined city, and at every step some telltale monument is staring at him from the grave.[19]
>
> (EAPHL 5-6)

Porter had seen his share of battle's carnage and Stephens was not unmarked by death, yet the overwhelming quantity of it that they record, the manner in which the land seems

infused and suffused with it, affects them in a way that makes them unable to "preempt" death. Even if they attempt any such strategy of evasion, they certainly cannot do so without first having an experience of death. This experience is not that of their own personal physical dissolution but of the dissolution of identity--that which purports to be eternal and thus beyond death--in the face of death. Abroad will thus not provide the answer to the subject suffering under homelessness. A new experience, a "revelation" of a "'wholly other'" possibility, is needed. This possibility must abolish the question of homelessness: a clean break is required, where that way of thinking is no longer pursued. The new experience, revealing the movement between apparent identities, is an experience of wonder.

Experiences of death and mortality happen in the moments where Porter and Stephens wrestle with the question of nothing, the question not of <u>why</u> (seeking causes, reasons, explanations) but of <u>who</u>. Stephens and Porter, as has been shown, are struck by the way in which the Jews manage to hold on to their identity in the face of a long history of adversity. These travelers, though, are quite aware that the differences encoded in apparent identity lead more often to pain and bloodshed than to freedom, and that the result of such conflict is as often death as defiant survival. Indeed, defiant survival seems a reaction to death. The sepulchre upon which Stephens's traveler treads is evidence of this, as is the aftermath of the decade of open Greek and Turkish conflict in the region. On a visit to Scio with an acquaintance who had lived there and whose family still

resided there, Stephens writes:

> We left the house and walked out into the garden. It showed that there was no master's eye to watch over it; I plucked an orange which had lost its flavour; the tree was withering from want of care; our feet became entangled among weeds, and roses, and rare hothouse plants growing wildly together. (GTRP 1: 148)

This might be too consciously literary for Stephens's own good, but in its account of disorder and abandonment his language has both Biblical and Shakespearean overtones. The styles Stephens draws upon speak deeply to poignant loss. There is sad beauty in the language. Stephens could hardly hope that the orange he plucked would be sweet, but he tries it anyway, in hope. Although "weeds, roses, and rare hothouse plants" are tangled and untended, there is something not unhappy in their "growing wildly together." Perhaps these very different plants, some precious, others entirely unvalued, have found their own balance and harmony. Man cultivates the rose, but the cultivator is driven from Home.

Despite, or rather because of the neglect Stephens witnesses, a moment of "thusness" emerges: "I pause in wonder because a thing is as it is, at this moment, and not different. It is precisely the emerging 'thusness' of the thing that provokes wonder" (Verhoeven 63). Desolation and abandonment take on the aspect of a nearly Biblical curse upon the land. Scio lacks the sense of divine presence: "there was no master's eye to watch over it." Thus the precious combines intimately and inextricably with the

precarious: Stephens and his companion are "entangled" here. Gordon C. F. Bearn writes that "the redemptive power of tragedy is that to discover the precariousness of our caring is at the same time to discover the preciousness--the paper-thin surface--of what we care about, its fragility: its wonder" (32).

The forlorn aspect of the untended and untenanted garden is counterpoised on the facing page of GTRP by the macabre:

> On our way [to "visit a relative" of Stephens's "Sciote friend"] my companion pointed out a convent on the side of a hill, where six thousand Greeks, who had been prevailed upon to come down from the mountains to ransom themselves, were treacherously murdered to a man; their unburied bones still whiten the ground within the walls of the convent. (1: 149)

The ground upon which these travelers walk is not only figuratively a sepulchre: it is also literally that. That these "six thousand Greeks" were butchered in and about a convent further intimates the growing sense that the "master's eye" has been taken away from this land. Yet this is also sacred, hallowed ground. The exposed bones whitening "the ground within the walls" suggest not only violence and carnage but another sort of ultimate exposure: an existential and necessary "exposition," a fundamental nakedness that is gruesome, ghastly. Six thousand dead is scarcely imaginable. Stephens cannot bring a single one of those six thousand back from the dead. He can, however, witness this scene and convey it. As the reader is brought near to this scene the

sense of wonder is evoked, even here.

This moment at the ruined convent is a wonderful moment. Unfortunately, common English usage makes this last assertion seem bizarre or even perverse. "Wonderful," "marvelous," and "amazing" are used as expressions of pleasure. "Miraculous" is only understood as an act of divine beneficence. "Bewildering" might come closer to the aspect of wonder evoked here, but even that word seems too feeble to bear the weight of this burdened moment. Even "awful" seems too anemic. The wonderful is not strictly a matter of pleasure or morality; it is, rather, a matter (sometimes) of terrible mystery. A miracle is what defies all efforts to account rationally for an event. Thus, when I call what Stephens describes above wonderful, it is imperative that "wonderful" be recognized in its unutterably mysterious aspect. The wonderful is terrible mysteriousness and overwhelming joy. It is the overplus that cannot be said, cannot be reduced to "good" or "bad," "benevolent" or "malevolent": it is non-rational. As Frederick Sontag puts it, "[o]ur concerns are always wider than our language competency" (41).

That these aspects are simultaneous suggests part of the difficulty not only in conveying the sense of wonder, but also and finally, more importantly, of learning how to live with the sense of wonder: how not only to live with uncertainty but, in point of fact, to accept it and even be receptive to it. Confusion remains the unexchangeable environment of the travel narrative. Death and mortality, especially because experienced abroad, shock the traveler into sudden nearness: the precariousness and thus the

preciousness of "things," of that which constitutes human life, is brought abruptly into focus.

The process of fading and loss of apparent identity, suggested in one aspect through encounters with death and mortality, may also be detected in the remainder of a name, a timeworn inscription: another aspect of mortality. Porter notes a "Genoese graveyard, containing the remains of the former inhabitants. Time has nearly effaced the inscriptions" (1: 71). This evidence of a Genoese presence in the region serves as another reminder of the various groups which have occupied the land; the fading, the effacement of the names, is a counter-reminder of the ephemeral nature of occupancy and possession. Purity and eternity are constantly offset by death and mortality.

Porter's choice of words above is really quite fruitful, considering the connection between name and identity. This connection is fused by means of the face, in this particular case the "face" of the headstone, timeworn and practically illegible. An illegibility of a different sort occurs in Porter's description of an altar atop some prominent rocks "on the European side of the mouth of the Bosphorus": "The shaft or lower part is filled with the initials and names of persons who have visited the spot, some deeply cut others less so; some skillfully done, some otherwise; but all so run, one into the other, that it is impossible to make out what they are" (1: 54, 55). This convention of travel, leaving a mark at sites where the traveler pauses, is something Stephens, as well as Taylor and Paine, also note. Examining the ruins of the temple of Philae, Stephens

discerns "among the mysterious and unknown writings of the Egyptians...inscriptions in Greek and Latin....the sacred cross, the emblem of the Christian faith, and the figures of the Egyptian deities were defaced and plastered over" (EAPHL 86). Seeing the carved name of a friend who had died in Palestine before Stephens came to the region brings "[a] thousand recollections...of joys departed, never to return," and Stephens, more than just noting the marks, makes his own beneath that of his friend (EAPHL 87). He likewise inscribes his name inside a temple at Petra (EAPHL 257). While in the Sinai, Stephens comes across a rock that the Greek monks in the area claim is the Rock of Horeb, the rock Moses struck with his staff, causing water to flow from it.[20] Stephens considers it "a clumsy artifice of the early monks to touch the hearts of pious pilgrims" (EAPHL 195) and proceeds to carve his name on it beneath those of others who had preceded him, leaving similar records (EAPHL 195-196).[21]

Here the remnants of antiquity, ruins of apparent identity, show a process of effacement and reinscription, and sacred objects once the signs of holiness become signs of travel itself. These sites literally reveal the "(dis)appearance" of identity: its radically apparent property. The two processes--effacement and reinscription--may even be considered one, two faces of the same page. The record of apparent identity, "eternity," like the altar or the Egyptian temple, is palimpsestic, "deities defaced and plastered over," a maze, names "all so run, one into the other, that it is impossible to make out what they are." The holy, the hallowed, in terms of its inviolability and

eternity, has gone from these objects: the old gods have gone from this place--effaced. Wonder returns, however, through the traveler's encounter and reinscription.

Rarely does an old temple site or sacred object strike these travelers as having anything "holy" about it: they are not religious pilgrims. Nonetheless, visits to such sites often, not unexpectedly, become occasions for wonder. If the temple is no longer a temple, if the gods once worshipped there are unknown to these travelers, the temple was still once a temple. The ruins sometimes yet show the darkness and sometimes yet whisper the stillness that Otto argues have been the means in Western art to "represent" the numinous (68).

The attempt to accommodate the sense of wonder, to live it, requires a minimum of attention. The considered style of Porter and the lightness (but not levity) of Stephens's language seem strategies of accommodation adopted in light of a tension between, on the one hand, the ephemerality of time and human existence within it and, on the other, the assurance of eternity, of purity through which time is always thought to be transcended. Amidst the tension between the "essence" of apparent identity, with its promise of eternity, and the finality of death, with its manifold images of desolation, wonder becomes an alternative way of seeing. The apprehension of wonder offers a different relationship to the "crisis" of existence than that offered by rhetorics of identity.

Porter notes an experience of accommodation, rather late in his letters, which appears to have made a deep impression

on him. The accommodation is not initially his own, but becomes his own as it provokes thought. Going through a Greek village, his party

> stopped to buy some bread and onions, and fill our jugs with water--which was very fine, but every thing else that we saw was filth and wretchedness. I walked through the village, the streets or lanes of which were filthy in the extreme. The women and children were dirty and ragged; but on passing a house, I heard a woman singing a lively Greek song, and wondered how among so much misery, a human being could be found happy enough to sing. (2: 210)

Perhaps this "lively" song is an act of consolation amid the "filth and wretchedness." Perhaps this is the woman's ephemeral mark, her signature upon the moment. This signature, like the others, will eventually become commingled and illegible, all that remains the mark as a mark. Perhaps, again, this is the mysterious expression of an even more mysterious joy. Whatever may have prompted the song, it pervades this moment, giving Porter pause: as if the song were the only sound, punctuating the silence. The song does not fit. Yet it exists for the reader because it existed in that moment of indirect contact between Porter and the anonymous woman, singing "among so much misery." The wonder-evoking mystery is that people can be happy even in adversity and extreme hardship. No philosopher can provide the "answer" to that question: to think of this phenomenon <u>as</u> a question is to misunderstand it from the start.

This is a region of accommodation as much as of rigidity--of stubborn life as much as remorseless deaths held out by time on the one hand and apparent identity on the other. Indeed, "[s]o familiar is the idea of death in this country," writes Porter, "that even the tombs with which they [the people] are every where surrounded, cannot inspire them with thoughts of a gloomy nature" (2: 79). The song, past a certain point of rationalization, seems nearly a pure expression of freedom, spontaneous, a gift of existence: an occasion for wonder.

Though one might think that the abominable living conditions Porter describes would have been enough to keep him out of the village, at its edge, he instead walks through it. The efficiency of the qualifications within Porter's prose (his conjunctions) sets his reader at a pace, though condensed, similar to that at which he took the village in. He appears to feel a need to witness, to see this place, to be exposed to it by turn and return ("but"...."but"). It is only by virtue of that exposure within the village that Porter was able to hear the woman's song. It is only as a result of the "filth and wretchedness" that this song opens forth as the rare, precious, and precarious gift that it is. The "lively" song seems to express happiness; it clearly expresses happiness to Porter, which is why it amazes him.

4. "Emphatically a Paradise Lost"

The pastoral graveyard Stephens describes above is just one of many references to garden-like spaces, spaces of leisure and pleasure, which are also found in the narratives

of Bayard Taylor and in Caroline Paine's Tent and Harem: Notes of an Oriental Trip (1859). The richness and detail of the descriptions that Taylor and Paine especially provide (evidenced for example in the botanical knowledge they demonstrate) unfolds a metaphor of Paradise--Home, Identity, Certainty--interspersed between with sublime and fatal desolations. In that part of the world, so rich in Biblical lore, an originary site for religion, both the apprehension in desolation of mystery and the reaction that seeks to establish a space for apparent identity--Home--is a matter of which Taylor and Paine are both keenly aware.[22]

Paine, at Philae, notes that "[i]t is no wonder that this insulated region, solitary, grand, and beautiful, the very home of meditation, should have been religiously consecrated as the abode of the gods" (147). In his Journey to Central Africa; or, Life and Landscapes from Egypt to the Negro Kingdoms of the White Nile (1854), while out in the desert, Taylor finds "an unspeakable fascination in the sublime solitude": "I often beheld the sun rise, when, within the wide ring of the horizon, there was no other living creature to be seen. He came up like a god, in awful glory, and it would have been a natural act, had I cast myself upon the sand and worshipped him" (JCA 181). Otto writes that "its dual character, as at once an object of boundless awe and boundless wonder, quelling and yet entrancing the soul, constitutes the proper positive content of the mysterium as it manifests itself in conscious feeling" (41).

In an environment shot through with such associations the Edenic note evoked by gardens should hardly be

surprising. The notes of pleasure, innocently sensual, evoke the prelapsarian fullness of life in Paradise, tended as well as tenanted by Adam and Eve. Paradise, however, is hardly a place in which to perceive the "awful glory" of God, or mystery. Perhaps contrary to expectation, Paradise is not a place that easily fosters the sense of wonder, being instead antagonistic to it. It is well to recall here the etymological implications of the Persian-derived "paradise": a walled garden. The homecoming, the return to blessed oneness, can only, seemingly, be realized within that demarcated (home) space. Outside stretches the question of death, naked as the bones punctuating the desert.

The road Taylor takes through the desert "was strewn with bones and carcasses, and I frequently counted twenty dead camels within a stone's throw" (JCA 176). Paradise flees from the question of death because that very question negates Paradise. Eden fails at the threshold, trembles, fears, and flies far away. Thus the ache of homelessness is inseparable from Edenic consciousness and its attendant desires. Thoughts of Paradise can never travel past that "evil" question of death. The garden, then, more often than not is a troubled place: always haunted or else already, in a sense, "dead." Stephens's walk in the abandoned garden at Scio suggests this irrevocably troubled state of being, this paradise "emphatically a Paradise lost." Continuing his description, Stephens writes:

> Do not think me extravagant when I say that, in your wildest dreams, you could never fancy so rich and beautiful a scene. Even among ruins, that

> almost made the heart break, I could hardly tear my eyes from it. It is one of the loveliest spots on earth. It is emphatically a Paradise lost, for the hand of the Turks is upon it; a hand that withers all that it touches. (GTRP 1: 152)

Porter, who also visited the island, describes Scio as "[t]he garden of the Levant, the earthly paradise. All, all was ruin and desolation! Every house was roofless and tenantless! Silence reigned every where!" (2: 258). That such loveliness should also simultaneously be such a waste seems an unbearable, an impossible thought, enough to make "the heart break," for both writers. The skeletons of the houses evoke the image of the skeletons of the butchered Greeks Stephens saw in and about the abandoned convent, or those Taylor beheld in the desert. The pleasure and certainty of the garden space is here washed away by the blood soiling it, washing the sensation of divine superintendence out from the soil.

Once that sense of divine presence fades all the certainty of purity and eternity is immediately threatened. Once Paradise is lost, Home is lost. To be aware of this loss is also to be aware of the desire for restoration, the pain of homelessness, and, perhaps on the far horizon, the hope of a possibility of new revelation. For Taylor, traveling in "the hill country of Judea": "There was a quiet pastoral air about the landscape, a soft serenity in its forms and colors, as if the Hebrew patriarchs still made it their abode" (LS 44). Here, however, with the inclusion of "as if," some of the differences between Taylor's account and

those of Porter and Stephens begin to be suggested.

Travel is not necessarily end-directed: the goal, the endpoint, being the "return," whether to a geographical home or metaphorical Home, a certainty. Spengemann, by those writers he associates with what he calls the "poetics of adventure," presents a group for whom such a search is decidedly not an impetus to travel. For that group, there was no endpoint, and travel became "a temporal progression of scenes viewed through the eyes of someone who simultaneously brings the landscape into being by perceiving it and comes into being himself by responding to it as he moves through it on the ground" (7). Spengemann sees these "adventurers" as set against a "poetics of domesticity," which has been described above as a super-valuation of stability and conformity. The poetics of adventure, then, "express and appraise the predominantly individualistic values of change, discontent, daring, aspiration, curiosity, eccentricity, and self-justification" (69).

"Adventure" certainly adequately captures the impetus of Spengemann's description. Yet all of these commendably "individualistic values" set an impossible task, and his last characteristic, "self-justification," necessitates that the central drive of the "adventurer" be an insatiable and all-consuming hunger for explanation. If "domesticity" promises that (an illusory) Home already exists here with us, "adventure" insists that (a real and true) Home already exists out there elsewhere. Home remains the common factor, and the opposition is measured by the degree to which the ache of homelessness gnaws away at any particular soul.

In Lands of the Saracen; or, Pictures of Palestine, Asia Minor, Sicily, and Spain (1854), near the mountains of Lebanon, Taylor feels he has found "the true haunt of Pan, whose altars are now before me, graven on the marble crags of [Mt.] Hermon. Looking on those altars, and on the landscape, lovely as a Grecian dream, I forget that the lament has long been sung: 'Pan, Pan is dead!'" (112). This passage in many ways encapsulates Taylor's writing. While his romantic penchant was certainly not out of the mainstream of his time, the overwhelming dullness or conventionality of his prose has been a perversely frequent note in critical evaluation of his work.[23] Much more than either Porter or Stephens, Taylor throws himself into the everyday life of the regions he visits, and records in greater detail with much greater frequency his interactions with local people.[24] This seems in keeping with what his wife said of him, that "it was not so much a craving for knowledge of the world as it was a desire to place himself en rapport with a wide range of humanity and nature, which had given him a restlessness of life" (qtd in Wermuth 58). This seems almost to encapsulate the memoir-fond picturesque traveler discussed by Batten. Taylor, in this greater concern with the words and actions of those among whom he travels, struggles for and wrestles with interaction and communication. While this struggle is surely not absent from either Porter, Stephens, or Paine, Taylor allows a particularly significant space in his narratives to this contemplation.[25]

In further keeping with conventions of the picturesque,

Taylor allows more space to consider descriptive pictures--snapshots in a time prior to the Kodak, but also an effective means of "extraducing" wonder. Meant to paint as vivid a picture as possible for a readership which most likely would never see these sights with their own eyes, these moments also seem a way for Taylor to project himself into the environment, as though he were actively searching for wonder. Taylor at one level is assuredly seeking the identity of the East, the deep mystery--again hinting at the religious or, perhaps more properly, spiritual overtones of wonder and of travel. If he is searching out the identity of the East, however, this "identity" is not the "apparent identity" Verhoeven has given warning about. This identity instead occurs as part of "the endless deferment of certitude" that characterizes thought arising out of wonder. It is this identity, <u>whatever</u> it is, toward which Taylor struggles.

At the farthest point of his travels in Africa, Taylor writes: "Beyond me all was strange and unknown, and the Gulf of Guinea was less distant than the Mediterranean, which I left not three months before. Why not push on and attempt to grasp the Central African secret?" (<u>JCA</u> 343). This is certainly a call to adventure; but Taylor also responds to the call of wonder, the sheer fascination of all that yet lies before him, from which he must now turn away. For Taylor to push on from that point would be an illustration of the purest case of Spengemann's contention for the conjoined processes of bringing and coming into being through travel. Spengemann's rationale of "self-justification," however, is not Taylor's rationale.

Taylor's aesthetic and poetic senses, or sensibilities, are employed much more frequently than those of Porter or Stephens (even Paine for that matter, who remains closer to Taylor in this than either of the earlier writers). Though mountains as altars may not be an especially fresh image, the "Grecian dream" Taylor mentions above remains intriguing. What precisely is a "Grecian dream": a dream of Greece, a dream in the Greek manner? This may be nothing more than the vision of a rough nature that is, for all its roughness, a non-threatening nature: harmonious wilderness. Even in the moment of his dreaming, though, Taylor remains awake: his act of forgetting that "Pan, Pan is dead" simultaneously and necessarily an act of remembering this death.

Taylor makes reference to the "Hebrew patriarchs" in his feeling for the pastoral qualities of Judea. His sense is an "as if" perception, an imagining which seeks to bridge the gap of time. Such "as if" awareness, like the ghostly presence of Pan, haunts Taylor both in the vicinity of Mt. Hermon and away from it. Pan, this figure of freedom, pleasure and enjoyment, a happy hybrid of human and animal (mind and body, reason and desire), practically escapes the decisions of innocence and guilt, being beyond these. Past that boundary lies plenitude, the cornucopia associated with Pan and other fecund Grecian deities. This is a mysterious bounty. But plenitude, like Taylor's Grecian dream, cannot ultimately forget mortality, and this because it cannot ultimately forget the tremendous mystery of its bounty. Et in Arcadia ego.

The gardens and garden-like spaces Taylor and Paine give

a special degree of attention to, sites which seem a promise of "home," are inseparable from that relation to death. These gardens are frequently figures for purity, for Home, but the fascination is not finally in these apprehensions but rather in that which the lapsed garden, the neglected or forgotten garden, supplies. Such spaces fascinate not, or not only, because their "ruined" quality corresponds to the "ruined" and superseded "essence" of the Near East, though. It is in such spaces that an extra-human fecundity mysteriously manifests itself. (Recall for a moment the "weeds, and roses, and rare hothouse plants growing wildly together" at Scio.) Though the "withering hand" of the Turks may be in evidence at places like Scio, the Turks seem no more than agents of a more pervasive imperative, "effects" of a deeper "cause."[26] This is a region upon which the "withered hands" of the mummified dead also lie, scattered. This imperative is mystery. The wonder of abroadlessness comes here as a revelation: the acceptance of and receptivity to the precariousness and preciousness--the "fragility," as Bearn calls it, "of what we care about" (32).

Riding near "[t]he village of Aboo 'l Ghosh...said to be the site of the birth-place of the Prophet Jeremiah," Taylor considers the cultivation on the surrounding mountains: "The stony mountain sides are wrought into terraces, where, in spite of soil which resembles an American turnpike, patches of wheat are growing luxuriantly, and olive trees, centuries old, hold on to the rocks with a clutch as hard and bony as the hand of Death" (LS 55). Working their way toward Osioot, Paine's party witnesses the stark contrast between the desert

and the river Nile, "the waving line that divides it from the region of fertility, so gracefully curving, and yet so clearly defined--a world of awful desolation and a world of life, side by side" (203). The two images, different in what they observe, are yet marked by a similar deep impression. This is a land where life and death have reached a stalemate, existing "side by side." The curve of that "region of fertility" suggests a gradualness and a softness. Although "the waving line" is not expressed by Paine as the line of the shore but rather as the line of the Nile "so clearly defined," the river seems to be aligned with the fertile lands, not the desert. The desert is that which lacks water, and is thus defined by the river, but defined differently than the way that the river defines the fertile lands. Paine is in a sense at a loss how to describe what she sees, for the line is "so gracefully curving, and yet so clearly defined," as if there were a paradox here. Indeed, there is. This is a paradox of wonder: that "awful desolation" and "life" can, on the one hand, be separated and "clearly defined" by only the narrowest of margins, "and yet," on the other hand, the line itself is not rigid but, quite literally, liquid. This paradox insists upon itself and, because it does so, arouses wonder. This insistence recalls that of the "olive trees, centuries old," which Taylor mentions, with their tenacious, insistent hold upon the soil, upon the rocks of that impoverished yet abundant land, a hold just "as hard and bony as the hand of Death."

If this is a land of tenacious life and equally tenacious death locked in seeming stasis, impasse, neither

triumphing over the other in a victory of escape, it is also a land where life becomes confused with death, becomes an imitation of it adopted in order to perpetuate life (the hold of the roots upon the rocks). Life, chameleon-like, accommodates itself to the environment in which it finds itself.[27] "A, by changing, becomes identical with itself" (Verhoeven 67). This confusion, interweaving, thus suggests that paradox of wonder yet again (life becomes death becomes life) which continues through other garden images. While walking in a garden at Rhoda, Paine notes that it

> was in a very neglected condition when we saw it, but we chanced to be there at a season when the roses were in full bloom, and such a wilderness of them could scarcely be imagined. A soft, delicious morning air was redolent with the perfume, which we snuffed with no little delight as we wandered through labyrinthine walks enjoying the thick-set shrubbery and umbrageous trees whose branches dipped into the water. (232)

The rose is, if anything, the very symbol of the disciplined, ordered garden. It is a temperamental, though hardy, beauty. To encounter a "wilderness" of roses, then, would indeed be scarcely imaginable. Yet here it is, strangely impressive, a "redolent" wilderness of "labyrinthine walks" and "umbrageous trees whose branches dipped into the water." The confusion here recalls that other running together in Porter's account of the names of travelers carved upon the altar stone, an account of rigid distinctions blurred, lost in a manner of historical "sedimentation." The grooves of the etched names

in turn evoke the furrows of the cultivated fields Taylor has noted, a record of ongoing human presence, of temporality, effaced and overwritten "certainties": desolate homes.

Indeed, "Home," here, is always already a desolation and an illusion: a mirage. The various deep impressions encountered and recorded by these travelers (punishment early in this chapter and the equipoise of life and death just above) are also figured in the mark of the name. This is the certainty that perpetuates itself by an act of possession. Home, to be "Home," in order to be legitimate, must purge itself of "impurity," all illegitimacy, all impropriety: Abroad, in short. This is the means of knowing how to go on afforded by certainty.

Wilderness does not afford that certainty: wilderness is not nor ever can be Home. This is also implicit in Paine's wonder at the graceful but definite division of the fertile lands from the waste. In that image was an intimation of the logic of home/abroad. That the wilderness here is a wilderness of roses, though, suggests the loss of the garden's purity as garden. Still, this place retains an atmosphere of Edenic pleasure. Eden, in the biblical account, was certainly the place people were meant for, and on Earth, on the ground, people "belong" nowhere else. In contrast to the Edenic Home, everywhere else is abroad.

The place Paine experiences is almost a "dream" garden in the way Taylor's description of the mountains of Lebanon made them out to be "lovely as a Grecian dream." The garden as garden is forgotten and remembered simultaneously, lost and retained. The roses mark the place as a garden, yet

those very roses have lost their apparent identity as garden plants, trained, divided. They have been left over to the freedom of wilderness, left to find their own way, subject to no law of apparent identity. Yet wilderness exhibits freedom only in the fiction of the dream, and though Paine "snuffed" the rose-thick air in animal-like simplicity and joy, "Pan, Pan is dead[.]" In this interplay of loss and recovery, moments of occluded perception, the use of "umbrageous," an uncommon word, is surprisingly effective: the heaviness of its vowels conveying the play of the shade, branches burdened by leaves dipping into the water. Paine delights in this "redolent," "labyrinthine" confusion, taking immense pleasure from the freedom of "impurity": that abundance of wonder which only Home could train to alternate employment.

Paine's delight in spaces which have lost the purity of identity is evident earlier in her narrative in another way, while in Cairo. The garden of Shoubra "has no particular beauty or interest; like all those of the East, it is laid out formally and stiffly, with avenues of lemons and oranges, odoriferous shrubs and ornamental trees, and contains fountains of water, well supplied by the Nile, which flows by the garden" (88). It is understood that Paine cannot possibly have surveyed every garden of the East; she is not making a claim of fact, but a generalization from her experience. What she responds to is a matter of absence of mystery or <u>numen</u>: wonder. This garden is strongly identified by its purity of line, as found in the garden's formality and stiffness, its "avenues of lemons and oranges," and in its disciplined "ornamental trees." It is a mathematically clean

and precise space, "well supplied by the Nile" with water. Nothing, in short, has been left to chance. Where the trees in the lapsed garden at Rhoda met the water at the river, here at Shoubra, the Nile, "which flows by the garden," separate from it, has been channeled into the garden.

In its apparent characteristic quality for Paine, this garden suggests an aspiration toward eternity through the purity of its identity, each element allotted its exclusive and defined space. Though pleasant in its way, it "has no particular beauty or interest" (emphasis added). Beauty and interest, it would seem, are properties neither of eternity nor of purity. The garden at Shoubra, clean and defined and fixed, does not reveal any wonder to Paine.

It is hard to avoid the impression that Paine has some knowledge of gardening, for her botanical knowledge demonstrates more than a passing interest in the subject. Rather early in her account, while she and her party are at Therapia ("a small Greek village on a little bay of the Bosphorous, about twelve miles, or two hours, from Stamboul" [32]), they visit another garden, which, "although somewhat stiff and formal in its design, was deliciously sweet and lovely with verbenas, jasmines, passion-flowers, pinks, and roses" (33). There is a manner of sensuous pleasure to be had simply in the cataloging Paine does here, the sibilants and bilabials having a sensuousness comparable to the fragrance of the flowers. This is a seductive place, "deliciously sweet and lovely." Part of that seductiveness is to be found in its Edenic-seeming certainty.

It is precisely in this quality of being known,

identified, named--certain, "free"--that this garden, too, appears to lack in wonder for Paine. Its loveliness has an unsettling sterility about it which disappoints her hopes even as it fulfills her expectations. This same sense is also suggested at Shoubra, in the "odoriferous shrubs." The adjective, in its exaggerated formality (why not "fragrant," or "sweet smelling"?) possibly hints at disapprobation. The pleasure the garden at Therapia affords thinly conceals the walls of regularity and geometric discipline. There seems to be an implicit question posed by Paine's language: how can it be that the sterile spaces are spaces saturated with "identity" (all alike--identical), and the spaces that seem alive, truly pleasurable, even when desolate, are places having a rather loose and tenuous relation to identity, to certainty, to Home?

A simple response would be that garden spaces by their very nature are regulated, unfree. They are designed reflections of human intentions, desires. To that extent, they cannot manifest wonder. As Otto and Verhoeven both point out, wonder can only be "evoked, awakened" (Otto 7), "granted or inflicted" (Verhoeven 13). The gardens Paine describes strive to provide the sense of "Home": belonging, "stable perpetuity." Past a certain point these values are necessarily opposed to mystery, and especially to any tremendous mystery. At Home, all is fixed and in place. There the world makes sense, and harmony and efficiency proceed from this. Going on presents no difficulty and certainly no despair. The price for this certainty, however, is wonder, revelation.

Still roaming in Lebanon, Taylor and his guide

> entered on wild, half-cultivated tracts, covered with a bewildering maze of blossoms. The hill-side and stony shelves of soil overhanging the sea fairly blazed with the brilliant dots of color which were rained upon them. The pink, the broom, the poppy, the speedwell, the lupin, that beautiful variety of the cyclamen, called by the Syrians "deek e-djebel" (cock o' the mountain), and a number of unknown plants dazzled the eye with their profusion, and loaded the air with fragrance as rare as it was unfailing. Here and there, clear, swift rivulets came down from Lebanon, coursing their way between thickets of blooming oleanders. (LS 34)

Much like the "labyrinthine" ways of the forgotten garden Paine visited, the "bewildering maze of blossoms" here, in its confusion and "profusion," seems to offer an intimation of freedom otherwise unattainable. This freedom is a freedom to participate or partake, rather than the "freedom from" of separation and purity. Here also, unlike the garden at Shoubra, the watersources make their own way through the landscape. The "rare" and "unfailing" fragrance of the air, the sea to the one hand and the mountains to the other, places Taylor in a position between the two conventional manifestations of the sublime.

While this stretch he traverses is hardly described as a desolation, it nonetheless functions as desolations elsewhere in these travel narratives: a space between unowned by any,

saturated with a wonderful specificity. Here, then, arises another apprehension that this place, this region, is "emphatically a Paradise lost," fatal to certainty, fatal to purity: Home is not nor ever can be here. The resulting tone is one of unmitigated joy. The flowers are named in English, but one then also in Arabic. This flower bears both names and neither. The purity of identity, the sine qua non of identity's closure and eternity, is lost, lost in the naming of a flower. Several of the plants growing there Taylor cannot name and does not bother to.

The risk of naming and its inadequacy is humorously described by Taylor in what happened to him as he was about to leave the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. "[A] monk appeared with a bowl of sacred rose-water, which he sprinkled on our hands, bestowing a double portion on a rosary of sandalwood which I carried. But it was a Mohammedan rosary, brought from Mecca, and containing the sacred number of ninety-nine beads" (LS 84). Several contexts are being violated, traversed here. To begin with, Taylor doubts the authenticity of the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher; he is not Catholic; his "rosary" is Islamic. The especial blessing of a "double portion" of the rose water on the rosary, then, seems doubly strange, doubly confused. All is skewed here, and the purity of what ought to be, and what is assumed to be, is lost in the several negations of purity and certainty at work in this one moment. The mystery of things seems to emerge in the utter confusion and consternation of aims and intentions that happens here, even though and precisely because Taylor obviously knows how things were

"meant" to be taken. The wonder, at least in part, is that "certain" things are so easily made uncertain. To become aware of impurity is to lose Paradise.

5. Pleasure and Extraducing Wonder

Porter is introduced to the concept of kef during his time at Constantinople. Leisure or relaxation is part of kef but the experience is not reducible to either word, either name. Kef is akin to a particularly satisfying experience of pleasure. Discussing the pleasures available at Constantinople, Porter allows that an American, used to American ways, and unwilling to accept or appreciate Turkish ways, will be rather disappointed. "There is nothing of what we call society here. No tea-meetings, no evening or dinner parties, no balls, no theatre; but their keff parties, as they call them, are more than a mere substitute for the pleasures we delight in" (1: 262). Porter has earlier made clear what he likens "keff" to: "jollification" (1: 65). By the emphasis Porter himself twice places on the "we" in the above quote, he insists on the need to contemplate Turkish, and perhaps more generally Eastern ways not by a Western standard, or even, for that matter, by an Eastern standard, which Porter may or may not be in a position to apply, but by a more general means of evaluation. This means would be the capacity of any experience to "extraduce" wonder, to apprehend the "thusness" of things, to begin to understand what abroadlessness entails and how a person could go on (in company) with it.

When Porter uses the term "society," what perhaps comes

to mind is the familiar usage, denoting a class-delimited body of activities expressing a class-delimited set of values. The pleasures Porter lists under that heading suggest the pleasures of the pleasant as opposed to the salacious, the pleasures of cultivation: good conversation, good food, wit and the play of language. In short, he expresses the deep contentment of good company. The "keff parties...are more than a mere substitute" for these aspects of good company. Porter appears to place great emphasis upon this point, an emphasis in keeping with the image he typically conveys of the Turks as a highly cultivated, highly civilized people, as opposed to the heathen barbarians his readers may have been led to expect, going only upon preconceptions. The pleasures of kef are not simply some second-best alternative to the pleasures which Western "society" offers. To make such comparisons is to engage in a sort of arithmetical endeavor of "greater than/less than" or "equal to." To say, while the West has "society," the East has "keff," is to express an equivalency. This seems innocuous enough; indeed, drawing equivalences is a rather typical epistemological activity. But this activity leads to taking things for granted and failing to see them as unique: equivalence by its very nature demands as much.

Many things can produce similar results, but this does not necessarily make those producing things equivalent. Porter begins to suggest something of this when speaking of the outings he makes:

> The Bosphorous cannot be visited too often, and when you unite, with the pleasure of viewing its

> numerous beauties which meet your vision through every turn of its meadows, the delights of a keff, with agreeable society, in one of these pleasant valleys, I know not how time can be more agreeably or more profitably spent; for the object of life is rational pleasure; and every moment so spent, cannot be otherwise than profitable to body as well as mind. (2: 146)

The admixture of "the delights of a keff" and "agreeable society" suggest the tying together of the happiest of Eastern and Western concepts and practices. These are tied together through variations on the common theme of perception. This use has already been encountered through Spengemann's account, quoted earlier, of the "temporal progression of scenes viewed through the eyes of someone who simultaneously brings the landscape into being by perceiving it and comes into being himself by responding to it as he moves through it." First, and most clearly, Porter describes moving through a landscape, and the acts of perception which structure that movement. The use and value of "society," as Porter has already implied and makes plain above, is to facilitate "rational pleasure...profitable to body as well as mind." Social interaction promotes a general health and well-being. This is something to which Porter would especially respond. He spends several pages at the start of his second volume describing an almost paralyzing depression which kept him inside his home for five months.[28] The social interactions of rational pleasure, of kef, serve to heighten perception; and heightened perception, true to mystical

experience, extraduces wonder. Good conversation is a pointing out, an exchange and a sharing for which the participants, no matter whom, are the richer. That richness is in large part the result of the wonder the participants begin to apprehend, in apprehending the marvelous mystery of each other. So for Porter, at least, wherever that pleasure may be found, and in whatever form, it is to be valued. Moreover, where different forms of such pleasure can be combined, pleasure overall is increased by that much. That is the weight carried by the term "unite" with which Porter brings together the various sources of pleasure.

Because Porter declines to associate kef with such conventional Orientalist tropes as indolence or voluptuousness (rather heavily sensual, even sexual terms) readers might be tempted to ask what is precisely "Eastern" about kef. However, to do so would be to fall into the trap of Orientalist discourse. If kef is just a means for facilitating "rational pleasure," then how is it <u>different</u> from "society" in America or Europe? But if kef is an "Oriental" means for facilitating that pleasure, what is distinctly, exclusively, purely "Oriental" about it? And if the "Orient," in its purity and exclusivity, is bound to and by "indolence and voluptuousness," how can one speak of a practice found in the Near East which does not immediately fall under those headings? Such questions desire essence, asking for a narrative of being rather than what would be more appropriate here: a narrative of doing. There is a differing, and it is not essential, "inessential." If the phrase "how is it <u>different</u>" had been altered to "how do they

differ," something of this point might become clearer: they are not the same question.

Episodes of pleasure in these narratives, for example, the "keff" outings Porter delights in, describe a successful and comfortable accommodation of another totality of judgments, another perspective, another way of seeing the world. The transformative capacity of that accommodation is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in descriptions of experiences at that most characteristic and conventional of "Oriental" sights/sites, the baths. While Porter's experience of the baths was not especially soothing or pleasurable to him, the baths for Stephens, and Taylor especially, are a very definite instance of the pleasures of transformation. This transformation is simultaneously and necessarily a retention (a person cannot realize a transformation has taken place if he or she cannot recall what came or was before).

The baths were something of an ordeal for Porter. "We visited it," he writes, "and underwent the usual sweating, scrubbing, and washing so delightful to the Turks, and so painful and debilitating to every one else. I had scarcely strength left to return home after it; and never had the fortitude to visit the baths again" (1: 263). This is not the pleasure afforded by kef. There is something humorous, quite possibly intentionally so, in the way Porter describes the almost complete ruin which the baths made of him. Of course, it can also be said that, as the baths are not particularly a space of "rational pleasure," such as the kef outing, Porter would be likely to react in just this way.

Perception is not so much heightened by the experience as dimmed, as by the clouds of steam, and what might very well be described as the "indolence" necessary to a "proper" experience of the baths is something Porter has consistently tried to work against in his narrative of Constantinople.[29] Yet it is not so much an "indolence" as a particular "suffering" that is called for here. "Everything that happens to man despite himself is suffering, regardless of what form it takes" (Verhoeven 30).

Dimmed perception and ruined bodies--"suffering"--is a note Stephens responds to in his account of the baths: "The large room was dimly lighted, and, turn which way I would, there was a naked body, apparently without a soul, lying torpid, and tumbled at will by a couple of workmen" (EAPHL 49). This (vaguely infernal) workshop-like description, however, comes near the end of Stephens's time in the baths. The overall process describes a figurative death and rebirth, a process performed upon a body by the "workmen." After leaving the tepidarium, having been "wrapped up in hot cloths and towels," he is led to a room where he selects a couch,

> and, throwing myself upon it, gave myself to the operators, who now took charge of me, and well did they sustain the high reputation of the Turkish bath: my arms were gently laid upon my breast, where the knee of a powerful man pressed upon them; my joints were cracked and pulled; back, arms, the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, all visited in succession. (EAPHL 49)

Needless to say, suffering or undergoing this experience

calls for a remarkable degree of letting go, acceptance, and going on. The body's universality, a note touched upon in the discussion of Porter and Stephens in their descriptions of Ottoman punishment, seems to be an issue here once again. Regarding that punishment, the body was always subject to the mark of "identity," conferred through "purity" and "eternity": the "is, has been, and always shall be" that marks not identity but always apparent identity. The potential for the "thusness" of anything to emerge is blocked, necessarily and deliberately, through the application, as it were, of purity and eternity to identity. Though Porter regards the baths as something on the order of a punishment, Stephens clearly regards the baths otherwise, entering as fully into the spirit of the thing as he is able, and discovering his (becoming identical with itself) soul even as he loses his "soul."

In giving himself "to the operators, who now took charge of me," Stephens for the moment surrenders his self-management, self-determination if you will, highlighted by his pinned arms. The baths, an "Oriental" space fostering a transition into anonymity, a place where bodies are "tumbled at will by a couple of workmen," lead to the question of what that work is and, further, what for Stephens is the "work" of his travel in "the Near East"? His concluding remarks on the baths appear to speak to this question:

> I had had some fears of the plague; and Paul [Stephens's guide], though he felt his fears gradually dispelled by the soothing process which he underwent also, to the last continued to keep

> particularly clear of touching any of them; but I left the bath a different man; all my moral as well as physical strength was roused.... (EAPHL 49)

Fears of the plague were well-founded. As Porter records, outbreaks regularly occurred in Constantinople. But this "plague" may also strike a reader by this point as a figurative "dis-ease." The plague in this sense is the fear of contact, of pollution, of impurity. While Paul (Paolo Nuozzo), a multilingual guide who can get around with ease, a native of the Mediterranean region, feels that fear to the degree that he keeps "particularly clear of touching any of them," Stephens seems to suggest by this that he himself, to the contrary, surrendered his fears of contact and impurity when he gave himself "to the operators."

Their operation, in a very real sense, is to put Stephens in contact--physical, human contact--with themselves, and it is through such contact, Stephens makes plain, that he walks out of the dimly lit confusion of the baths "a different man." The "Near East," then, is not a preestablished quantity for Stephens but a qualitative process of encounter, where who is the ruling question. This region is nothing but does something. Wonder is the movement, punctuated by "pauses" of greater or less duration and magnitude, in the mystery of things toward their (ever-deferred) identity. The capacity for new and further revelation--in the region par excellence of revelations--is neither ruled out nor exhausted. A particular kind of "surrender," however, is very much needed in order to experience the wonder that is such further revelation. It

should be remembered here that "to defer" has several senses, the most important of which for the moment goes beyond the "putting off," or even the "acquiescing." To defer is also, importantly, to exercise patience, and patience, in turn, encourages a simultaneously cautious and hopeful attentiveness.

Taylor, upon emerging from the baths, experiences a sense of renewal compatible with Stephens's. "[W]e went forth," says Taylor, "lighter in body, and filled with a calm content which nothing seemed able to disturb" (JCA 17). The lightness and calm Taylor describes seems at once both metaphoric for sunlight and a description of the unitive feeling/experience characteristic of the one alive to wonder.

Taylor describes the experience of the bath at somewhat greater length in Lands of the Saracen. He begins rather casually: "The Bath is the 'peculiar institution' of the East" (149). This remark seems poorly chosen, a forced analogy would be the best interpretation possible here, a seemingly ready phrase that in fact cannot bear the weight it is being asked to support. Stephens's treatment of his experience begins to suggest what Taylor might have in mind, but this is a point that Taylor does not elaborate upon explicitly. It is difficult finally to know what to make of this word choice and Taylor seems censurable here.

A crucial element in Taylor's description of the baths is the sense of an essential "more." "As the rose in the East has a rarer perfume than in other lands, so does the Bath bestow a superior purification and impart a more profound enjoyment" (LS 150). It is not that the East is

peculiarly a land of purity or enjoyment--though these are certainly conventions of travel narratives on the area--but rather that, for Taylor, these things are raised to a higher degree in the East. This is in keeping with Porter's understanding and use of kef, similar to but also perhaps a superior analog to "rational pleasure." "The East, in almost all its aspects, is so essentially poetic, that a true picture of it must be poetic in spirit, if not in form" (LS 351).[30] What is more "essentially poetic" than capturing the essence of a moment, a memory, a sensation?

The purification and enjoyment of the bath seems locatable for Taylor, at least in large part, as for Stephens, in becoming aware of the fluidity of identity. It is not purity of identity, but a purification from apparent identity that is here at stake. Here, in the baths specifically, but perhaps more generally in the narratival "here" of "the Near East," Taylor can be purified of the purity of identity. The great irony of this, as has been suggested before, is the degree to which the purity of (apparent) identity seems to be maintained in the Near East. That insistence, it would seem, undermines its own intention, for essences are ephemeral things, like human lives, situated in, but not ultimately containable within this or that "world." The capture of a moment so central to poetry captures that moment because it is ephemeral, and it is such ephemerality that poetry seeks to preserve and convey. If Taylor, or Stephens, or any of the travelers considered in this study would experience wonder, they sooner or later recognize that they must stop looking for Eden and instead

look at what lies before and all around them. The near must be brought near, seen and experienced as marvelous.

In Taylor's account of his first experience of the baths he notes how, after having gone through the process with two companions, and having been "enveloped in loose muslin robes" and turbans, "[t]he change produced by our new costume was astonishing. The stout German became a Turkish mollah, the young Smyrniote a picturesque Persian, and I--I scarcely know what, but, as my friends assured me, a much better Moslem than Frank" (JCA 17). While Taylor is able to describe how the others seem to him, he defers identifying what he "became": "and I--I scarcely know what." Taylor finds himself unable to differentiate, to determine, what he is, unable to pronounce with absolute certainty. The transformation retains an open-endedness. In a manner similar to Paine in the lapsed garden, Taylor seems to find himself simultaneously remembering and forgetting that the Turkish mollah is a "stout German," the "picturesque Persian" his companion from Smyrna. The experience of the baths, then, is, in addition to an experience of pleasure and of mortality, an apprehension of freedom: freedom from "identity," freedom to wonder. The wonder of the change can be "explained," yet the explanation explains nothing. The meaningfulness of the experience outstrips whatever language may be deployed to capture and train it to alternate uses.

That transformation and recognition is brought about by several means, and while the environment of the baths fosters such thinking, the most direct means of engendering it is through the action of the "workmen" at the baths. The

workmen of Stephens's account are, in Taylor's, artists:

> The brown sculptor has now nearly completed his task. The figure of clay which entered the bath is transformed into polished marble. He turns the body from side to side, and lifts the limbs to see whether the workmanship is adequate to his conception. His satisfied gaze proclaims his success. (LS 154)

The convolutions of aesthetics and appropriation are not easy to detangle with any confidence. These convolutions are in evidence in each line above, from naming the "operator" a "sculptor," to calling oneself a "figure of clay," transformed by the "brown" sculptor's skill, mastery--or alchemy--into "polished marble," to that "satisfied gaze" with which the sculptor surveys his "success." That sculptor and "clay" are of the same original color ought not to slip past unnoticed. That this is Taylor's rhetoric of what the attendant at the baths is or is not, is thinking or is not thinking, for better or worse is not precisely the point. Taylor both speaks and must be understood figuratively.

What is illuminated through Taylor's analogy is his sense of the malleability of identity, its freedom from any particular preexisting form. If "freedom" seems too vague, then consider "the experience of deferred identity" mentioned by Verhoeven (72). This freedom is apprehended both in the capacity of the one being bathed to be transformed, as well, and equally, as in the capacity of the workman to transform through his action, his artistry. Taylor suggests, then, a familiar matter: the productive power of art.

6. The Dubious Free Gift

The epigraphs to this chapter each speak to the effects of the heightened perception afforded by travel, as well as the relation between the distant and the near. As she and her companions make their way toward Jerusalem, Paine, putting the conclusion on her "notes of an oriental trip," records: "We felt that the romance of travelling was past, as, indeed, we afterwards found it to be" (300). This comment is in keeping with other moments in Paine's narrative where the nearer view is found to be far less enchanting, far less "romantic," than the view from a distance: a note each epigraph plays a variation upon. In keeping with this general effect of the nearer view, Porter, on an extended tour he makes, is struck by the way in which "every thing is beautiful in the distance; but nothing will bear examination. View the scene closely, and the charm vanishes" (1: 223). "Charm," it would seem, must vanish; the enchantment of Paradise must be lifted. Speaking of another moment in an Eastern garden space, Paine tells of how, as she and a companion

> wandered about in a delicious grove of palms, sycamores, and mimosas, the air perfumed with the blossoms of the palm, and the light and delicate acacias, gay with small bright-yellow flowers, I almost envied this people their little paradise. We strolled on a little farther, when we got a glimpse of the mud cabins, and our appearance drew forth the ragged and dirty occupants. The vision of happiness was at an end. Bliss and rags do not

often go together in our fancies. (142)

In the midst of this "little paradise," with as fragrant and as heavily perfumed an air as the other garden spaces she has encountered, sit the "mud cabins." It is worthy of note that Paine uses "cabins" instead of something more in keeping with typical Oriental terminology, something like "huts," for example. "Cabins" is decidedly a more typically American word, and brings along with it a whole series of associations, not just or even primarily that of poverty. A reader may associate this word instead with the rustic setting, the pioneer spirit, the canvases of Thomas Cole, American pastoral. The word also evokes slave cabins. As Paine makes clear, the "vision of happiness" was a product of the fancy, and the apparent identity Paine's fancy was weaving around this paradise becomes frayed upon the nearer view of the people dwelling in the garden. The traveler becomes unavoidably aware of the assertion of the near.

Taylor strikes upon a perception related to Paine's when, having entered into Judea, he reflects upon the gap between "Reason" and "Faith":

> Was it possible that I was in Judea? Was this the Holy Land of the Crusades, the soil hallowed by the feet of Christ and his Apostles? I must believe it. Yet it seemed once that if I ever trod that earth, then beneath my feet, there would be thenceforth a consecration in my life, a holy essence, a purer inspiration on the lips, a surer faith in the heart. And because I was not other than I had been, I half doubted whether it was the

Palestine of my dreams. (LS 51)

This soil soaked with the blood of faith, faith in the holy presence upon the land that, by that very presence would convey something of its "holy essence," its purity and certainty to one present there, fails to produce that transformation. The high romance of the Palestine of Taylor's dreams has proven illusory. And so the change Taylor had imagined does occur, only far differently from what he had once thought it would be. Entering upon that Promised Land, Taylor, not unlike Paine, discovers he has not become a purer, surer version of himself but rather, in the disappointment of that expectation, less pure, less sure than the self promised: "I was not other than I had been."

Perhaps reflecting upon this later, Taylor states: "The pious writers have described what was expected of them, not what they found" (LS 85). Wonder, it might be said, happens at the discretion of wonder: the Promised Land is not a place but an event: "remember the words of Schleiermacher..." Verhoeven enjoins his reader: "'miracle' is the religious name for event" (41). It is not the place that offers mystery, but mystery that inhabits a place. Wonder extraduces by inhabiting. If there is an expectation of "communion," then awakening to wonder becomes all the more difficult. If the "pious" seek purity and eternity, these things will not be difficult for them to find. But Taylor appears to have found something else entirely.

What has been found? Taylor suggests that, whatever it is, it is something other than piety would require. The expectation and desire that, by being present in the Holy

Land, a person would somehow be sanctified and drawn into eternity, purified, is not met. What is met is the failure of justification. The hoped for hosannas of fusion are instead stilled by the muteness of confusion, as Paine also finds while attempting, with the aid of printed travel guides, to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics:

> I could not withdraw myself from the absorbing effort of endeavoring to make an intelligible translation of the story, written on the walls before us, of the burial scenes of Osiris, and other subjects of Egyptian faith. But ignorance and imagination are very poor guides to truth, and, after wasting too much time in these fruitless efforts, I tore myself from them, vexed with myself for being unsuccessful, vexed with the meagre exposition in Wilkinson's guide book, and more than all vexed with the ignis fatuus light thrown upon them by Miss Martineau.[31] (146)

Paine's desire to enter into the life, thought, and rituals of the ancient Egyptians, to do which she has entered a tomb, proves "fruitless," though initially "absorbing." Their "truth" is closed to her. She cannot "make an intelligible translation of the story." The nearer view defies such desires, and those who would illumine our efforts toward "knowledge" of such things provide a light which is either "meagre," or worse, an "ignis fatuus."

In a highly roundabout way then, this discussion returns to Porter's contention that he would not concern himself with the past of the Ottoman's, of the East, so much as with its

present. This was also one of Taylor's objects in his travels in "the lands of the Saracen": a phrase which evokes the past in order, perhaps, to lay it to rest. "I set out," Taylor tells us as he is about to embark for Sicily and the Western Mediterranean,

> determined to be satisfied with no slight taste of Eastern life, but to drain to the bottom its beaker of mingled sunshine and sleep. All this has been accomplished; and if I have not wandered so far, nor enriched myself with such varied knowledge of the relics of ancient history, as I might have purposed or wished, I have at least learned to know the Turk and the Arab, been soothed by the patience inspired by their fatalism, and warmed by the gorgeous gleams of fancy that animate their poetry and religion. (LS 355)

Taylor's apology suggests he feels as if he has experienced something of the essence of the Near East. Rather than a place, though, "the Near East" seems an event that draws forth acceptance and receptivity even as--because--it shocks the traveler. The wonder to which the traveler is extraduced, the "thusness" emerging from each "not thus," makes a very hard demand because it is a demand of freedom. Knowledge can ease the disturbance of freedom by providing explanation, reason, fact, accuracy, and above all, justification. But it was not "such varied knowledge" that Taylor, nor any of these travelers, was seeking. The soothing warmth Taylor did find, like the calm lightness he experienced after the baths, figures the more general

revelation to these travelers of wonder and the greater mystery of abroadlessness. Once all that has not been found is set aside, relinquished, then, miraculously, what has been there all along emerges.

What will now bear further consideration, especially in taking up travelers to England, is that Taylor (and although to lesser degrees, Stephens and Paine as well) seems at least to have hoped for if not expected some sort of revelation of personal transformation by virtue of a shift in place.[32] By going elsewhere Taylor expressed an apprehensive hope of being--and seemingly all at once--otherwise. Despite failing to realize this change, this conversion, Taylor closes Lands of the Saracens in the belief that he had imbibed something of the meaningfulness of the space through which he traveled, through which he lived. Taylor leaves feeling that he, to use a phrase of Bruce A. Harvey, had been able to "penetrate the barriers of cultural difference" (62). These "barriers" are the differences that inhere in different worlds: lives differently lived. Taylor felt he had experienced the uniqueness of the places he had visited, had experienced something of what it would be to live that other life. It might even be better to say that Taylor felt as if he had been able to live his life in that other way, even if only for a relatively short time.

The uniqueness of the place visited is only initially delineated by "facts"; thereafter, the uniqueness can only be a product of the style of the travel narrative: the effort, that is, to enter into relation with the mystery of things. Mystery, wonder, deepens or diminishes, but never remains in

exactly the same degree at which the traveler first became aware of it. Contemplating how to live with the mystery of things, how to go in with wonder, is a function of time. This last point, especially, may seem self-evident, but the aspect of time appears typically to go almost completely overlooked in criticism of travel writing. In fact, it seems a commonplace in travel criticism to regard travelers as seeing or as desperately wanting to see the places they travel to (particularly when these places are less technologically advanced than home) as being outside of time: timeless. Such a "cultural logic" tends to impair a reader's ability to see travel works for the subtler and more nuanced narrations they are.

II: "The Inscrutable Temple": The Englands of James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne

It was life without the trouble of living; nothing was ever more quietly agreeable.

--- Nathaniel Hawthorne

But so it is: when we have learned to live, life's purpose is answered, and we die!

--- Harriet Beecher Stowe

Nations are getting obsolete, we go and live where we will.

--- Ralph Waldo Emerson

1. Nationality as Question

One result of travel for Bayard Taylor is an estranged realization that living is simultaneously always learning to live: learning what living entails, enjoins. He did not become other than he was, traveling in the Holy Land. The change in outward appearance that he noted while at the baths was an occasion to experience such a transformation <u>as if</u> it were possible. It seemed momentarily possible to enter another world that was yet this same world. This sky was not unfamiliar, these flowers not strange, these people not alien. Yet it was another sky, other flowers, other people, and precisely because they were <u>these</u>: these particular instances. Danger comes from failing to note uniqueness in favor of exposing common characteristics, although this activity is the indispensable flip-side of appreciating singularity.

The Near East, because of its experiential distance (both in space and frequently though not always in time), could make its uniqueness felt in a way that England could not. Yet England also without doubt keenly evoked the sense of difference and wonder thereby. Naturally, there was a much stronger sense of affinity between England and the United States, for a variety of historical, political, social, and artistic reasons. Perhaps James Fenimore Cooper captures the overall impression best when he notes "[i]t was the land of our fathers, and it contained, with a thousand things to induce us to love it, a thousand to chill the affections" (11). He anticipated his travels in England "with longing and mistrust" (11). Cooper goes on to speak of American adulation for all things English and the initial shock upon realizing that, for the English, "the tie of a common origin has seemed to be utterly broken" (11). This realization is phrased somewhat more strongly in his Preface, where he observes that "[t]he English do not like the Americans" (2).[1] While the Near East held out a tantalizing if finally chimerical fantasy of feeling spiritually at Home, for the writers considered here, England held out an even more palpable apprehension of being "nationally" at Home.

This was so much the case that, as Robert E. Spiller observed as long ago as 1926, "[p]rior to the middle of the nineteenth century, most [Americans in England] made no effort to give a complete survey of the English nation" (viii). This is revealing because, as Spiller later observes, it suggests that, to the typical American, "England was not...a foreign nation" and so much so, in point of fact,

that "in many respects he knew more about her than he did about his own country, especially the outlying parts of it" (347). Cooper's Gleanings in Europe: England (1837), Stowe's Sunny Memories (1854), Emerson's English Traits (1856), and Hawthorne's Our Old Home (1863), coming after the period of Spiller's study (roughly 1785-1835), demonstrate deep familiarity with England (assumed to a greater or lesser degree in their readers as well) but are also written as the sort of work that has as its goal the presentation of a foreign place to readers not really sure what England and the English are like--outside of hearsay and prejudice, that is, which are always common enough.

Each of these writers is disturbed and impressed by English power, and not only because each looks upon England as the ancestral homeland of the United States, and further, in Emerson's case, as a sort of spiritual-material book by which to understand the increasing prosperity of the United States.[2] As Emerson puts it, "England tends to accumulate her liberals in America, and her conservatives at London" (33). The power of the English, as all power, is unsettling, but perhaps more disturbing and impressive still is the question of what exactly is having its being realized through the exercise of that power. Even to Emerson, whom Howard Mumford Jones describes as "an Anglophile from a characteristically Anglophilic portion of the United States" (English Traits ix), it is not immediately evident that England's might is a manifestation of anything more than human, anything particularly fine or providential. England's prosperity and prevalence serve to drive home the point that,

somehow, England seems to enjoy peculiar favor, but how they came to be so favored remains shadowy and indistinct.

The term that could encompass that favoredness was neither simple nor forthcoming. "English history, wisely read," writes Emerson, "is the vindication of the brain of that people" (126). Thus, "brain" was one word that expressed part of England's supremacy. "Nation" was another such term, "mind" or "race" yet others, and still others included "circumstance," "institutions," "climate," "temperament," and "character." Where "race" and "nation" stand out now, it seems important at least to try to understand these terms as relatively synonymous for these writers with the other terms also listed, terms that do not seem to contemporary readers quite so "loaded."[3] Whatever the cause, each term implies something held in common, at once exclusive and permeable. Emerson is very careful to observe in several instances that, as he says at one point, "[m]ixture is a secret of the English island" (152). Much earlier in English Traits, he observes that "[t]he English composite character betrays a mixed origin. Every thing English is a fusion of distant and antagonistic elements" (32). Curtis Fukuchi argues that "[w]ithin the context of the book as a whole...the idea of 'mixture' has a larger significance, referring to a capaciousness of mind and spirit" (204). In terms of the "racial" language familiar to us today, we would expect mixture to be understood at that time as anything but desirable--mixture was (wasn't it?) a "taint," or a "stain," a "blemish." Each of these writers, though, may be said to have established their reputations

precisely by dwelling upon and thus valuing the "stain," Hawthorne most obviously so.

Their "mixed origin" is in very large part the fundamental strength of the English, even if, as Philip L. Nicoloff argues, "[t]he position which Emerson finally rested in was that while hybridization was an immense initial asset in the founding of a nation, it was no final protection against nature's irresistible decree that all cultivated life must experience a lapse from power" (129). "Neither do this people appear to be of one stem, but collectively a better race than any from which they are derived. Nor is it easy to trace it home to its original seats" (English Traits 32). John Peacock perhaps paraphrases the sense in which Emerson uses this word "race" when, in his article on English Traits, he writes: "Race was no more of man's making than sacred types, but, like types, race partly reflected individuals' abilities and partly determined them" (62). "Race," in short, is for Emerson a word (abused and readily abusable) that expresses a tension any given person experiences, caught between the awful mysteries of free will and determinism.

Race, in short, becomes a concept that can both shape subjects and be shaped by subjects. Even so, race is a term that today especially is seen as simply too ready with disparity and oppression to be of any help in attempting to explore the fundamentally existential issue at stake here: liberty, whether of a group or of an individual. For Emerson, however, because of the inherent and intractable difficulty in discussing this dilemma, and also because some vocabulary appears to be needed by which to talk about the

"national," it becomes necessary for Emerson "to use...names a little mythically":

> the Norman has come popularly to represent in England the aristocratic, and the Saxon the democratic principle. And though, I doubt not, the nobles are of both tribes, and the workers of both, yet we are forced to use the names a little mythically, one to represent the worker and the other the enjoyer.[4] (48)

Types are thus Emerson's way of arriving at principles, by means of which he can address his ultimate interest: ideals. Rather than debating the usefulness or ideologies of "nation" and the national in a theoretical register, this chapter tries to keep its focus on two relatively concrete and common points of fascination among these travelers: the landed aristocracy and the cathedral. The aristocracy serves as an example of the risks of "nationality," since aristocratic thought and institutions were part of what the United States was to have rejected in breaking with England. The cathedral seems to make the question of nationality as nearly irrelevant as can be in human intercourse.[5] Benjamin Goluboff, discussing the conversational form of Emerson's English Traits, writes that "it is from the parochial limitations of nationality that the speakers' conversation emancipates them" (158).[6] This movement toward liberty is an ideal goal within many forms of interaction or exchange. Looked at in this way, the cathedral provides further opportunity to reflect upon the qualities of abroadlessness,

the rejecting of the question of home--that complete expression of the "parochial limitations of nationality"--its complement in the home/abroad ideological regime, and, ultimately, the moving beyond the pangs and anxieties of existential homelessness lying at the core of that regime.

What was being produced in England at the time these travelers visited was not just textiles, machinery, firearms, and braces only but, through it all, "Englishness." Put somewhat differently, Terry Caesar argues that "the British had already defined national identity" (30). The implicit question travelers in the Near East asked through means of their narratives dealt more immediately with issues of their own capacity for both self-transformation and belonging. While these issues are not absent from the travel narratives on England considered here, the travelers this chapter examines more immediately take up the question of nationality. It may even be better to phrase the matter thus: nationality <u>as</u> a question.

The explorations of these writers varied with their interests and itineraries. Cooper commented largely on contemporary social relations and institutions in England and the dangerous results of too easily appropriating all things English for American emulation. While places and people have their roles in Emerson's <u>English Traits</u>, he is most interested in the more abstract and historical foundations of "Englishness."[7] Stowe, touring England as an initial stop on a tour of Europe soon after the publication of <u>Uncle Tom's Cabin</u>, records her very kind reception by all ranks of English society. Her travel narrative has a deep concern

with the aristocracy and with Gothic art, on the one hand and, on the other, the reform circles in which she was an honored guest and fellow laborer. Hawthorne spent the years from 1853 to 1857 as consul at Liverpool and, while he shares with Stowe a fascination with the Gothic cathedral, and (like the other three) has a deep interest in tradition, he also manages to say more than the others combined about the poor of England, perhaps with the question in the back of his mind: How are these people also a part of English "nationality?" What is their relation to the abstract concept?[8] Thus, in what is in many instances a comic work, Our Old Home also manages to draw attention to the profoundly troubling aspect of wonder in addition to its profoundly engrossing aspect.[9]

2. Traveling beyond Social Prestige/Social Overhaul

The advent of tourism and the uses to which tourism was put by nineteenth-century American travelers has received a respectable amount of critical attention over the past forty years, much of it within the last ten. William W. Stowe, in Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture (1994), seemingly following through on material Ann K. Douglas opened, studies "a whole class of materially nonproductive Americans who helped create an artistic and intellectual culture that valued European travel as a flight from various distasteful aspects of life at home" (7). Work or study abroad, however, also "gave a large number of Americans, undistinguished by birth or fortune, the chance to define themselves and their groups in the context of European

culture and history" (7). The crucial point for Stowe then, is the class-bound aspect of travel. He sets up a contrast to argue for ways in which travelers "undistinguished by birth or fortune"--standard ways to socioeconomic power--could, like those so privileged, stake their own claim in the creation of that "artistic and intellectual culture." Stowe seems to be drawing an implicit contrast between these two groups, because "flight-from" and "definition-within-the-context-of," although they can be combined, are different activities, differently motivated.

Overall, however, both groups are significantly affected by a social pressure Stowe finds compelling. He sees nineteenth-century Americans particularly as exploiters "of all the features of their favorite pastimes to claim social and professional positions for themselves, to gratify their desires for pleasure and especially prestige, and to justify their privileges by demonstrating their superior taste and sensitivity" (15). Americans, for Stowe, were obsessed with justifying social disparity in a democracy. But Stowe seems to make the very common and very understandable mistake of obfuscating the crucial difference between social and political equality. His assertion is in keeping with what James Buzard, in The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture (1993), says of "the criteria for separating authentic from touristic experience": such criteria "have not been those visibly based on advantages of birth...but rather a loosely defined set of inner personal qualities that amounts to a superior emotional-aesthetic sensitivity" (6). The traveler, as

opposed to the tourist, comes in for greater social prestige because the traveler has had an experience while the tourist has been duped. Rather than seeing "emotional-aesthetic sensitivity" as an especially desirable quality, Buzard regards it instead as part of a more general (Western?) social process whereby ultimately "one must suppress many specific tones of living and suffering; the totality is a selective construction that elides what challenges its definitions" (12). "Sensitivity" is one such "selective construction." In Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920 (1997), Mary Suzanne Schriber contends "[t]ravel was a ritual, a cultural performance to which importance, respectability, and meaning attached" (16).

The apparent prevalence of prestige-conscious insecurity is an observation made much earlier, however, as, for example, in Cushing Strout's American Image of the Old World (1963). America's new rich "were pathetically insecure in their hunger for a kind of established status that neither their origins, their code, nor their mobile society could naturally supply" (108). In anti-aristocratic, democratic America, very few things had the benefit of "established status," and those things which might just qualify (perhaps the cities of Boston and New York, Harvard) simply could not compare with what was established in Europe. Worse still for America, as Cooper notes: "[i]t is the pêle-mêle of society, in towns that double their population in fifteen years, that is so destructive of manners with us. In the general scramble, no set remains long enough in a prominent situation to form a model" (187).

Stowe's, Buzard's, and Schriber's studies tend to examine travel for the socio-cultural capital it ostensibly earns the traveler at home: the means by which, in short, to establish "a prominent situation." This is to get a jump on the Gilded Age, though a reader may here also ask whether it is not in fact the Gilded Age that these critics primarily have in mind. As they sharply criticize this social endeavor, however, Stowe and Schriber, particularly, attempt to reserve room for those travelers who, as Schriber phrases it, "in the act of freeing themselves physically from geographical constraints, free themselves from less tangible ideological boundaries hemming them in" (8). Because of this focus these critics tend to be less concerned with travel as an activity of existential care, and more concerned with the sociological aspects of travel: the ways in which travel produces the "cultured," the ways in which culture is thereby made use of to maintain raced, classed, and gendered exclusions, and the strategies of resistance that members of excluded groups (or else those more fully "sensitive" to those groups) employ.[10]

That travel was, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century, used as a prestige symbol by people hungry for previously unimagined possibilities for self-affirmation is a contention with which the present study will not argue. The interests of this study lead somewhat away from matters the abovementioned critics focus their scrutiny upon, though. This study is more interested in how travel writing offers instruction in wonder's capacity for transformation as apprehended through encounters with

difference. In short, that travel which does not summarily elide "what challenges its definitions."

In Americans Abroad: Two Centuries of European Travel (1964), Foster Rhea Dulles contends that the majority of travelers' writings "suggest that they found in all too many instances exactly what they were seeking, and returned with all their prejudices happily confirmed" (6). It seems at least possible that, where a person is seeking a predefined something, this is likely to be the case.[11] Buzard, Stowe, and Schriber all substantiate this contention, as they must, given the argument they make. Dulles's contention argues that European travel, for that majority, changes nothing. To be imperturbable, unaffected by travel, unchanged, a traveler must be impervious to perturbation. Certainty, as for example of "racial superiority," allows for a substantial degree of insulation against perturbation. What is seen depends upon who is seeing and how.[12]

Simultaneously in contrast to and in keeping with all this is Philip Rahv's comment in Discovery of Europe: The Story of American Experience in the Old World (1947) that, "in the American character," there is a

> deep desire to accept the challenge of Europe and to utilize the experience of it for self-advancement and self-improvement. To go to Europe is for an American not at all the same thing as going to Asia or to Africa. His background and quality are tested in Europe as they are tested nowhere else; going to Europe thus becomes a cognitive act, the act of re-discovering and re-

possessing one's heritage. (xvii)

The contrast with arguments like that of Dulles and those of Buzard, Stowe, and Schriber is to be found in the contention that Europe is a challenge rather than a commodity and, most importantly, a challenge that, to recall Buzard, cannot be elided through definitions. Although Rahv's underlying assumptions about "the American character" would perhaps not go uncontested today, so many of the most recent critical examinations of travel narrative take Europe as their subject, that they tend, albeit unintentionally, to bear out Rahv's statement that "[t]o go to Europe is for an American not at all the same thing as going to Asia or to Africa."[13]

The rediscovery Rahv mentions ends for him in the repossession of heritage, suggesting that this is the purpose of travel to Europe: "self-advancement and self-improvement." It is not immediately plain what this heritage might be, exactly. It would likely have something to do with a sense of belonging, of history, of place: containing, in short, much of what gives the term "nationality" its positive connotation.[14] Rahv says something somewhat more suggestive, though, when he notes the existence of two Europes. The first is identified "wholly with the feudal and aristocratic past, with the power of its ruling classes"; and the second is identified "with the vitality of its art and thought, its revolutionary traditions, and the constant revivification of its culture through revolt and experiment" (xiii). Stowe's comments on the one hand about Americans in flight "from various distasteful aspects of life at home" and, on the other, Americans who used the "chance to define themselves

and their groups in the context of European culture and history" seems in a sense, then, an echo of Rahv's much earlier observation. No matter which "Europe" they sought as that by which "to define themselves"--the reactionary ("self-advancement") or the radical ("self-improvement")--what unites the two Europes is that, in either case, "Europe" is seen as the source of power (whether to maintain or to change things) because it is seen as the source of Tradition: the concepts of democracy and also of the divine right of kings, of social revolution and also merciless suppression of protest. To understand the United States, Europe must be understood, and the power of "Europe" is best understood, in the middle of the nineteenth century, by understanding England, a nation at once foreign and familiar.

3. Institution as Foundation and as Decision

For James Fenimore Cooper, English and American "facts" were quite distinct, and part of the problem with the prospects for a national identity of the United States, as he saw it, was a lack of appreciation of this difference and its importance. This is made plain enough within the first few lines of his Gleanings in Europe: England, when he suggests that the work which should be able to give a full account "of the fundamental differences" between England and the United States "might be considered the foundation of the mental emancipation which alone can render the nation great, by raising its opinion to the level of its facts" (1). Cooper assumes that, despite whatever common heritage there may be between England and the United States, it cannot and must not

be allowed to erase fundamental differences. These differences appear to be largely matters of social values and practices: institutions. For Cooper, these institutions, rather than some other factor, are essential:

> Climate, probably, has an influence on us all, for we know that we are more elastic, and more ready to be pleased in a clear bracing air, than in one that is close and sciroccoish, but, on the whole I am led to think, the English owe their habits to their institutions, more than to any natural causes. (302)

If this is the case, then its meaning for the United States is tremendous, for it suggests that, despite the "English" derivation/origins of the United States, being born of the English does not an Englishman make. Human choices and actions, rather than divine decree, topography, or weather, inculcate habits. Inculcate is deliberately used here because, as Emerson notes when speaking of the practice of individual eccentricities among the English, "as he has been doing this for several generations, it is now in the blood" (68). Human decision for Cooper is very significant but, like Emerson, Cooper also recognizes that "habit," over several generations, can come to be seen as though it were indeed "in the blood"; institutions themselves, in the confusion, come to be seen as expressions "of the blood."

Cooper often observes that "usage" and "traditions," rather than "reason" or "principles," carry the decisive weight in human conduct. English traditions and institutions, as in the case of the English Constitution,

bleed one into the other. America is not bound to be British, however, because, for Cooper, tradition and institution are, finally, separable, just as the United States made its division and thereby suggested its difference from Great Britain. The difficulty is getting those in America to see that, once an institution has been decided upon, new habits must be cultivated that shall be in harmony with the institution. This is evident in Cooper's estimation of democracy over against monarchy and landed aristocracy. The English use "democracy" to denote a system that is in their view wrong or productive of evil because it is by its very nature vulgar--leveling--which necessarily entails the loss of liberty as the English understand it. To this distaste Cooper responds:

> Democracy has no necessary connexion with vulgarity, but it merely means that men shall have equal political rights. There can be no greater fallacy than to say, one man is as good as another, in all things. In the eye of God, men are equal, and happy is the country, in which it is not dangerous to declare, also, that they shall be perfectly equal in all their legal privileges. But beyond this, the principle cannot be carried, and civilization maintained. (239)

This serves as an example of the understanding Cooper has of the gap between facts (for him, the unique, distinct differences between different societies: as, for example, in institutions) and opinions (views which at times have only a tenuous and at other times a very firm grasp on facts).

Political/legal democracy is, for Cooper, something quite distinct from what might be called social democracy which, he believes, is wrongly conflated with political/legal democracy, in both America and England.

Democracy, in short, appears to exist for civilization, and not civilization for democracy. As Cooper earlier notes:

> Wherever civilization exists, society will be separated by castes, for it is not desirable to reduce all to the same level of deportment, tastes, and intelligence, nor possible without making a sacrifice of that which is most estimable. All that liberty assures us, is, entire equality of rights, and there would be little of this in a community, in which the cultivated and elegant were compelled to sacrifice their feelings by an unlimited association with the ignorant and coarse. (177-178)

Clearly, Cooper has in mind here the first of the "self-evident truths" of the Declaration of Independence: "all men are created equal." Although his comments in this instance are made in a letter to a niece living in Michigan, his words seem directed also at an English audience. "[T]hat which is most estimable" seems to be the free exercise of that very "equality of rights," which have as their object the goal of living one's own life as one sees fit. For Cooper, this is something like the gift of "civilization."

Under Cooper's understanding of democracy as an institution, distinctions are not made on political or legal grounds. Democracy does not recognize difference in the

political or legal arenas: all "shall have equal political rights." England is rife with both political and legal distinctions. As Emerson wryly observes, speaking of the "game-preserves": "It is a proverb in England that it is safer to shoot a man than a hare" (46). That this comment comes near the end of Emerson's chapter entitled "Race," seems telling, for it may be taken as something deeply, typically "English," but of the wealthy, the aristocracy.

4. An "Uncompromising Lack of Sympathy with the English Social Order"

Aristocracy in a very potent way defines both England and Englishness--especially as over against the United States and "Americanness." "It was in considering the question of British aristocracy," Goluboff observes, "that American travelers succumbed most readily to the conflict of longing and distrust" ("Emerson's" 163). Goluboff reminds his readers of the two key sensations for Cooper upon arriving in England: "longing" and "distrust." If, for Cooper, ideally all are subject to the same law equally in America, England presents a very different case, a very different application of "law." Considering membership in chivalric orders, Cooper speculates that

> [t]he greatest evil of such rewards arises from the fact that men will not be satisfied with simply making a distinction of merit, but they invariably rear on a foundation so plausible, other and more mystified systems, in which there is an attempt to make a merit of distinctions. (32)

There is deep danger in the way what appears perfectly reasonable (in the sense of appropriate and good, rather than logical) is ultimately made to serve self-interested ends. As has already been noted, Cooper is of the opinion that usage, and not an ideal logical clarity, tends to decide such matters. This transfer of virtue from merit to distinction is in a sense Cooper's short history of aristocracy. He elaborates his point by considering the role the peerage played in rescuing England from the Stuarts:

> The authority they [the peerage] wield and the power by which it is maintained, are the results neither of frank conquest, nor of legally delegated trusts, but of insidious innovations effected under the fraudulent pretences of succouring liberty.... profiting by their position, they have gradually perverted the institutions to their own aggrandisement and benefit. This is substantially the history of all aristocracies, which commence by curbing the power of despots, and end by substituting their own. (135-136)

It might be well to return here to the division Rahv wished to make between the two Europes, either one of which American travelers went to find. On the one hand was the Europe of feudalism and aristocracy, with all the practically reactionary impulses that come along with it. This aspect held a distinct fascination for Americans. "We have the reputation of being notorious tuft-hunters in England," Cooper observes, "and, I am afraid, not always without cause. Nothing is more natural than that one educated in American

society, should feel a curiosity to see the higher classes of a country like England" (65).[15]

The other Europe was that of revolution and uprising, engaged in "the constant revivification of its culture through revolt and experiment." Although other European countries had seen monarchs opposed by peerages, it was England that claimed for itself a tradition, a heritage of what can only be called decentralized or else diffuse power within a single "nation" (including, of course, Magna Charta). Despite this seemingly "American" decentralization, the power of the aristocracy is secured to them through "insidious innovations effected under the fraudulent pretences of succouring liberty." In other words, a policy animates English life (a characteristic, an institution, a habit) that advocates liberty for all even as it by the very same gesture denies that liberty to many. The aristocracy, that institution so typical of England for these travelers, so foreign to America and yet also so strangely fascinating, seems situated very near the point of paradox, or worse, outright contradiction.

Spiller, in The American in England, During the First Half Century of Independence (1926) sees in Cooper an "uncompromising lack of sympathy with the English social order" (343). Cooper found many fine things while in England, so Spiller's evaluation, while correct, is only correct when seen in the larger context of Gleanings in Europe: England. Cooper, perhaps because of the still relatively short span of time between the end of the Revolution and his stay in England (1828, approximately fifty

years after independence, then--but only thirteen after the end of the War of 1812), investigates and contemplates the aristocracy in a more immediate and critical way than either Emerson or Stowe (Hawthorne has relatively little to say on the matter, though what he does have to say is wry and perceptive).[16] After all, Adams and Jefferson had only recently died, and there were doubtless many veterans of the Revolution to keep the memory of those times alive. Nearly thirty years later, that social fact could hardly have obtained. Emerson and Stowe regard the English aristocracy as a somewhat quaint but still useful institution within the context of English society. It is characteristic for them of Englishness and, thus, of English nationality.

5. The Hard Romance of Aristocracy

Harriet Beecher Stowe spends much of her time in England and Scotland touring estates and cities. It is the estates that best typify the presence and provenance of the aristocracy. It goes without saying that the estates impress her. As to their social effect, and not just for England, she reflects that

> [t]he influence of these estates on the community cannot but be in many respects beneficial, and should go some way to qualify the prejudice with which republicans are apt to contemplate anything aristocratic; for although the legal title to these things inhere in but one man, yet in a very important sense they belong to the whole community, indeed, to universal humanity. It may be very

> undesirable and unwise to wish to imitate these institutions in America, and yet it may be illiberal to undervalue them as they stand in England. (94)

What the beneficial influence of these estates, belonging, "indeed, to universal humanity" is remains vague. Perhaps this suggests more of an earnest wish to believe in that benefit than an ability to delineate what that benefit in its "many respects" actually is. Yet certainly that benefit has at least something to do with the preservation and peculiar sort of cultivation characteristic of aristocratic estates. They are places set apart, in several senses. In one of these senses, the estates seem much like nature preserves, seemingly free from the appropriation of the land into material for industrial production. Thus in a related sense the estates seem set against one kind of commodification of nature. It must be kept in mind, however, that the estates are not free from the hand of man. Even as the peerage acts to preserve tradition and encourage art and artisanship, it would not do to forget Cooper's admonition that the aristocracy "invariably rear on a foundation so plausible, other and more mystified systems, in which there is an attempt to make a merit of distinctions."

While the estates are kept "natural," their particular wilderness--that all-important ingredient for defining American national character--is English, a point Christopher Mulvey makes in his Anglo-American Landscapes: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Travel Literature (1983). "The most recurrent image used to describe England in

nineteenth-century American travel literature was that of the garden" (126). The garden or park atmosphere of the estate was the English version of Nature that Americans encountered and the Lake Poets immortalized. The Nature of these poets was "a Nature that had been long domesticated....Though they had piped a wood-note wild, they were not celebrating a wilderness" (Anglo-American 230). In a word, the estates of England demonstrate the human hand of art: skewed and broken nature set right, made proper. "England is a country of proprieties," Cooper confesses. "Were I required to select a single word that should come nearest to the national peculiarities, it would be this" (71).

The effect of this transformation, reflecting more of an artisanal than an industrial ethic, is not met entirely with approbation. Cooper notes England was "a country where order and system and the fitness of things, seem to form a part of its morals, if not indeed of its religious faith" (55). This "order and system" ("proprieties," as noted above) extends its hand over every aspect of nature: "There was a large herd of deer, or I ought to say a drove, for they had a calm and sheepish appearance. It is an animal that loses its characteristic charm, in losing its sensitive, listening, bounding wildness, and its elasticity" (Gleanings 169). Emerson likewise finds the effect on nature, especially when in comparison to nature in America, distasteful: "There, in that great sloven continent, in high Alleghany pastures, in the sea-wide sky-skirted prairie, still sleeps and murmurs and hides the great mother, long since driven away from the trim hedge-rows and over-cultivated garden of England" (187).

So while aristocracy implies among other things the ability to reshape nature in accord with human will, that particular power, of "the fitness of things," that "seem[s] to form a part of its morals, if not indeed of its religious faith," can very quickly produce a deadening effect. Order produces knowledge because it implies a logic, but a logic in its turn demands an order from which there is no appeal. The result is a certain vitiation of the very vitality that for these writers ought to be at the heart of the "nationality" (or "culture" or "race": these terms are sometimes used interchangeably, which ought to tell us something about how they were understood) that figures as the motivating spirit or animating rationale of transformation. Although Cooper engages in a little hyperbole, where "order and system" become moral and even religious qualities, mystery and wonder are sure to wane.

An awareness of the waning of wonder characterizes Stowe's thinking about England. Her relationship to aristocracy, as it was historically and as it was fictionalized, is something she struggles with in several instances. "I cannot understand nor explain the nature of that sad yearning and longing with which one visits the mouldering remains of a state of society which one's reason wholly disapproves, and which one's calm sense of right would think it the greatest misfortune to have recalled" (25). If it is the properties of contemporary aristocracy which impress Stowe, it is the past of aristocracy, so familiar to readers of Sir Walter Scott as the "Age of Chivalry," which moves her, against her better judgment. Reason and "the

sense of right" reject all that such a past offers, and still there is that in her that yearns and longs. But for what? Not, surely, to have lived in that time, nor to have that time brought forward to the present. Stowe does not so much desire to live <u>in</u> those times as to have "those times" live <u>in</u> her. This nostalgia that is not quite nostalgia seems much closer to a wish to see a nearer coherence between existence and fiction, between being and a having of that being that seemed, utter fiction though it was, to transform living itself into a work (a labor) of art, and not just any artwork but supremely a virtuous artwork: a cultivated soul set at liberty within the garden.

Stowe finds it difficult at times to take this wish for chivalric living seriously, and is quite ready to ironize it. Considering the Earls of Warwick provides her with an opportunity for a little facetiousness:

> In later times, when the giants, dragons, and other animals of that sort were somewhat brought under, we find the Earls of Warwick equally busy burning and slaying to the right and left; now crusading into Palestine, and now fighting the French, who were a standing resort for activity when nothing else was to be done; with great versatility diversifying these affairs with pilgrimages to the holy sepulchre, and founding monasteries and hospitals. (89)

In this account of various self-aggrandizements, Stowe finds something much closer to the brute facts of the age of chivalry than the image of gentle self-cultivation for which

she values it. While she is certainly critical of the violent and glory-seeking earls her censoriousness is not entirely in earnest. She seems a little bemused by it all, almost as if--very like Washington Irving in what Spiller calls his "third-party attitude"--she can admire the something picturesque in all this activity, this knight-errantry. She can be tolerant because all of that is so very decidedly past. Even what has come down from that time is largely no longer of that time.

That period is dead, though its impact remains felt in the inheritance, the traditions and characteristics that for her compose "nationality." Something of this is implicit in the passage above, where a process emerges that begins with fabulous adventures, moves through historical actions of brutality (howsoever defended in the name of religion or lineage) and results in rather peaceful, even penitent, "pilgrimages to the holy sepulchre" and the founding of "monasteries and hospitals." Such penitential conversion requires embracing a wider community as well as becoming a servant, forsaking suzerainty. These more altruistic activities, however, take place only after the brutality preceding them, as if charity and benevolence were in some mysterious way the perhaps almost necessary consequence of those earlier acts of carnage. Altruism and brutality are imbricated, interwoven.

What also moves Stowe is the implicit Christian interpretation that emerges from the "biography" of the Warwicks: a story of sin, repentance, and grace productive of charitable works, care for fellow creatures. The Warwicks,

figures for those in positions of social power, come ultimately to work for the increase of civilization, for the Kingdom of God. Their "nobility," a product of their feudal code, is most amply expressed in this task: a comprehension not only of their own worth and dignity as creatures of God, but also and vastly more importantly, of that same worth and dignity in others. Religiousness and piety are not absent in Stowe's nineteenth century, but they are not, perhaps, qualitatively of the same spirit as the religiousness and piety of those times. This sense of a broken inheritance seems clear in her comments on Glasgow Cathedral where she

> was disappointed in one thing: the painted glass, if there has ever been any, is almost all gone, and the glare of light through the immense windows is altogether too great, revealing many defects and rudenesses in the architecture, which would have quite another appearance in the coloured rays through painted windows--an emblem, perhaps, of the cold, definite, intellectual rationalism, which has taken the place of the many-colored, gorgeous mysticism of former times. (23)

Life in feudal times, as Stowe imagines it, had a richer, deeper aspect than life at present. The "defects and rudenesses in the architecture" may now be more visible, but that provides no cause for joy or satisfaction. The power of (godless) Man is seen clearly but also, as it were, <u>blankly</u>: all that "the cold, definite, intellectual" light of "rationalism" can reveal is defect: perhaps a useful, though by no means a happy power. It is, rather, "the many-colored,

gorgeous mysticism" of those past times that points to the crucial difference, even as--and in point of fact even because--Stowe recognizes that the wonder, the sense of the mystery of things that seems to have permeated that life, is entirely inseparable from the "defects and rudenesses." That "gorgeous mysticism" does not hide those faults so much as show them in another light. That other light bespeaks for Stowe the presence of the holy, of God. It expresses to her, as it expressed then, a need for the holy.

Yet even if life in feudal times expressed a qualitatively different relationship to the sacred, to wonder, Stowe nonetheless finds she has "often been dissatisfied with the admiration which a poetic education has woven into my nature for chivalry and feudalism" (25). Her dissatisfaction, as already suggested, stems from a conflict between such "poetic" admiration and conscience: between what she would like to believe true and what she is certain was the actual case. Stowe ponders this incongruity between fiction and existence, as well as the way to resolve that incongruity, through Walter Scott's portrayal of the Douglases:

> who, as represented by Scott, are perhaps as good exponents of the idea [of chivalry and feudalism] as any. Was it their hardness, their cruelty, their hastiness to take offence, their fondness for blood and murder? All these, by and of themselves, are simply disgusting. What, then, do we admire? Their courage, their fortitude, their scorn of lying and dissimulation, their high sense of

> personal honour, which led them to feel themselves the protectors of the weak, and to disdain to take advantage of unequal odds against an enemy. (25)

Stowe accepts that there is perhaps a great deal more evil than good in chivalry and feudalism (and by extension in this context, in English character as well), but the little good to come out of that system is a remarkable good. Again, the reader discerns that the good is inseparable from the evil, the benevolence of self-cultivation (and the tolerance emerging from its seed) from the violence of self-assertion. "Their drowsy minds," Emerson holds, "need to be flagellated by war and trade and politics and persecution. They cannot well read a principle, except by the light of fagots and of burning towns" (57). Hawthorne notes that "English people, I imagine, are influenced in a far greater degree than ourselves by this simple and honest tendency, in cases of disagreement, to batter one another's persons" (284). It is only in the midst of committing some entirely reprehensible act that people abruptly and completely discover their own evil. It is only then that, possibly, they may set about to correct it. The "high sense of personal honour," the dignity of the feudal lords, <u>was</u> their liberty. That exercise of liberty also appears to these travelers to have in some way been modified to the use of the English more generally.

Yet this liberty in its fullest exercise was kept by the peerage exclusive to themselves, a privilege rather than a right, as Cooper earlier noted in discussing "the history of all aristocracies." Stowe admires, and perhaps at times somewhat too uncritically, the nobility of the idealized

feudal lord, particularly as presented to her imagination by the writing of Scott. Cooper, who was acquainted with Scott in a way none of the other travelers considered here could claim, has a different interpretation of the matter:

> The bias of his feelings, his prejudices, I might almost say of his nature, is deference to hereditary rank; I do not mean that deep feeling, which, perhaps, inevitably connects the descendant with the glorious deeds of the ancestor, and which every man of sentiment is willing enough to admit, as it is a beautiful feature in the poetry of life, but the deference of more feudal and conventional laws, which have had their origin in force, and are continued by prejudice and wrong. This idea pervades his writings, not in professions, but in the deep insinuating current of feeling, and in a way, silently and stealthily, to carry with it the sympathies of the reader. Sir Walter Scott may be right, but if he is right our system is radically wrong.... (121)

Stowe is certainly aware of the force, prejudice, and wrong that are inseparable from "feudal and conventional laws" as these establish and continue the institution of the aristocracy. Yet she seems to think, or at least certainly hope, that it would be possible to see the noble despite the base, the justice despite the oppression, the liberty emerging out of the bondage. Stowe, because of her "poetic education" seeks, in other words, to emphasize what Cooper has just called "the poetry of life." This movement of love

is a small part of what that "gorgeous mysticism" offers.

Cooper is not as sanguine. In pointing to "the deep insinuating current of feeling," that "silently and stealthily...carry with it the sympathies of the reader," he points out the way in which British nationality (what Cooper sees as the power and allure of Scott's work) presents a very dangerous because very seductive threat to American nationality. English institutions, system, and order, as represented in the English literature popular in the United States, pose a distinct threat to American institutions, system, and order. While liberty characterizes the aristocratic system, it is hardly the liberty characteristic of democracy. Spiller, discussing Cooper's reactions to England and Europe, quotes the end of Cooper's Monikins (1835), a satire comparing England and America: "liberty is a convertible term, which means exclusive privilege in one country, no privilege in another, and inclusive privileges in all" (331). Privileges are always first of all "my own" privileges, and only, maybe, thereafter those of others.

6. "The Treasurers and Librarians of Mankind"

The English estate seems a fair representation of aristocratic liberty: an exclusive domain wherein, strangely, a sort of nascent comprehension is underway or, better, "treasured." The aristocracy offers a kind of sanctuary, a preserve or reserve, but admittance (not to their ranks but to their system) is not free. The cost can be high, as high as mental independence. "Alas!," Cooper laments, "it is much easier to declare war, and gain victories in the field, and

establish a political independence, than to emancipate the mind" (206). Hawthorne will later echo this feeling: "bred in English habits of thought, as most of us are, we have not yet modified our instincts to the necessities of our new forms of life" (119). Cooper continues by observing that, "[o]f all burthens, that of the mental dependance created by colonial subserviency, appears to be the most difficult to remove" (233). Hawthorne, seemingly almost in dialogue with Cooper by this time, laments: "But alas! our philosophers have not yet taught us what is best, nor have our poets sung us what is beautifullest, in the kind of life that we must lead; and therefore we still read the old English wisdom, and harp upon the ancient strings" (119).[17] These thoughts must become all the more galling in light of Cooper's earlier remark that "one of the things that has struck me favourably here [in England], is the practice which people have of doing their own thinking" (160).

A key trouble is that, even as Cooper himself, the most severe critic of the four, notes, "emancipation" is a key feature of the "English mind." Emerson claims early on that "[t]he American is only the continuation of the English genius into new conditions, more or less propitious" (22). These "new conditions" seem synonymous with what Cooper calls "facts," but for him those very facts necessarily call for an alteration of and substantially alter any "genius." The American may be the "continuation of the English genius," but that continuation grows far beyond the "only" with which Emerson seeks to limit and tie it with cords of geniality to England and the "English genius."[18]

Emerson later contends that "[t]he Englishman finds no relief from reflection, except in reflection" (82). If reflection is taken as an exercise in emancipation, the question then becomes this: can there be real emancipation from real emancipation? That is, if "Englishness" is at least in part (and in large part) defined as exercising independence of thought, what sort of independence, difference, can there be from this that would still be valuable? "They dare to displease, they do not speak to expectation. They like the sayers of No, better than the sayers of Yes. Each of them has an opinion which he feels it becomes him to express all the more that it differs from yours" (Emerson 88). Cooper bemoans "[t]he besetting, the degrading vice of America...the moral cowardice by which men are led to truckle to what is called public opinion" (304). Yet, just as Cooper finds "[t]he prevailing characteristic of America is mediocrity" (200), Emerson can also speak of England as "this Gibraltar of propriety," where "mediocrity gets intrenched and consolidated and founded in adamant" (72). As Peacock notes, the resolution of these seemingly mutually exclusive alternatives of liberty and conformity "is that Emerson attributes positive traits of English character to laissez-faire individualism and negative traits to too much institutional interference" (63).

If this nearly perverse independence of thought, this contrariness, this unruliness, is characteristic, national, of the English and makes them "English," the question becomes not one of opposition but of adaptation: transformation and accommodation. This is the meaning of Cooper's desire that

American "opinion" would rise to the level of American "facts." This desire is especially keen for Cooper, because, as he observes, "[t]he tendency of things generally, with us, is to destroy all individuality of character and feeling, and to concentrate every thing in the common identity" (282). The principle of political equality is somehow reshaped into a sort of social cudgel to enforce a monotone of character: the first value of liberty is thus invalidated.

The question of difference, how America, child of England that it is, can yet grow beyond the parent, points again to the aristocracy as focal point. For if emancipated thinking and aristocracy are both in some way deeply characteristic of the English, the American, in "new conditions, more or less propitious," is confronted with the challenge of seeing whether it were possible to hold to one characteristic while rejecting the other.

Emerson, like Stowe, sees something admirable in the peerage in the way that body preserves and promotes a high social tone through its values of preservation and cultivation. "Social" here must not be taken to refer only to the more superficial quotidian interactions between people, and certainly should not be taken to mean some sort of hypocritical or empty etiquette. Social tone is intended, instead, to encompass the actively shared values and aspirations within social interaction. Democracy may have no necessary connection to vulgarity but, as Cooper well understood, neither does democracy have any necessary connection to mutual respect or courtesy: expressions acknowledging the inherent dignity of others in addition to

one's own inherent dignity. Aristocracy is hardly in a position to teach that, either, and yet, perhaps, aristocracy (without especially being aware of it) is in a better position to begin that instruction.

The aristocratic system is paradoxically in this position precisely because of the violent power of subjugation and appropriation it exercises, the same power of which Stowe has already spoken. Emerson reflects that,

> [i]n these manors, after the frenzy of war and destruction subsides a little, the antiquary finds the frailest Roman jar, or crumbling Egyptian mummy-case, without so much as a new layer of dust, keeping the series of history unbroken, and waiting for its interpreter, who is sure to arrive. These lords are the treasurers and librarians of mankind, engaged by their pride and wealth to this function. (121)

These thoughts of Emerson make more explicit the grounds of Stowe's understanding of how the estates ultimately belong to all people. What Emerson says corresponds also to an observation Stowe makes after having made a tour of a manor house, through rooms many of which were not commonly exhibited. She saw "a bewildering display of magnificent apartments, pictures, gems, vases, arms and armour, antiques, all, in short, that the wealth of a princely and powerful family had for centuries been accumulating" (91). It is this perception of accumulation as representative of "wealth" and of "pride," but also of something as yet unspoken, to which Emerson also bears witness.

It seems a purpose of any refuge or preserve to serve as a point of accumulation since, in "keeping the series of history unbroken," items are somewhat removed from history. It cannot be forgotten that the things accumulated have been brought to the estate through "the frenzy of war and destruction." The cost is high, but the end result is not contemplated in the moment of violence. Violence, for Stowe, has been the too-frequent note in the "progress" of the English people, the advance of "civilization." "We have been the race," she writes,

> which has conquered, subdued, and broken in pieces other weaker races, with little regard either to justice or mercy. With regard to the benefits by us imparted to conquered nations, I think a better story, on the whole, can be made out for the Romans than for us. Witness the treatment of the Chinese, of the tribes of India, and of our own American Indians. (147)

Stowe makes a point of drawing no distinction between the English and the Americans, in large part because of the pressing nature of the slavery issue for her and her abolitionist itinerary in England. What she here points to is a shared lack of responsibility. The subsequent acquisition of rare artifacts becomes an incidental benefit out of an otherwise deplorable greed. Emerson, who is decidedly critical of England despite his evident admiration for it, likewise confesses that

> [a]s they trample upon nationalities to reproduce London and Londoners in Europe and Asia, so they

> fear the hostility of ideas, of poetry, of religion,--ghosts which they cannot lay; and, having attempted to domesticate and dress the Blessed Soul itself in English broadcloth and gaiters, they are tormented with fear that herein lurks a force that will sweep their system away.[19] (164)

What the English fear, in short, is the "nationality," the animating spirit (the "ghosts which they cannot lay") of another people. It is in the estate of the landed aristocrat, a point of accumulation for the spoils of conquest and rule, that a sense of connectedness between "nationalities" is strangely, mysteriously, fostered, and this even as another set of connections is visibly shattered. While all connected to each by virtue of existence, this connection (which it would be well were we each to feel it deeply) seems too abstract to be of much value in lived life. Witness what was just quoted from Stowe and Emerson, particularly the "racism" of Stowe.[20] A more immediate connection is needed because only the sense of such connection can call forth respect. That more immediate sense of connection, the means for fostering it, seems to be the underlying premise of Emerson and Stowe in considering the ultimate value of the aristocracy. Their consideration is addressed especially both to non-aristocrats and those unsympathetic to aristocracy.

The respect that can grow to admiration that Emerson and Stowe appear to see being made possible through the preserve of the aristocratic estate is born from witness to the power

of imagination, the capacity for humans in all times and all places to make, to shape, and to express their world. The imposition of English order upon the world does not entirely erase the orderings of others. In like manner, the estates of the English are like museums (treasuries or libraries, as Emerson calls them), each of which imposes an order upon the objects there accumulated while being finally unable to erase the fact that there have been, are, and thus shall be yet other and potent orderings.[21] Both the Roman jar and the Egyptian mummy-case are evidence of what others have made, as well as that there have been others making for thousands of years. That the artifacts Emerson notes are, inside the environment or atmosphere of the estate, "without so much as a new layer of dust" not only suggests the care that is taken with them but also that these objects shall not be lost "amidst [the] burning cities and revolutionary countries" from which they were taken (105). In the blind searing of the moment of violence, such things are very little worth.[22]

The gifts of the "spirit"--ideas, poetry, religion (to recall Emerson's list)--are durable, yet their manifestations fragile. The objects accumulated in the estates have been relocated in space, and space is the domain of objects, mute things. Objects, of course, do not travel but are relocated through the travel of people. Travel, as has been suggested at several points in this chapter, is not solely a spatial activity, an objectifying activity, but even more a temporal activity, a subjectifying activity. Objects unfold over time and thereby lose their status as objects, becoming instead loci for expression. The estates preserve these loci, and

are in a very definite way themselves also such loci.

These objects require their "interpreter, who is sure to arrive." Travel, as "adventure," has a quality of continual arrival. It might even be said that these objects, removed from the course of history in order to preserve history, are only "circulated" through the advent of travelers. The aristocrats themselves, Emerson makes plain, are not (nor apparently can be) the interpreters, only "the treasurers and librarians." They hold these objects, artifacts of what might be called the human tradition, for humankind in common and in trust. Accumulation, however, no matter of what, produces a blindness to values other than those of accumulation. What the objects being accumulated were becomes less important for the collector, ultimately, than that they are objects that are accumulated: to complete the collection is to complete that history. Thus, in Emerson's logic (and to a certain extent Stowe's as well), the aristocracy exists and is valuable, but only because it is to be superseded, and not necessarily by "America."[23]

7. Cathedral

It is this awareness of supersession, perhaps a peculiarly American awareness, which, finally, turns these travelers away from aristocracy. Despite a certain power of self-affirmation the aristocracy makes available (regardless of intending to or not, Stowe and Emerson seem covertly to suggest) there is ultimately too much pride and wealth concentrated there: surely, as Stowe might say, the two single greatest temptations to sin. The distinction of

merit, as Cooper notes, too readily becomes the merit of distinction.

Something self-affirming (that is to say, dignity-expressing) but less selfish is needed, something offering a space for self-cultivation that does not demand as its price degradation of others. Stowe and Hawthorne find such a place in the Gothic cathedral. Of the several things Stowe responds to in considering Gothic art and architecture, one of the most prominent is the imaginative possibilities offered by the period. Stowe notes, almost as if putting into a sort of shorthand what might later become a tale or even a novella:

> It were a fine field for a story-writer to analyze the conception and growth of an abbey or cathedral as it formed itself, day after day, and year after year, in the soul of some dreamy, impassioned workman, who made it the note-book where he wrought out imperishably in stone all his observations on nature and man. I think it is this strong individualism of the architect in the buildings that give the never-dying charm and variety to the Gothic: each Gothic building is a record of the growth, character, and individualities of its builder's soul; and hence no two can be alike. (60)

This thinking is recognizably of the Romantic artist-as-genius school, yet the artist here, "dreamy" though he be, is a "workman," a rather less glorious title than artist. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that Stowe feels connected to,

and human labor as an expression of relationship with that spirit: a connection that for Stowe is necessarily and always available to any and all. The abbey or cathedral as a life's work calls to mind Thoreau's allegory of the artist of Kouroo: another craftsman who set himself the task of attaining to perfection, which can only be a function of time.[24] This crucial element of time is also at the core of Stowe's idea. The other, perhaps radically democratic element in Stowe's thinking as she sketches her idea, is that the abbey or cathedral she has in mind is an abbey or cathedral yet to be. Stowe's example suggests the cathedral she contemplates is the "cathedral" within. It is the aspirations within by which Stowe is moved, and the growth of the idea in the "soul" is at the same time the growth of that soul. To nurture a noble idea is to nurture one's own nobility. What might be called the soul-cathedral is, in each and all the "note-book" where people develop their observations on existence.

These observations, these narratives "wrought out imperishably in stone," outlive the actual physical ruins of abbeys and cathedrals...so long as there are those who will cherish and preserve such labor. The catalog of what America lacked in comparison to Europe is quite familiar from the various prefaces of Cooper, Hawthorne, and Henry James. But Stowe also has her contribution to make to this consensus when she writes that "[t]he poetic mind is not always the progressive one; it has, like moss and ivy, a need for something old to cling to and germinate upon" (77). Moss and ivy more easily cling to what is old because it is weather-

worn, rough. Moss and ivy need that roughness, but as they germinate upon it they cover it and change the rough and broken pile into something else. Hawthorne speaks of "the coarse texture and dull neutral tints of truth" (23) and it is just such coarseness and dullness that later growth thrives upon as it covers that "nakedness." In a nicely poetic passage regarding the walls of Warwick Castle--a bastion of feudal aggression and violence--Stowe finds they "were entirely covered with ivy, hanging down like green streamers; gentle and peaceable pennons these are, waving and whispering that the old war times are gone" (88). Speaking again of Sir Walter Scott, Stowe suggests his "fictions are like this beautiful ivy, with which all the ruins here are overgrown,--they not only adorn, but, in many cases, they actually hold together, and prevent the crumbling mass from falling into ruins" (28).

This preserving quality has been made familiar already through the function of the aristocratic estates. Those estates were, however, in the end merely museums, libraries. As Emerson puts it, they lacked their interpreters, though these are sure to arrive. Time again proves the essential factor. The sense of passionate involvement which both invests and makes the cathedral is cousin to fictions such as those of Scott (or Cooper, or Hawthorne), which are the only things holding together what would otherwise be, for better or for worse, vacant ruins.

That impassioned involvement is of the nature of an existential commitment. Stowe speaks at one point of the way in which ruins touch the "deep springs of sympathy": "We,

too, are desolate, shattered, and scathed; there are traceries and columns of celestial workmanship; there are heaven-aspiring arches, splendid colonnades and halls but fragmentary all" (97). In its ideal presentation the observations underlying and embodied by the cathedral suggest a devotion to mystery and to wonder. It is for this reason that the Gothic can seem ridiculous as well as serious. "Methinks it is the test of Gothic sublimity," Hawthorne muses, "to overpower the Ridiculous without deigning to hide it" (261). Stowe contributes to this line of thought when she writes: "this I take to be one of the main advantages of Gothic architecture; [sic] it is a most catholic and tolerant system, and any kind of eccentricity may find refuge beneath its mantle" (53). By this, Stowe seems to echo her earlier comments on the "many-colored, gorgeous mysticism" of former times, visible in the quality of light streaming through the windows of Gothic cathedrals. In mixture, that crucial concept for Emerson regarding England, there is mystery, there is wonder. The more profound message is within the education of tolerance and comprehension. This note of tolerance suggests to Hawthorne and Stowe the spirit of the Gothic in relation to living.

The power of the ridiculous is to undermine the "merit of distinctions" that Cooper castigates, particularly when it arrogates all dignity to itself. The term "ridiculous" tends to undermine its own capacity for seriousness, but the ridiculous expresses a significant power of negation. Recall for a moment that Emerson commends the English because "[t]hey like the sayers of No, better than the sayers of

Yes." Negation, eccentricity, individuality, liberty--all these are expressed within that "No." It is such negation that facilitates occasions for further possibilities, discoveries. It is also, in a sense to undermine certainty: even, finally, hopefully, a ceasing to need "certainty." The liberty of this self-affirmation, taken in one way, comes at the heavy price of imperialism, as Emerson and Stowe have already explicitly noted, and Cooper implicitly in his criticisms of English social order. Each of these writers, though, and at times seemingly against their better judgment, are to whatever extent also apologists for England, even if the apology is rather backhanded. Emerson claims "[s]he is simply a good England, but no divinity, or wise and instructed soul. She too is in the stream of fate, one victim more in a common catastrophe" (110).

The fascination of the Gothic is akin to the mysterium tremendum Rudolf Otto speaks of to characterize the sense of the holy and which is used in this study to describe the sense of wonder: the at times delighted, at times fearful awe of the mystery of existence. "[T]here is nothing in this world so fascinating as a Gothic minster, which always invites you deeper and deeper into its heart both by vast revelations and shadowy concealments," Hawthorne observes (265). This air of the seductive is communicated in a rhetorically sinuous manner, suggesting the intricate ties between cathedral, world, and self while at the same time making the further suggestion that all three exist only with each other. This is an insight Stowe also contemplates, as demonstrated in the consideration of her attraction to

medieval times. The Gothic minster takes a person deeper and deeper into itself, just as the imaginary interior of the existent's self, like the minster, is illuminated by its own "vast revelations," encompassed by its own "shadowy concealments." To recall Emerson: there is "no relief from reflection, except in reflection."

Stowe likened the cathedral to "the soul of some dreamy, impassioned workman." Hawthorne comes very close to a similar equation of cathedral and human, contending that

> [a] Gothic Cathedral is surely the most wonderful work which mortal man has yet achieved, so vast, so intricate, and so profoundly simple, with such strange, delightful recesses in its grand figure, so difficult to comprehend within one idea, and yet all so consonant that it ultimately draws the beholder and his universe into its harmony. It is the only thing in the world that is vast enough and rich enough. (125)

As a work of "mortal man," the cathedral serves as a reflection of its makers and, like other works of art, whatever of harmony the cathedral aspires to offers itself to the viewer, drawing in the beholder. The cathedral offers the beholder to the beholder's self, and thus surely part of the "vast revelations and shadowy concealments" is here in this moment of the opening out of possibility. Despite an existence where, as Hawthorne very early in Our Old Home remarks, "the world, and individuals, flourish upon a constant succession of blunders" (30), hope remains. The harmony of the cathedral is at once part of this world and

yet apart from this world. Its mystery is "its harmony," just as its harmony is its mystery.

Hawthorne's thinking about the Gothic cathedral changes by turns. He remains in admiration of it, but his admiration is at times wry, and at other times reverent. Hawthorne can regard the cathedral as a marvel because it is a human work. He can also marvel at the way in which it seems to be something belonging to a different order, somehow independent of, or immune to, the disastrous hand of man. Speaking specifically of Lincoln cathedral, Hawthorne notes that

> [i]t does not impress the beholder as an inanimate object, but as something that has a vast, quiet, long-enduring life of its own; a creation which man did not build, though in some way or other it is connected with him, and kindred to human nature. In short, I fall straightway to talking nonsense, when I try to express my inner sense of this and other Cathedrals. (146)

In his moment of high seriousness and self-derision, Hawthorne finds the Gothic cathedral does not so much have a separate being as being, which is separate. This is perhaps a needlessly mysterious way to state what may be obvious: the cathedral elicits a sensation of familiarity even as it induces a sense of estrangement. These feelings cannot be captured by any single fact or set of facts, and thus Hawthorne finds himself "talking nonsense" about a being which "in some way or other" is connected with "and kindred to" while at the same time distinct from "human nature." The cathedral, in short, is not Other but rather another. World,

cathedral, and existent have already been discussed as connected, reflecting each other and co-participatory with each other. Hawthorne again makes this relationship in mystery the subject of his contemplation.

The cathedral offers an ostensibly more "democratic" (because more inclusive) atmosphere for self-affirmation than the institution of the aristocracy.[25] There is admittedly a note of nostalgia in the way Stowe, Hawthorne, and Emerson respond to the medieval edifices of England, both architectural and social. Peacock, for example, contends that "the myth of Culture fulfills" the wish for order expressed through nostalgia "by representing ideal order amid the chaos of society in the present; the myth of feudalism fulfills the wish by idealizing social harmony in the past" (66). The cathedral certainly can stand as an image for culture. Peacock's observation is consonant with his understanding of how culture would be, for these writers, the means by which to tutor Society (67). As has been argued here, though, "order," especially order placed upon "chaos," is an insufficient model for what these writers are engaged in: world inevitably outstrips story. Their nostalgia is, if such a thing is possible, a wise nostalgia. They realize, as Stowe's earlier comments suggest, that the facts of earlier times would quickly raze whatever fantasies these writers build up within their imaginations.

It is this awareness which goes to temper these travelers' thinking on nationality, a highly opaque term taken up and contemplated by such instances as aristocracy and cathedrals. These travelers have not based their

comments in nationality as some sort of given so much as directed their attention to nationality as a question. "Nationality" could not bear up under scrutiny. It was necessarily a means of "speak[ing] a little mythically" about a need that goes deeper than certainty (the point at which and the application with which "nationality" begins and ends), that goes to an existential need for security. Just as world outstrips story, so too this need outstrips "nationality."

Arnold Goodman argues that Hawthorne set himself the task of "discover[ing] a legitimate relation to the Old Home" (160) in his travel book. Goodman's final argument about Our Old Home, though, is that it became a "resolute search for an understanding of a previously unwritten common humanity and Hawthorne's relation to it" (152). For Goodman "humanity, mortality (including [Hawthorne's] own), and even salvation" are what "come more and more to the foreground, absorbing if not displacing the ever-present themes of national character and the Anglo-American comparison" (152). Goodman's observation is very important, for it points to the way in which, as these narratives move toward their conclusions, nationality, even as a question, seems to occupy them less and less. The further into their travels they go, the less they are concerned with the pros and cons, let alone the supposed actuality, of "nationality." What they end up concerned with is recommending a way of life, with living.

The cathedral in Lichfield, one of "the first that [Hawthorne] had seen" (124), provides an occasion to consider this phenomenon of these travel texts. Letting what he would

shortly call his "ill-trained enthusiasm" soar as he takes in "a flood of uncomprehended beauty...of which [he] could appropriate only the minutest portion," he reflects that

> [a]fter a hundred years, incalculably as my higher sympathies might be invigorated by so divine an employment, I should still be a gazer from below and at an awful distance, as yet remotely excluded from the interior mystery. But it was something gained, even to have that painful sense of my own limitations, and that half-smothered yearning to soar beyond them. (125)

While this once more captures the apprehension not only of Hawthorne but Stowe as well in the presence of a Gothic cathedral, it also speaks to a larger awareness that becomes common to each of the four writers considered in this chapter. Walking amidst the massive pillars and slabs of Stonehenge, in company with Carlyle, Emerson and his companion "counted and measured by paces the biggest stones, and soon knew as much as any man can suddenly know of the inscrutable temple" (180). They

> walked in and out and took again and again a fresh look at the uncanny stones. The old sphinx put our petty differences of nationality out of sight. To these conscious stones we two pilgrims were alike known and near. We could equally well revere their old British meaning.[26] (181)

Figuring Stonehenge as "[t]he old sphinx" tells us very much about Emerson's reactions. The Egyptian sphinx is a wonder of the ancient world; it is also a pagan monument, much as is

Stonehenge, with its Druidic connections. The mythological sphinx posed the riddle of man to Oedipus, and thus Stonehenge comes to suggest this same riddle. Stonehenge, then, is both foreign and familiar, an "inscrutable temple" that, none the less, obviates "petty differences of nationality" and before which persons from different parts of the globe may "equally well revere their old British meaning." Yet if the meaning of Stonehenge lies in its "Britishness," does nationality not enter in again?

While touring Lichfield Cathedral, Hawthorne for a time loses his reverent mood. This enables him, however, to give a more minute inspection to the building. Afterwards, he concludes that

> [i]t is no matter whether I ever came to a more satisfactory appreciation of this kind of architecture; the only value of my strictures being to show the folly of looking at noble objects in the wrong mood, and the absurdity of a new visitant pretending to hold any opinion whatever on such subjects, instead of surrendering himself to the old builder's influence with childlike simplicity. (127)

Perhaps like Hawthorne's reaction here, Emerson's reaction to Stonehenge and its "old British meaning" is an apprehension of a need to surrender "to the old builder's influence with childlike simplicity." This would be to look "at noble objects" in the right mood. If the "petty differences" are thereby overcome, the deeper similarity--the common bond of the "old British meaning"--yet remains. But if Emerson has

throughout English Traits been using "names a little mythically," then "British" is itself such a mythical term, denoting no concrete thing and certainly no discrete population but rather an entire series of abstract qualities, and not all of them necessarily in harmony with the rest. If anything, the peculiar attraction is that these qualities tend toward disharmony as much as to harmony. This fractious conglomerate, this "inscrutable temple," like the Gothic cathedrals that drew the praise of these travelers, poses a riddle. The secret of their harmony is precisely in the inclusion of disharmony. "[I]t is the test of Gothic sublimity to overpower the Ridiculous without deigning to hide it" (Hawthorne 261, emphasis added). Far from hiding what would shatter it, the cathedral has the ability to show the ridiculous, but in another light, as an indispensable part of its "comprehensiveness."

This word "comprehensive" occurs several times as these travelers consider the cathedral. The word itself points to the riddle once more, the incorporation and the effort to realize the consequences of such incorporation. "British," among the other things it has come to represent, stands also as a substitute for this capacity. To include the ridiculous, though, is always to risk dissolution at its hand. While being conducted through the chapel at Lambeth Palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stowe is told that it

> was built between the years 1200 and 1300, and there used to be painted windows in it, as Archbishop Laud says, which contained the whole history of the world from the creation to the day

of judgment. Unfortunately these comprehensive windows were destroyed in the civil wars.[27] (145)

The act of shattering those "comprehensive windows" was no aberration of English "nationality." Rather, it is the entirely common (characteristic) act of a desire for liberty, that most "English" trait. Moreover, within that same gesture, clothed in the guise of liberty, there is also the desire to raze any assertion of "individualism." "I think it is this strong individualism of the architect in the buildings that give the never-dying charm and variety to the Gothic," writes Stowe. "[E]ach Gothic building is a record of the growth, character, and individualities of its builder's soul; and hence no two can be alike" (60). To smash the painted windows, with their "many-coloured light" (92), is to make a judgment against such expression, is to judge against that "many-coloured, gorgeous mysticism" and to decide for conformity.

Stowe records these now-absent windows as a unique accomplishment, as a thing fine and singular: as a wonder. The shattering of the windows in an act of righteous rage and the subsequent replacement of those windows (perhaps with plain, unadorned glass much like that in Glasgow Cathedral) encapsulates an institutionalization of "clarity" and austerity. Importantly, it also figures much more. Richard Bridgman, discussing English Traits, speaks of Emerson's disappointment with "the inertness, if not deadness of [English] spiritual life" (480). This observation takes on fuller significance when considered in light of Nina Baym's claim that "[t]he deprived American, who lives in the plain

sunlight of an austere environment, compensates by developing imaginative responses to other places, another world, which those who live in rich surroundings will never be motivated to achieve" (274). Deliberately to strive for austerity is something that, by the time of these writers, had become something perverse--comprehensible, perhaps--but now only as a thing to be lamented as a tragic instance of something nearly suicidal in human action.

The whole story, as it were, was in the glass: the beginning to the end. The "painted windows" are in every respect and in all their aspects a work of time--and this is particularly demonstrated by their continuing existence in memory. Not the object domain of space but the subject domain of time is what the windows illustrate, illuminate. But the windows are shattered, the fragments lost. The "Old Home" is not Home. Investigated as a potential "Home" abroad, it cannot offer what "home" lacks. The possibility of Home is at every turn rendered uncertain by the apprehension of wonder, frustrating the assumptions of certainty.

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III: "Through Dried Grasses, Blooming Fields": The American Wests of Washington Irving, Margaret Fuller, Francis Parkman, and Bayard Taylor

It is a simple narrative of every day occurrences; such as happen to every one who travels the prairies. I have no wonders to describe....

--- Washington Irving

In times of slower growth, man did not enter into a situation without a certain preparation or adaptedness to it.

--- Margaret Fuller

I turned away, half unwilling to take a final leave of my savage associates.

--- Francis Parkman

[B]ut, like most of the splendid plans we build for ourselves, I was obliged to give it up on the eve of fulfillment.

--- Bayard Taylor

1. The Promise of Place?

It does not seem so long ago that to ask "What is America?" was to ask "What is the American West?" To know America and what it meant to be American was to know the role of the West in the realization of the United States: the promise of the West.[1] This task of definition is in keeping with other questions already encountered in the course of this study that asked for identity and that, having identity, thus had certainty. The pioneer spirit: that captured an essence. Paradise vanishes for travelers in the Near East,

and nationality, another communal essence, could not supply the Home that was lost. Perhaps, though, Home could yet be obtained, through collective effort, a great human movement. Encountering and overcoming hardship was not incidental to but quite thoroughly an integral part of forging a life out of the materials at hand. That essence of the vanquishing spirit, however, leaves too many unanswered questions along its path, trampled under, plowed over.

These turbulent questions did not go unacknowledged. Coming to works of travel to the American West, whether in what is now Oklahoma, as in Washington Irving's Tour on the Prairies (1835); or the Old Northwest in Margaret Fuller's Summer on the Lakes, in 1843 (1844); whether the Nebraska and Colorado of Francis Parkman's Oregon Trail (1849), or, in Bayard Taylor's Eldorado: Adventures in the Path of Empire (1850), what is now California, each of these writers realizes that the West is not going to be Home. Home does not exist and abroad cannot be made into Home. Traveling under homelessness robs what is encountered and experienced of its uniqueness. The means of engendering the wonder available during travel, and in travel writing, is available only as a function of abroadlessness: only, that is, when the obsession with Home (and its corollary, Abroad) has been forsworn.[2] The possibility of fullness may occur when certainty and the need for it are let go, when conformity to a preestablished logical order--what Home requires in order to be Home...and Abroad to be Abroad--is not the standard by which experiences are measured.

What these travelers to the West encounter is a

fullness, an abundance in the border of tragedy. Tragedy springs from and results in blindness, the blindness of certainty, the hubristic conviction of necessary superiority, necessary destiny. Neither the Near East nor England could provide absolute certainty or even, finally, a stable illusion of certainty, because both locales, to varying degrees and each in specific ways, displayed the impermanence of human action and the impossibility of a transformation effected merely by a change of location. Movement in the object realm, in space, while obviously a precondition for the travel text, is very far from a sufficient condition for an internal change, a change of mind, of heart.[3]

2. "The Confines of Light and Darkness"

John Francis McDermott suggests that the "true worth" of Tour on the Prairies is to be found "in the brilliantly drawn pictures of frontier life that flow from the pencil of a great genre artist" (xvi).[4] "Genre" here specifically means Irving's attention to and joy in "the portrayal of scenes of everyday life" (McDermott xxv). There were no castles or ruins or cathedrals on the prairies (though several abandoned and decaying trading posts, as Parkman notes). In lieu of this staple of travel convention, the prairies could only offer the routine living of people, seemingly the most ordinary and commonplace of possibilities. The people were remarkably diverse, however: the frontier supremely a place of mixture. At the Osage Agency, from which Irving and his party were to set out on their tour, Irving quickly sketches the variety of people among whom he found himself. "Besides"

Osages and Creeks,

> there was a sprinkling of trappers, hunters, half-breeds, creoles, negroes of every hue; and all that other rabble rout of nondescript beings that keep about the frontiers, between civilized and savage life, as those equivocal birds, the bats, hover about the confines of light and darkness. (22)

This may not at first glance seem like a promising beginning for Irving's encounter with the West and the people who inhabit it. The contrasts between "civilized and savage life," and "light and darkness" draw attention to themselves right away. What emerges upon further reflection, however, is the peculiarity of "confines." "Boundary" seems to be the expected word here, or "border." "Confines" intensifies the implicitly closed-off quality of what is to either side of a boundary or border. The "bats" are "equivocal birds" because, although they do fly, they are not birds: yet if flying defines what a bird "is," then a bat must qualify. This difficulty of definition points up a third category or space that the civilized/savage, light/darkness binarisms leave out, necessarily. There are beings who belong to neither, relegated to the "confines," and "confined" there. These beings are "nondescript," abundant and, here, on the frontier, added to the "trappers, hunters, half-breeds, creoles" and "negroes of every hue." The list is at best merely suggestive. It cannot be complete, cannot, as it were, bring everyone into the light. Thus, between what is known (civilization, light) and what is not known (savage life, darkness) are people who cannot be fit into that

scheme. This region, then, is unique. The term "half-light," suggested by this point or moment between light and darkness, day and night, does not capture what this unique region is, only, approximately, what it is like. "Twilight" seems better, a sort of light that does not afford the ability to distinguish neatly, a place and time of obscurity, ambiguity. This obscurity is valuable and not fearsome, though. The potential for encounter increases at a steep rate here as the kinds of people who may be encountered increase. In Irving's language of increase, as plain and ordinary as could be and yet so inestimably rich, wonder already begins to emerge.

The wonder of being in this non-place (between what ought logically to have no between: "the confines of light and darkness") becomes still more strongly suggested as the expedition Irving has joined sets out on its way into the Oklahoma wilderness. "We soon...lost sight of our escort," Irving writes, "but managed to keep on their track, thridding lofty forests, and entangled thickets, and passing by Indian wigwams and negro huts" (27). The danger here is not so much from being separated from the escort as from being too near it or caught up with it. To be constantly with or among the escort would be constantly to describe it, to be focused on it: much in the manner of a conquest narrative. Now, having "lost sight" of the escort, Irving is free to see his surroundings more directly. Following after, behind, something Irving does several times throughout Tour, becomes an occasion for attentive encounter, here alternately with the "lofty forests" he and his party are "thridding" and the

"entangled thickets." Each suggests the facility of line of sight: the forest permitting long line of sight, up if not always horizontally; and the thickets intercepting any possible line of sight. This extraordinary and odd word "thridding" speaks to the same picture, both "threading" and "treading": the line is not straight, the way not clear, and this in turn turns attention to immediate surroundings, to the very act of coming into physical contact (treading) with this ground, this way, this place.

Such sighting imagery becomes significant because a contrast between light and darkness has already been made, and what separates them is a "clear" line, the line of the confine. Vision occurs only where there is light, and "light" has already been presented as a metaphor for knowing. Once more, then, Irving finds himself in a "non-place" where sight is possible and simultaneously not possible. In the midst of this thought, added on to it, are the "Indian wigwams and negro huts" they pass. These, too, are included, this "wilderness" never presented as other than a vivid, lived space, for all the vast stretches and frequent absence of evidence of human life.

Irving's habit of following after was mentioned just above. "I always felt disposed to linger," he reflects, "until the last straggler disappeared among the trees and the distant note of the bugle died upon the ear, that I might behold the wilderness relapsing into silence and solitude" (169-170). In such a mood (or, better, reverie), Irving becomes positioned not only to witness this "relapse" but also to observe as literally as may be possible the utter

transitoriness of life. The sentiment itself is familiar but the illustration seems particularly effective. This expedition that Irving has joined is literally passing through. As he lingers here, just as when earlier he and his companions "lost sight of our escort," this passing through is forcefully impressed upon his imagination.

A relapse ordinarily connotes something like failure, but one that follows after an improvement. "Backsliding" is synonymous here. Less pejoratively, a relapse may be seen as no more than a return to an original state, back to the way it was "before": but a relapse is always pejorative. In this case, "silence and solitude" are themselves the improvement as Irving looks around him and sees

> Trees felled and partly hewn in pieces, and scattered in huge fragments...smouldering fires, with great morsels of roasted venison and buffalo meat, standing in wooden spits before them, hacked and slashed by the knives of hungry hunters... uncooked joints, and unplucked turkeys, left behind with that reckless improvidence and wastefulness which young hunters are apt to indulge when in a neighborhood where game abounds. (170)

The destruction and waste for which the empty camp serves as a focal point are notes to which Irving also comes back. Here, he records this scene not necessarily because the image is somehow "picturesque" or even, on the other hand, shameful. Rather, the silence and solitude that make the relapse a relapse can only present themselves in this "clearing," this empty camp. Irving for a moment becomes the

eyes of the wilderness, even as he stands apart from it. That wilderness does indeed return becomes a note of reassurance for Irving over the course of his narrative, becomes a path to security.

The appropriateness of the idea of the relapse perhaps impresses itself upon Irving, because he has used this same word earlier, describing another moment of keeping behind:

> The clamor of voices and the notes of the bugle at length died away, and the glen relapsed into quiet and silence, broken occasionally by the low murmuring tone of the group around the fire [the rear-guard], or the pensive whistle of some laggard among the trees; or the rustling of the yellow leaves, which the lightest breath of air brought down in wavering showers, a sign of the departing glories of the year. (81)

The bustle and activity, the sharp "clamor of voices" and the shrill "notes of the bugle" seem to suggest a figure for the discordant knot of day-to-day living. The expedition resumes its way, making its purposive track through the wilderness. Left behind amidst the relapsing is "murmuring," pensive whistling, and, finally, the "wavering showers" of the autumnal leaves. It is as if each of these subsequent active verbs suggests either a sharing in or at least a growing awareness of the change, which is a return to that prior condition. These acts stands out for their "aimless" quality. Murmuring is speech just below the threshold of clarity. It communicates only the "image" of speech. The whistling, pensive, is tentative, provisional, uncertain.

And the "wavering" fall of leaves likewise, and perhaps best, illustrates the contrast Irving seems to be drawing between the "direct" "line of sight" of the expedition, on the one hand, and the indirect and geometrically complex "line" of sight characteristic of this wilderness left to itself, left to open itself. Like the "equivocal birds" hovering "about the confines of light and darkness," the fall of leaves is variable, indeterminate, between the known and the unknown, in a space that by the stark logic of the known cannot exist. The semi-known is not a possibility, and what could be termed the conditionally known is not in fact known at all.

If there can be nothing that is "semi-known," however, there can of course be that which is open to interpretation. Such things are not the subject of knowledge but of belief or, put differently, opinion. Put figuratively, those things open to debate exist in temporalized space. This may seem either a needlessly contorted or overly complicated formulation, but debate, dialogue, encounter--all these can only occur in time. So too, ultimately, change. Irving, however, provides a much plainer way of saying all this when he describes in general terms the region the expedition was to traverse: "The regions I have mentioned form a debatable ground of these warring and vindictive tribes; none of them presume to erect a permanent habitation within its borders" (10). The various tribes who live around the fringes of these regions (Irving specifically mentions the Osage, Creek and the Delaware, the Pawnees and Comanches) come here to hunt and supply themselves against winter and its looming privations.[5] "Over these fertile and verdant wastes still

roam the elk, the buffalo, and the wild horse, in all their native freedom" (10). The place belongs to none yet all resort there, all rely upon it. It is a place, if not always of certain conflict, then always of the threat of conflict. It is common ground and, precisely because of that, none dwell there, "none of them presume to erect a permanent habitation within its borders."[6]

Such an act of possession, of claiming, would be to assert boundaries, lines of punishable transgression. To possess the place it is also necessary to defend it. The "warring and vindictive tribes" do not defend the region but rather themselves while in the region: a significant difference. To possess and defend this region would be to control inclusion and exclusion. Though there is the distinct possibility of conflict while in the hunting grounds, the region itself, "belonging" to none, excludes none. Irving has already commented on the resulting radical inclusiveness, perhaps the defining quality of the "native freedom" of this region, in listing all the kinds of people, descript and nondescript, whom he encounters at the very "gateway," as it were, into the region.

One such person standing at this gateway is Irving's "guide and interpreter" through this region: Pierre Beatte, "a half-breed of French and Osage parentage" (24).

> He was cold and laconic; made no promises or professions; stated the terms he required for the services of himself and his horse, which we thought rather high, but showed no disposition to abate them, nor any anxiety to secure our employ. He had

> altogether more of the red than the white man in his composition; and, as I had been taught to look upon all half-breeds with distrust, as an uncertain and faithless race, I would gladly have dispensed with the services of Pierre Beatte. (25)

If Irving's entry into the hunting grounds had seemed unpromising, his presentation here of Beatte seems still less so.[7] If the hunting grounds are a "debatable" region, Beatte seems profoundly uninterested in negotiation. His terms are unconditional. His inexpressiveness is nearly exasperating, as Irving's language begins to suggest. It does not appear to matter to Beatte what Irving and his party thought of him. He does not need them. He "made no promises or professions": told them nothing of what he would or could do (for them: "promises"), nothing of who he was or would be (for them: "professions").

Beatte's seemingly unwavering presentation of himself intriguingly elicits from Irving a reaction based firmly in a mistrust of wavering. Irving "had been taught to look upon all half-breeds with distrust, as an uncertain and faithless race." The "half-breed" cannot be trusted, is unreliable ("uncertain"), will not keep a promise ("faithless"). All this follows from the "logic" of his "composition." His mixture literally renders Beatte "uncertain," in the sense of obscure, equivocal, wavering between the confines. He cannot be "written" neatly, directly.

Beatte is neither known nor unknown. Certainly, Irving initially is put off by feeling uncertain in the presence of Beatte. Irving does not feel he understands Beatte, does not

know where to fit him into the scheme, the system of division and classification, neither "red" nor "white." Since Irving "had been taught," however, where such people fit, he falls back upon those categories. This is one sense of what it means that Beatte is not known, but not unknown. The other sense is that, in failing to fit cleanly into the response demanded by asking either what Beatte is or how Beatte fits, this man is in a position to unfold before Irving, provided Irving asks the question that is truly at stake here because the only meaningful question to ask: who is Pierre Beatte? This is a question that can only be asked of Beatte himself and that can only be "answered" by listening to Beatte's response. Being neither known nor unknown is the place, the moment, in which this other speaks.[8] As a result, as John T. Jacobs rightly notes, "Beatte becomes the most thoroughly examined character in A Tour on the Prairies" (82).

Pierre Beatte "speaks" in Irving's narrative only to the extent that Irving permits and only towards drawing the fullest picture possible of Irving's experiences on the prairie. Thus, the presentation of Beatte has much to tell regarding a change of attitude that Tour on the Prairies records. Though Irving had been "taught" to distrust a man like Beatte, a "half-breed," that teaching quickly falls away as Irving learns another lesson. Over the course of the narrative, the half-breed ceases to be a figure of mistrust and loathing, becoming instead perhaps the single person suited and suitable for the prairie: the one person able to remain in a place where everyone else seems finally a transitory trespasser. Neither the "red" man nor the "white"

man remains in that "debatable ground." There is no "permanent habitation" there, and to attempt to make such habitation would be an act of presumption. The hunting grounds are at the confines of the possessions of several tribes to the north, west, south, and east of the region. The "man with a cross," to evoke a phrase from Cooper, between the confines, like the "equivocal bird," crosses between these, belonging to neither yet capable for either.

A little more than halfway through the tour, Beatte goes out alone to catch a wild horse, something no one else in the party had yet been able to accomplish. "I saw our half-breed, Beatte, quietly saddle his best horse, a powerful steed of half-savage race, hang a lariat at the saddle-bow, take a rifle and forked stick in hand, and, mounting, depart from camp without saying a word" (114-115). Where Beatte's "laconic" quality ("nature"?) had at first seemed a source of suspicion or frustration, here it speaks firm determination. By this point, it is not necessary for Beatte to "promise" or "profess" anything. He does not waste words. Beatte, having returned with the wild horse he has caught, a feat of great admiration in the camp, is described by Irving, who remarks that "as he stood before his captive horse, with folded arms and fixed aspect, he looked more like a statue than a man" (118). This is not, though, an example of an objectification of Beatte, or of his "aestheticization," where this term is understood as a silencing or reduction, a robbing of life from a human being. Irving instead freezes time for a moment, has Beatte "hold a pose" for an instant that is crucial and irreplaceable. All of Beatte's resolve, skill,

pride, and even nobility are brought out and forced upon the reader's attention in this moment. Beatte figures nothing here other than Beatte.

Commenting on Beatte's capture of the wild horse, Irving notes that "[e]verything was done by this man in a similar way, promptly, resolutely, and silently, without a previous promise or an after vaunt" (123). Self-aggrandizement, then, is none of Beatte's concern, but Irving's description here, his attempt to bring Beatte to his readers, emphasizes something other than this, something he also attempts to bring out as he sees Beatte in that particular "statue" moment. Beatte is independent. That was the source of Irving's troubled initial impression, but it has by this point become a source of admiration. "[W]ithout a previous promise or an after vaunt," Beatte demonstrates that he is not seeking the approval or adulation of others. Not unlike Irving's own comment in his introduction to Tour that he has "generally been content, in all matters relating to myself, to suffer the truth to work its own way to light" (5), Beatte exemplifies more than self-sufficiency: he suggests the possibility of security. These things are also part of what Irving presents as, for that particular moment, time slows to a temporary halt, the "half-breed" guide standing "with folded arms and fixed aspect" before the captured horse.

If Beatte here for Irving forcefully "speaks" himself, figures his own existence, elsewhere he speaks that existence, tells of himself and his life. While Beatte does not require another to whom he explains himself, this does not mean that he does not appreciate being rightly valued.

It becomes clear during Irving's narrative that Beatte does not feel he has been so valued by most in the expedition (see 66, 94, 119). To be rightly valued, particularly in the wavering, obscure, and uncertain hunting grounds, is to be listened to. Words are perhaps most important in dialogue, conversation, where attention and understanding become of paramount importance. Dialogue requires a mutual willingness to speak and to listen, however. Thus far, Beatte has continued laconic. Irving, though, for whom sociability, good-will, and sympathy are indispensable (both as writer and as human being) appears to have been able to persuade Beatte that here was someone who would listen.

Nearly three-quarters of the way through Tour, Irving, interested in the gap between native people and the Indian of fiction, observes "their exposure to the vicissitudes of the elements does not produce that perfect hardihood and insensibility to the changes of the seasons that many are apt to imagine" (160-161). Beatte's history bears witness to this: "He bore the scars of various maims and bruises; some received in hunting, some in Indian warfare. His right arm had been broken by a fall from his horse; at another time his steed had fallen with him, and crushed his left leg" (161). If hardship and physical suffering are part of the hunter's life on the prairies, or more generally the life of the prairies, these nonetheless are not all. The people living here are not statues, not examples of "perfect hardihood and insensibility." Perhaps it is this "vulnerability," off-setting Irving's initial repelled reaction to Beatte's "cold and laconic" presentation, that makes Beatte a more

sympathetic figure for Irving over the course of the narrative. Beatte becomes more "human" for Irving: he is also a member, after all, of the fellowship of suffering. Perhaps Irving begins rightly to value and understand the meaning and the life that expresses itself in what he initially sees as a "cold and laconic" manner.

This change of attitude toward Beatte continues when, just after remarking the physical hardships Beatte has endured, Irving "drew from him various particulars concerning himself, which served to raise him in my estimation" (161). As Beatte has certainly not been low in Irving's estimation for some time now, this further increase reflects a change not in kind but quality. Irving hears from Beatte about where he came from, about his wife and children, and about how he lives when he is with them (161). The picture of Beatte becomes deeper and richer. Not only is he an accomplished hunter and guide, which while admirable remain qualities bound to the prairie, the frontier, but Beatte is also a husband and father, with a home and a life there. This family is "in" the frontier but complicates the image of the frontier as the arena solely of rough, masculine exploit: as, indeed, that image has been complicated throughout Tour. The travelers considered in this chapter--even Parkman--rarely use the language of puissant dominion and, if they do, only to ironize it.

The frontier may call forth, or seem to call forth a particular rhetoric of prowess and aggressiveness. As contrast to the "light" of "civilization" this evocation is hardly extraordinary. It is a rhetoric of certainty: it has

the answers, knows the imminent completion of its identity, its destiny. It is only such certainty that may allay whatever qualms of conscience or moral nausea such subjects may, perhaps, experience. Irving, however (this proves true of Fuller, Parkman, and Taylor as well), is fully cognizant of the cost of blind, arrogant allegiance to such a rhetoric, of the cost of certainty. This awareness in turn makes Irving aware of the need for another rhetoric, and attunes him to those moments that may begin to suggest that other rhetoric. Continuing his conversation with Beatte, in one of the longer episodes in Tour on the Prairies, Irving remarks:

> When he talked to me of the wrongs and insults that the poor Indians suffered in their intercourse with the rough settlers on the frontiers: when he described the precarious and degraded state of the Osage tribe...he would check the feeling with a strong exertion of Indian self-command, and, in a manner, drive it back into his bosom. (162)

The colon following "on the frontiers," in causing the slightest pause, seems almost to signify the "check" Irving mentions. It is almost the halt, recomposure, and resumption of Beatte trying to tell these things bluntly, candidly. What Beatte tells Irving is not only a story of injustice, though it is of course that, too. What Beatte depicts in this suffering "intercourse with the rough settlers" is the same lack of appreciation and proper valuation that angers Beatte with the youthful, ignorant, and often oblivious members of the expedition. Margaret Fuller at one point in her thoughts on Native Americans professes, "I scarcely see

how they can forbear to shoot the white man where he stands" (71). The "Indian" "self-command" that Beatte exerts here could be taken as in keeping with Irving's initial observation that Beatte "had altogether more of the red than the white man in his composition." It may also be the case here, however, that Indian self-command is Irving's term for a particularly stringent form of self-control, the stringency required by the immediate, potent, and continuing nature of the injury. This is a self-command not impossible for "whites," not different from or incongruous with other forms of self-command, but one that is particularly pronounced among the natives. In short, this is the self-command displayed in one whose very life is "precarious."

It is the hardiness of such life not despite of but because of its very precariousness that moves Irving to admiration of Beatte. If admiration is too strong a word, then perhaps a mixture of respect and gratitude best describes Irving's change of attitude. Beatte evokes the sense of wonder. This change of attitude has been suggested in potential from quite early in Tour, suggested both in what Irving has to say about what he perceives as a particular freedom of "the savage state," and also in the durability and capability of the mixed breed horse.

Beatte brings two horses along on the expedition:

> In addition to the horse for the road, and for ordinary service, which was a rough, hardy animal, he had another for hunting. This was of a mixed breed like himself, being a cross of the domestic stock with the wild horse of the prairies; and a

> noble steed it was, of generous spirit, fine action, and admirable bottom. (28)

Irving describes both horses with words of praise, for both are well suited to the demands that will be placed upon them. It is also of substantial importance here to point out that Irving makes no fine distinction--indeed, no distinction at all--between which traits of Beatte's "mixed breed" horse are to be apportioned off to one "half" and which to the other. Though a fusion of the "domestic" and the "wild," there is no certainty possible here regarding the source of each of the horse's "properties." This creature, by virtue of its indivisible existence, rather than by how it can be divided and classified, is "noble...generous...fine...admirable." Not only is there no need for the kind of taxonomic, genetic certainty that such dividing implies, it would be absurd to attempt such dissecting, such vivisecting. The point of the "mixed breed" horse is not that its lineages can be winnowed out from its whole existing, but instead precisely that, in being "mixed," certainty becomes impossible and, finally, dispensable. Certainty no longer matters. All that is "known" is that there is a mixture.

Approaching the end of his tour and his narrative, Irving observes that,

> [i]n all expeditions of the kind we were engaged in, the hardy Indian horses, which are generally mustangs, or a cross of the wild breed, are to be preferred. They can stand all fatigues, hardships, and privations, and thrive on the grasses and the wild herbage of the plains. (194)

These mixed, "half-breed" horses appear capable for this region where none other does. For Irving, this tour has been rich with experience's treasures. These treasures are not only the happy and joyful moments, but also the experiences of "fatigues, hardships, and privations." Indeed, once again, it is not possible to separate the one element from the other; moreover, such a formulation is wrong from the start, suggesting as it does that somehow there are these separate "elements." In point of fact, these elements are only reason's way of organizing the material of existence. In short, the elements are not prior to or in experience but are concepts overlaid afterward upon experience.

It may also be the case, however, that, despite Irving's admiration for the mixture he beholds "about the confines," the mixed breed, in being so admirably capable for this region, is thereby unfitted for any other. Irving does not say as much, but the critic may object and argue that the "logic" of his narrative may require as much. What is at stake here is both belonging and boundary-crossing. The importance of the horse is familiar from Westerns, and so it may come as no surprise that, when Irving later in the narrative trades his current horse for another, he remarks that "it almost seems as if a man changes his nature with his horse. I felt quite like another being" (142). A being's "nature" changes not only because of a change of horse but because of a change of location. Belonging, so the argument would go, is a matter of nature and location. If the mixed can so admirably exist and "thrive" in this "debatable ground," that same observation by no means leads to the

conclusion that the mixed can belong anywhere by virtue of their mixture. So, the argument would conclude, the mixed breed, the "half-breed," can no more cross boundaries than any other being.

This argument returns us to the point from which Irving's thinking began, when he listed the several sorts, descript and nondescript, peopling the prairie. The "alignment" of all these people was less than clear, was uncertain, but there was no sense that they were out of place. The argument delineated above is valid enough so far as it goes but it does not go far enough: this is the very problem that the narrative form of these accounts continually finds itself outdistanced by. Irving's initial mode of thought is familiar and typical: belonging is a matter of certainty and of knowing. The civilized are on one side of the confine, the savage on the other. A fence or wall both keeps something out and something else in. Separated in this way, looking, as it were, from one side of the confine, there is no awareness that there is something, anything, between: no awareness, that is, that the confine is anything other than a clear and clean line.[9]

Irving's point has been to show that there is a space between and that it is a lived space. This is not the Space of certainty and of mute objects but the temporalized space of travel. Where confines are imposed, the space between is not visible and thus there is no possible place for the half-breed. Neither one nor the other, how can the half-breed fit anywhere? The question demonstrates its shortsightedness, its own blindness. Certainty, because it establishes and

perpetuates itself by its confines, must blind itself.

Irving from very early on finds himself responding deeply to images and intimations of what, near the very beginning of his narrative, he calls "native freedom" (10), natural freedom, the freedom to which the animals are "born." When Irving, considering a young Osage, reflects upon the human analog to "native freedom," he discusses "glorious independence":

> Such is the glorious independence of man in a savage state. This youth, with his rifle, his blanket, and his horse, was ready at a moment's warning to rove the world; he carried all his worldly effects with him, and in the absence of artificial wants, possessed the great secret of personal freedom. We of society are slaves, not so much to others as to ourselves.... (34)

The young Osage manages to escape the ties and trammels of "the civilized state," ligatures that Irving also alludes to biographically in his Introduction to Tour. He clearly admires this Osage; Beatte, as an "Indian hunter," is early on described in similar words (28). This passage, however, makes its point of view plain: Irving is writing from the "civilized" side of the confine. In a published letter to his brother Peter, Irving, about to begin his tour, speaks of wanting to "see those fine countries of the 'far west,' while still in a state of pristine wildness, and behold herds of buffaloes scouring their native prairies, before they are driven beyond the reach of a civilized tourist" (Tour xvii). It seems that "the great secret of personal freedom" is not

available to "civilization," by virtue of its own logical structure. That is, "personal freedom" is necessarily excluded from "civilization," and this is what makes it "civilization." Thus, although Irving does not have it and cannot have it, yet, in being able to recognize it he is in a sense permitted to share in that freedom.

It cannot be denied that Irving's description of the young Osage is part of his representation of the prairie, even his "imposition" of a set of values and meanings upon his "material."[10] Did this Osage in fact have the great secret? Is Irving telling the truth of the matter? Either the negative or the affirmative answer involves the reader in difficulties. The greatest difficulty, however, may be to see that these questions, and questions like them, are not well-formulated. In asking, or rather demanding the absolute certain truth of the matter, these questions will always be frustrated. As Irving presents this Osage, the man does demonstrate "personal freedom." In Irving's narrative, this is the truth not of but rather in the matter. To demand something else, whether "real" truth or "actual" fact, is to require a book other than the one Irving wrote. Reflecting on an earlier reading of Tour, McDermott sees "[m]y chief objection, as I look back, was that Irving had not written the book I then wanted from him" (ix).[11]

3. The Reach of the "Civilized Tourist"

Thinking about the "civilized" tourist brings this discussion into contact with Margaret Fuller's Summer on the Lakes, in 1843 and Francis Parkman's Oregon Trail. As

several critics note, when Irving returned to the United States in 1832 he had spent seventeen years abroad, from the age of thirty-two to forty-nine. His literary career was already well-established. His exposure to "civilization" had for many years been to that of Europe. Francis Parkman had also spent some seven months in Europe in 1843-44, just after which he graduated from Harvard. Before that European trip, he had made two substantial summer trips to the forests and mountains of the New England/Canada region. In his Foreword to Oregon Trail, A. B. Guthrie, Jr. remarks that "Parkman was just twenty-three years old" at the time of his trek (ix). That "just" seems to need emphasis, needs to be kept in mind throughout the following consideration of Parkman's narrative.[12] Like Parkman, Fuller, who was "already," as Susan Belasco Smith points out, "established as an important member of the Transcendental circle" (Summer vii), was raised and breathed in the atmosphere of Boston and the civilization it both represented and continued to develop. Like Fuller's, Parkman's text was his first book-length work.

If Irving was able to travel as a cosmopolitan, Fuller and Parkman traveled as well-educated Bostonians. This should not be taken to mean they traveled narrowly. Both are motivated to go and to see and to learn, suggesting at least a willingness to appreciate experience by more than one standard. Education, is, in point of fact, a crucial aspect of both these travelers' narratives: Fuller's because she is quite eager to learn what the new conditions of life in the Great Lakes region may be teaching those settling there, developing lives there; Parkman's because one of his explicit

intentions is to research and learn about the native tribes out on the plains as he begins to turn more of his attention to what will finally become Conspiracy of Pontiac (1851).

In a remark reminiscent of Irving's introductory comments to Tour, Smith argues that, for Fuller, "[d]iscovering the 'true spirit that animates daily life' out on the prairies, away from the intellectualized life of Boston and her Transcendentalist circle, was the most significant part of Fuller's trip" (ix). This emphasis upon "daily life," (Irving says "every day occurrences" [9]) draws attention to such life, such living, as a fit source for wonder: as opposed, for example, to ruins or other tags of the aesthetic categories. Such daily life is a function largely of the people doing that living. If Irving was fascinated by the "half-breed" and all those others whom he encountered between the confines, those who do not seem to "fit" are also a central note in Fuller's Summer on the Lakes. Unlike Irving, however, Fuller's focus is not upon the wonderful capability for life that is already in action about the debatable ground. Rather, her interest is split between people who cannot seem to find a place on the one hand and, on the other, the settlements as having the potential to induce a kind of life that may perhaps offer possibilities for belonging. In short, where Irving sees possibility (even if not for himself--must all choices also always be our own choices?), Fuller apprehends the possibility of possibility.[13]

This position, though tentative, precarious, is nonetheless highly important to Fuller, who "had begun to

feel that Transcendentalism alone was unlikely to produce a person who possessed the attributes she saw as vital" (Summer xix). Where this new person may emerge is as important a question as how such a person shall emerge. The two, in a real sense, are the same question, at least parts of the same question. Fuller begins her investigation with a stricture upon New Englanders emigrating to the Old Northwest:

> there is nothing real in the freedom of thought at the West, it is from the position of men's lives, not the state of their minds. So soon as they have time, unless they grow better meanwhile, they will cavil and criticise, and judge other men by their own standard, and outrage the law of love every way, just as they do with us. (13)

The great openness of the country only appears, momentarily, to promote a corresponding openness of thought. The "position," or location, cannot finally transform the prior state of mind. Fuller's condition ("unless they grow better meanwhile") is not hopeful but, instead, rather unlikely of fulfillment. The possibility of possibility, however, is preserved. While it is highly unlikely that the emigrants will "grow better," Fuller's basic optimism (or perhaps better, her basic hopefulness) cannot entirely rule out such growth, such change. If the "position" seems but a momentary illusion--or fantasy, or fiction--there may yet be a power within that illusion to have an effect upon "the state of their minds."

The power is to be found in the merging of position with state of mind, and the resulting possibility of a better

harmonization of the two. For Fuller, "harmony" emerges repeatedly throughout Summer on the Lakes, and is a recurring theme. This theme is introduced explicitly early on, while at Niagara Falls. Looking at the moonlight upon the water, Fuller notes how "[a]ll tended to harmonize with the natural grandeur of the scene." Fuller "gazed long," and "saw how here mutability and unchangeableness were united" (9). It is these two qualities that both require harmony and, in combination, suggest harmony. It is these two qualities that serve to measure life and thereby to teach its worth. Each requires the other in order to recognize itself. Both require time: unchangeableness requiring it, even if less obviously so than mutability.

Neither is it necessarily obvious that the permanent is actually ever-unchanging. It may also demonstrate change, though at a vastly slower rate. Fuller suggests as much, remarking:

> Yet, as gradation is the beautiful secret of nature, and the fashioning spirit, which loves to develop and transcend, loves no less to moderate, to modulate, and harmonize, it did not mean by thus drawing man onward to the next state of existence, to destroy his fitness for this. (98)

Here--the "here" both of this passage and of the regions Fuller has in mind--"mutability" is that developing and transcending expression of "the fashioning spirit," and moderation, modulation, and harmonization the expression of the tendency toward preservation, persistence, and "unchangeableness." Harmony is so crucial for Fuller because

it is the means by which people may be "drawn onward to the next state of existence" while at the same time maintaining a "fitness for this" present state. Even if it is the seemingly typical pattern, never to "transcend" the present state is abhorrent for Fuller: first, because it signals a loss of harmony; second, because failure to transcend signals a loss of "spirit," which by its very nature transcends. Failure of moderation, however (that is, the ever more rapid increase of change) is equally detrimental for people. Such a frenetic state not only fails to teach the value and need for constant change (a vertical rather than horizontal "progress," moral growth), but it likewise and most importantly fails to establish a valued place for those who value the spirit and its power to grow beyond the present state of things.

As Fuller travels along the St. Clair River, between Canada and Michigan, she observes that "[t]he people on the boat were almost all New Englanders, seeking their fortunes. They had brought with them their habits of calculation, their cautious manners, their love of polemics" (12). They also seemed to spend their time "talking not of what they should do, but of what they should get in the new scene" (12). Here, then, is that failure, or loss of spirit that so concerns Fuller.[14] The "calculation," caution, and "love of polemics" all signal a being that is more self-contained than open. What they intend to "do" is strictly a matter of what they intend to acquire, "get"--the profit: the vocabulary betrays where their ultimate concern lies. There is little interest in, let alone, perhaps, awareness of, growth beyond

the present state. Harmony and the further harmonization of existence is a dim, obscure thought at best. Doing and becoming are matters subsumed almost entirely by a monetary rhetoric and standard.

This rhetoric is not at all surprising to Fuller, though the cost is typically tragic, in that it leaves no room, not only for another rhetoric, but no room also for those who would speak this other language, those who would have others listen to this other language and rightly value and appreciate it. "To me, too," Fuller tells her reader

> used to the feelings which haunt a society of struggling men, it was delightful to look upon a scene where nature still wore her motherly smile and seemed to promise room not only for those favored or cursed with the qualities best adapting for the strifes of competition, but for the delicate, the thoughtful, even the indolent or eccentric. (38)

The ambivalence in Fuller's remark about "those favored or cursed" with the ability to thrive in the environment of "go ahead" must be taken quite seriously. Fuller knows where her sympathies lie but is far from convinced that the values she writes for will ever be likely to win the day. She wishes to make plain here that she writes from the point of view of this "society of struggling men," and understands what is required for "the strifes of competition." She is fully part of this living, yet she is also open to the delights of a more complete inclusion: the further harmony. These others still to be included, to whom this "scene" "seemed to promise

room" are also "those favored or cursed." The favoredness or cursedness of these people, however, is in their seeming unfitness for "the strifes of competition" in a "society of struggling men." The ambivalence of the position of such people is as real as that of the materialists, those for whom doing is nothing other than a matter of getting, for whom "becoming" is completed by "rich."

4. Unity Contra Harmony

There is much material in Summer on the Lakes that, on a desultory reading, seems tangential to Fuller's "immediate" subject: her trip and the regions through which she travels. This impression has resulted in substantial elision when Fuller's work has been republished. There is every argument, however, to be made for keeping Fuller's work just as she had it published, and very few arguments of any weight for excising pages from it. Keeping in mind that Summer is Fuller's first book-length text, it is just as important to recall, as Marie Mitchell Olesen Urbanski points out, that it "is experimental in form and in content" (156). Smith warns that "[r]eaders who look for surface unity and try to establish an overarching theme may have overlooked the essential disunity and multi-thematic nature of travel literature in general, and the nature of Summer on the Lakes in particular" (xiii). It is precisely the search for such "surface unity" that has prompted editors to alter this text. For Fuller, however, it is never "position" of life but rather "state" of mind that most matters. The "regions" through which Fuller in her text "travels," then, need to be

understood in a multiple way and primarily as explorations of states of mind, views, perspectives, possibilities. It is only through the possibility of "grow[ing] better meanwhile" (13) that position of life and state of mind may possibly begin to harmonize. Both can have an effect on the other, but that effect is not necessarily in itself positive. Unity, in short, more often than not is set against harmony, rather than in concert with it. Unity, in short, becomes another manifestation of the confine, with all the deleterious effects that come with the confine.

This opposition is made much clearer by examining two passages from Summer that, until recently, had been regarded as "extraneous": the stories of Mariana (pages 51-64) and the Seeress of Prevorst (pages 83-102). Both women are figures for those who do not fit nor--importantly--are given room to fit. Unity overmasters the possibility for harmony, for balance and exchange. The result hovers between the tragic and the pathetic. Mariana's is a passionate and capricious spirit. She is exuberant, demanding and, most of all for her schoolmates, strange. Mariana's ways, her living--indeed, her very life--"irritated the girls, as all eccentricity does the world in general, more than vice or malignity" (53). Through a series of mortifications, her spirit is brought under, so that, finally, "they really liked her much better now that she did not oppress and puzzle them" (55). Rather than seeking harmony, the goal of Mariana's peers is to bring her into conformity, unity. Harmony then has nothing to harmonize, no material upon which to work.

Mariana's rejection is made deathly plain to her several

times and is, in Fuller's tale, the ultimate cause of Mariana's early death. She is not a figure for harmony but rather an impetus toward harmony, as her life sets a challenge, a "puzzle." If the puzzle is taken up, then Mariana acts to bring others beyond the limitations of the moment, into a space where harmony may have the opportunity to do its work. The puzzle, though, is not taken up, but instead remains a distant curiosity: "What she wanted to tell, they did not wish to hear" (61). The unity characteristic of a particular, unperturbed state of mind preserves itself unconsciously by the limits it sets for itself. A poignant line of Fuller's work sums the matter best. Mariana "was so conscious of secret riches within herself" (60). No one else, however, appears in the least interested, either in searching out such riches or, even, in knowing of them.

Prior to the Mariana story, Fuller regrets the miseducation that disharmonizes settlers in the Lakes region (particularly women) with the life they could live there. She sees in these regions "a lot which would be full of blessings for those prepared for it" (39). Position of life and state of mind can be harmonized through a right education: "e-ducation" is, even, the path of harmony. Fuller seems to illustrate the kind of living that is incidental to the Lakes, and the kind of woman who can live there in "happiness enough" (40), when she records the experience of a woman who, "as she was making bread one winter morning, saw from the window a deer directly before the house. She ran out, with her hands covered with dough,

calling the others, and they caught him bodily before he had time to escape" (41). The story's impression of incongruity, as well as what it says about vigor and self-initiative, its message of capability, suggests a fullness that comes with the sense of capability. This woman, in her resourcefulness, seems well-matched with the life she has here to live. Such action may be called for by "necessity," but not everyone would respond to that call with capability: preparedness.

In Mariana's case, as one of the examples furthest from a matched life, Fuller laments that "[o]ur little girl was quite unprepared to find herself in the midst of a world which despised her, and triumphed in her disgrace" (54). Yet, while so extraordinary, so eccentric a being, Mariana shares with many others the same fundamental plight: "Like others she had the decisions of life to make, before she had light by which to make them" (59). It is difficult to say whether any preparation could be sufficient when such "decisions of life" must be made. More wisdom, however, and more experience, might be helpful. A wider circle and a larger development could be of great assistance, even if these can finally provide no absolute certainty.

While Mariana gives the impression of exuberance and a frantic desire to have life, a life through the living of which she could also have love, acceptance, and a place, the Seeress of Prevorst, Fuller's next extended "digression," suggests all that is the very opposite of expressive energy. The doctor who treats the Seeress reports that, at a certain point in the progress of her disease "she had now no life more, so thoroughly was the force of her own organization

exhausted, but what she borrowed from others" (89). While both women die young, the Seeress, in her sheer exhaustion and immobility, gives the impression of great physical age. Her condition, her life "immersed in the inward state" (90) has devoured her, drained whatever vitality of her own she may ever have had. As a result, what sustains her is contact with other people, with the energy of their lives, their living. "[T]hose from whom she could gain nothing made her weaker" (90). Further, it could not "be denied that persons were weakened by constant intercourse with her" (90).

It is here that these two women, Mariana and the Seeress, seemingly so directly the negation of each other, meet. Mariana was a constant drain on her schoolmates, and it is only when "she did not oppress and puzzle them" any longer that they "liked her much better." Mariana could have led others by her example toward a richer life, by helping them to break down the barriers within themselves that kept them dull, ordinary, in every way anything but a "puzzle," whether to others or, more interestingly and richly, to themselves. The Seeress, though confined to the smallest physical space, bridges vast realms, but requires substantial energy to cross and return with whatever she has seen there. That energy has been denied her for too long. By the time anyone begins to realize what her true capacities may be, her talents and abilities, her disease is too far advanced. Neither woman is given the opportunity to be who it is within them to be, because neither are understood, much less appreciated: there has been no room left for them. Neither Mariana nor the Seeress are allowed any measure of value:

they have nothing to contribute but discord or exhaustion.

Shortly after her account of the Seeress, Fuller mentions, perhaps more as a matter of faith and hope than of experience, "the power uncommon characters will always exert of breaking down the barriers custom has erected round them" (112). These characters may be able to free themselves from such trammels, but what they seem to find, if Mariana and the Seeress are any indication, is that they do not know their way about after the barriers are down. This proves fatal to them in the settings where they find themselves. It is perhaps in this context that Fuller (acidly?) remarks that "[t]he mass has never yet been humanized, though the age may develop a human thought" (143). The kind of accommodation Fuller appears to have in mind, a kind of belonging that would have room for the Marianas and the Seeresses, is just the sort of thought that may take an age to develop. This development, however, is not strictly or perhaps even primarily the work of Time or Destiny or Idea. Rather, people themselves have it in them to foster such belonging, to think that "human thought." "We want a more equal, more thorough, more harmonious development, and there is nothing to hinder from it the men of this country, except their own supineness, or sordid views" (147). Because these regions through which Fuller travels are still relatively unsettled, its settlers, provided they have already set aside "their own supineness, or sordid views," have here the possibility for a further harmony, a more thorough expansion and expression of capability, of contribution. Such possibility, however, requires an act of decision, an act that can only be

performed or not by each particular person. No one can decide for another, though anyone can create obstacles and stumbling blocks for any other.

5. A Prairie Teeming with Life

Reading criticism of Francis Parkman (1823-1893), one of the most striking features is the apologetics. This has been the note from as early as Charles Haight Farnham's 1900 biography. If Parkman "felt little sympathy with the political, social, religious, or other reforms of his time" (x), Farnham argues it must also be understood that "his senses were not highly developed; he was more or less insensible to delicate impressions from sound, color, odors, taste, and touch" (9). Shortly after Farnham's, Henry Dwight Sedgwick brought out his own biography (1904), where he points out that Parkman "had a youthful tendency to abrupt and severe judgments" (123). Sedgwick's work is more sympathetic to Parkman than Farnham's. Although published in 1942, Mason Wade's Francis Parkman: Heroic Historian is the third biography. While once again relatively sympathetic, Wade is careful to note that "Parkman was both too young and too typical a Bostonian to be an objective observer" of what he encountered while on his travels in the West (222). Echoing Farnham, Wade writes that "all the great ideas and causes of his era hardly touched him" (vi).

Parkman elicits these admissions in large part because, like a figure such as Richard Wagner, the man seems so often uncommendable while the work is so often impressive, often, even, moving. That Parkman too often comes across as a bigot

of the first order would be foolish to deny. Nor can Parkman's youth while on the plains completely exonerate his prejudice. It is strange then, even unsettling, to find in Oregon Trail several episodes where he writes with great sympathy. For a man supposedly so entirely distant from what finally mattered during the times through which he lived Parkman is not ultimately so irrelevant as his lack of "attunement" apparently ought to have made him. It may also be, though, that Parkman's distance, albeit born of illiberal sympathies, is precisely his peculiar, if limited, strength. In several crucial, revealing moments, he writes out of wonder. Wonder wanes with familiarity; the near becomes anything but wonderful. Parkman does not see the West as a settler, or as a politician in the Henry Clay tradition, nor as a scientist, neither as a missionary. It is the gap that involves him at one remove that enables the West to emerge as something in itself wonderful, rather than as hundreds of miserable miles intervening between here and there.

Parkman admittedly writes frequently enough from a strong disgust, born in most instances from an inability to comprehend. His distance from his subject cuts both ways, toward and against wonder. He admits his inability when, early on, he writes about western emigrants:

> Among them are some of the vilest outcasts in the country. I have often perplexed myself to divine the various motives that give impulse to this migration; but whatever they may be...certain it is, that multitudes bitterly repent the journey, and, after they have reached the land of promise,

are happy enough to escape from it. (17)

Parkman is not finally especially interested in the migration as Movement. Perhaps, from his point of view, such things are unexceptionable. Wade criticizes this seeming lack of interest with some justice (223). Yet his criticism, worthy though it be, also may miss an indispensable point that Farnham makes: "Parkman's success in dealing with many of his personages...sprang from intimate personal sympathy with them and a knowledge of himself" (229). Farnham draws the reader's attention to Parkman's focus on "personages" rather than movements. Whether this is questionable historiography on Parkman's point is a matter that cannot be taken up here.

Parkman's focus on people makes for more dramatic writing, however, and certainly a writing more susceptible to the influence of wonder. This focus does not mean that he is unusually sensitive to individual people. Rather, that focus turns his attention more to the actions of people and groups. He describes people from the outside, not bothering with plumbing their depths: he is not writing a novel. If he would have looked deeper, a critic can easily point out, Parkman would have seen something more than "the vilest outcasts in the country." Yet Parkman is already well within the mythologies of the West in seeing among the emigrants some particularly rough, aggressive, and violent people.

Parkman is not of a speculative turn and explanations are sure to take second place to descriptions in Oregon Trail: thus, his dismissal, troubling though it may indeed be, of coming to any conclusions about "the various motives that give impulse to this migration." There is, though, an

explanatory pattern that emerges very clearly in the passage quoted above. Looking at the emigrants, "bitterly repent[ing] the journey" to the "land of promise," leaves no doubt in the mind of Parkman, a minister's son, regarding one potent way to understand what he sees via a resonant if familiar vocabulary.

As the organizing pattern for viewing the emigrants, the wandering in Sinai likewise provides Parkman the opportunity to present his two great themes for Oregon Trail: unity or lack of unity of purpose, and the "preordained" fate of the Native Americans. In line with these two themes are competing versions of belonging, rhetorics of certainty: the first version is a belonging not only by action (taking) but also through some higher, prevenient sanction. Parkman does not specifically identify the sanction. Manifest Destiny, race, democracy, the progress of the vile outcast--any or all of these, in varying degrees, might begin to express it but none of them captures it completely. The second version of belonging is that of immemorial right, ancient possession. The conflict between these versions is manifestly unjust, both versions in themselves having justice behind them. The result cannot be happy.

This recognition is what makes Parkman by turns implacably set against Native Americans and deeply impressed by and even sympathetic to them. There is more than enough evidence of Parkman's deeply prejudicial reactions to Native Americans.[15] One particular aspect among the Indians that he pays relatively more attention to is also a problem he especially notes among the emigrants: lack of unity.

> The Dacohtah or Sioux range over a vast territory, from the river of St. Peter to the Rocky Mountains. They are divided into several independent bands, united under no central government, and acknowledging no common head. The same language, usages, and superstitions form the sole bond between them. They do not unite even in their wars. (115)

Whether part or all of this is either historically or anthropologically inaccurate, while an important matter, is not here the primary concern in discussing Parkman's travel narrative. He understands the Sioux in a particular way, as this passage begins to illustrate. At the very center of this passage (almost literally so), is the absence of a "central government," that would unite them. "Unite" is the key word in this passage. It is the seeming lack of a common purpose, or of an overarching cause under which to unite, that most strikes Parkman. Further, it would seem that, "[t]he same language, usages, and superstitions" are an insufficient bond. The Sioux are in some vague sense "one," but disunited, disorganized. In that disorganization, they lose power and risk making themselves subject to whatever more united group they may encounter.

As for leaders who could unite the people, Parkman argues that Sioux "usages" make no provision for that kind of leadership. For Parkman, the typical Sioux chief

> knows too well on how frail a tenure he holds his station. He must conciliate his uncertain subjects ....If he fails to gain their favor, they will set

> his authority at naught, and may desert him at any moment; for the usages of his people have provided no means of enforcing his authority. (115-116)

There is no precedent, in short, for leadership to weather adversity. Nor is there provision for placing faith in a leader and enduring suffering based upon faith in that leader. The leader does not have any authority to speak of and, where the chief may have any, "no means of enforcing" it. This hardly resembles any sort of leadership at all, but it does reflect where the power lies in Sioux society as Parkman presents it. Power is with the people. Sioux society is radically democratic and, past a particular point, perhaps even anarchic. This term should not be taken to mean chaotic, though. The Sioux that Parkman observes do not court the favor of the leader: there is no leader in the form of a "ruler." Rather, the "leader" must constantly court the favor of the people, even to the extent of impoverishment (115). Parkman visits the lodge of Old Smoke, a chief: "It was by no means better than the others; indeed, it was rather shabby; for in this democratic community the chief never assumed superior state" (91).

Autocratic or monarchical "state" would not merely be in bad taste but would, moreover, seem to be foreign to the Sioux. Parkman appears to be chastising this "democratic community," and this chastising tone becomes plainer afterward, when he discusses the marriage of a trapper named Morin to an Oglala woman. He "had not made an aristocratic match. His bride's relatives occupied but a contemptible position in Ogillallah society; for among these democrats of

the prairie, as among others more civilized, there are virtual distinctions of rank and place" (113). If, even in this "democratic community," there are "virtual distinctions of rank and place," then what "democracy" precisely means becomes uncertain. Rule by the people, rather than by the few or the one, is presumably what ought to be at the core of anything called democracy. For Parkman, however, such rule, in its ideal form, can only lead to powerlessness, defeat, and extermination. Leadership requires decision, just as, from his perspective, decision requires leadership, and the whole people cannot be expected to agree with any regularity on a single course of action, much less decide for it, much less perform it.

This line of thought becomes clearer in what Parkman also has to say about the emigrants, right from his first encounters with them. "They were in great confusion, holding meetings, passing resolutions, and drawing up regulations, but unable to unite in the choice of leaders to conduct them across the prairie" (16). The emigrants have all the forms of democratic-republican governance: "meetings...resolutions ...regulations," yet, despite this best of organizations, they cannot seem to "unite," cannot seem to choose who will lead them. This is bad enough, but the difficulty of choosing a leader lies in more than expecting a political form by itself to produce results. The spirit of politics, the wrangling, the dealing, the greed and the lust, all these are silent partners in the emigrants' deliberations. Nor, seemingly, can they easily set these things momentarily aside. When Parkman and his party later pass by a group of

emigrants, he finds "[i]t was easy to see that fear and dissension prevailed among them" (50). While some of the emigrants enviously watch Parkman and his companions pass (at least they are moving, riding "lightly and swiftly by"),

> [o]thers were unwilling to advance at all, until the party they had left behind should have rejoined them. Many were murmuring against the leader they had chosen, and wished to depose him; and this discontent was fomented by some ambitious spirits, who had hopes of succeeding in his place. (50)

How Parkman, cantering past the emigrants in their wagons, is in a position to know these things is not clear from this passage. He and his party, however, encounter these emigrants several times during the same day, and some of his companions spend more time with the emigrants. Rather than concerning themselves with the task at hand, with the need to move onward (which is, after all, their avowed plan), the emigrants seem instead caught up in and entangled by small-mindedness and the sort of politicking so characteristic of Home. Peter Antelyes quotes Frank Bergon: "[w]hat brought many of the early pioneers West was not a dream of adapting to the land and creating a new, distinctive society of equals," as Fuller, for example, wished for without hope, "but rather the desire to transfer to the West society as they had known it in the East, with one difference: they would be at the top of the heap" (39). Where there is discontent, magnify and encourage it: such increase is all the better for your chances to get power in your own hands. Rather than a tool of consensus-building, then, "democracy"

is here the means of perpetuating antagonism and animosity: the divisions out of which the opportunist can cut the sweetest deal for himself.

Where opportunism does not appear to be a significant factor in the emigrants' division and disunity, indecision presents itself as the most significant, debilitating factor. When Parkman and his fellow travelers go to another emigrant camp just outside Fort Laramie, they "were at once struck with the extraordinary perplexity and indecision that prevailed among them. They seemed like men totally out of their element; bewildered and amazed, like a troop of schoolboys lost in the woods" (89). In reflecting upon this unsettling uncertainty, Parkman goes on to note that "the forest is the home of the backwoodsman. On the remote prairie he is totally at a loss" (89). The totality of the emigrants' perplexity is doubly emphasized. Parkman uses "totally" twice within a short duration; the emigrants, worse than "schoolboys lost in the woods," here do not even have the benefit of "woods" to get lost in. The "remote prairie" offers none of the familiarities of the forest by which a lost person could hope to become "unlost." They let the sense of not belonging overwhelm them and can find no way (perhaps literally) to assume or forge a place for themselves from the materials at hand: they experience an incapability, or at the very least, an urgent fear of the possibility of incapability. As emigrants, and this may very well be part of Parkman's perplexity in understanding them, they have set aside, left behind one sense of belonging in hopes of finding another. This other sense of belonging, however, as Bergon

points out, is essentially the same sense, merely transported in space. Now, when and where decision and action seem to be called for most, the emigrants are least able to summon it. Their squabbling and politicking lead them in circles, when it "leads" them anywhere at all. To return to the subtending biblical vocabulary mentioned above, the emigrants lack a particular sort of "faith." Fear overmasters hope.

Strangely, the plight of the emigrants is finally not far different, in Parkman's view, from that of the Native Americans, of whom Parkman observes:

> [c]haracteristic indecision perplexed their councils. Indians cannot act in large bodies. Though their object be of the highest importance, they cannot combine to attain it by a series of connected efforts. King Philip, Pontiac, and Tecumseh, all felt this to their cost. The Ogillallah once had a war-chief who could control them; but he was dead, and now they were left to the sway of their own unsteady impulses. (115)

Once more, whether Parkman's dicta are true (accurate) or not is not the point of my analysis. That Parkman believes his opinion is justified is clear enough. What is more crucial to realize here, however, is that Parkman's main interest is in precisely what he is failing to see. Parkman is most interested in people attaining important ends and the leadership and authority he believes are required for that attainment. The lack of such leadership impresses itself upon him, whether among Ogillallah councils or emigrant deliberations. That sort of leadership so impresses Parkman

because it seems so rare to him and yet so necessary. Instead, "unsteady impulses" prevail among "red" and "white," native and emigrant, alike. Parkman is not so much interested in race here (although he uses it elsewhere) as in the dynamic, strong leader: the figure who can unify and transform "unsteady impulses" into steady purpose. For such a leader, toward such a purpose, people will endure suffering and hardship, will make sacrifices of time, resources and, at the extreme, life.

Parkman's failure to find such leaders or much leadership on the plains, however, is not finally a great disappointment to him. He does not appear to have gone out exclusively to find such things. It would be comfortable enough to say that Parkman finally only managed to see what Boston had taught him to see. His elitism and arrogance can be harshly grating. It seems inadequate, though, to leave the matter there. Even Parkman's perspective is not uninfluenced by his encounters. Even Parkman's attitude--even if only temporarily--undergoes a shift toward wonder, by means of wonder.

Two things especially impressed Parkman favorably, two things that are at heart one and the same. There are several instances where Parkman describes encountering a Sioux band, encamped or else on the move, making its way from one campsite to the next. Coming to such an encampment, near a stream called Horse Creek, Parkman gives his reader an impressive scene, worth quoting at length:

> Not far from the chief stood a group of stately figures, their white buffalo robes thrown over

> their shoulders, gazing coldly upon us; and in the rear, for several acres, the ground was covered with a temporary encampment. Warriors, women, and children swarmed like bees; hundreds of dogs, of all sizes and colors, ran restlessly about; and, close at hand, the wide shallow stream was alive with boys, girls, and young squaws, splashing, screaming, and laughing in the water. At the same time a long train of emigrants with their heavy wagons was crossing the creek, and dragging on in slow procession by the encampment of the people whom they and their descendants, in the space of a century, are to sweep from the face of the earth. (77)

If, as his earliest biographer contends, Parkman's senses were not highly developed, this is not to say he was incapable of impressionability. Parkman's forecasting is inaccurate and yet just accurate enough to emphasize what is particularly moving (for Parkman as well as his reader) in this moment. The Sioux, and more generally the Native American, has not been swept "from the face of the earth," yet the life they then had has been. The elders of the band, "white buffalo robes thrown over their shoulders, gazing coldly upon" not only Parkman and his companions, but also, it would seem, the "long train of emigrants," suggest through Parkman's language their awareness of what the future holds for them. This is the undertone, the quiet minor note amid a scene that is active, vivacious, and happy. The running and swarming suggest the energy of work and of play. That

Parkman is most drawn to the playful is apparent by his turn to the children and youth, the future of the band, in "the wide, shallow stream...alive with boys, girls, and young squaws, splashing, screaming, and laughing in the water." This is a delightful sight and delightful to Parkman. It is crucial to that delight, tempered by that undertone, that his attention immediately turns to what is occurring "[a]t the same time": the emigrants "in slow procession" in "their heavy wagons," "crossing the creek." The creek is a thing to be crossed, rather than to be enjoyed, rather than a scene of joyful play. The lightness and the quality of the activity in the Sioux camp is set in very deliberate contrast to the plodding progress of the emigrants, who seem almost to be moving under external rather than internal impulse.[16]

Parkman's language here, this image or possibility of the plains, should be taken alongside the other, perhaps more expected language of barren, empty vistas, stretching off to distant, flat horizons. Parkman experiences these, too. After riding through the "hollows and gorges" of "sand-hills" for some time, Parkman and his companions come to a high point, from which they can see the Platte River valley:

> We all drew rein, and sat joyfully looking down upon the prospect. It was right welcome; strange, too, and striking to the imagination, and yet it had not one picturesque or beautiful feature; nor had it any of the features of grandeur, other than its vast extent, its solitude, and its wildness. (55-56)

Neither "picturesque [n]or beautiful," this scene just yet

manages to display some of the traits of the sublime. Parkman, however, is reluctant even to name this sight by that word "sublime." The scene rather resembles than is an instance of the sublime. It is imperfectly sublime, and yet perfect in that very imperfection. The "prospect....was right welcome," not only because it is in contrast to the tiring wandering and occluded views in the sand-hills, but also because it is "striking to the imagination" in a way that Parkman cannot quite name, cannot quite classify. He does not know just what to call it, yet there it is before him. "[T]he experience of wonder," Stephen Greenblatt remarks, reminiscent of Cornelis Verhoeven, "continually reminds us that our grasp of the world is incomplete" (24).

For a region seemingly dominated by "vast extent... solitude, and...wildness," it is particularly noteworthy that Parkman finds himself drawn more frequently to recording the abundant life of the plains. This is not a lifeless wasteland but rather, as his description of the Sioux camp above begins to show, a region rich with concentrated and varied life. "The prairie teemed with life," Parkman nearly exclaims, yet, in this instance, "[t]here was nothing in human shape amid all this vast congregation of brute forms" (68). This concentrated life is not exclusively human life, and points well beyond the dominions and daily struggles of human life and living. One particular night, as Parkman is keeping watch in camp, he records that "[t]here was something impressive and awful in the place and the hour; for I and the beasts were all that had consciousness for many a league around" (53). Parkman clearly uses "consciousness" here in

the sense of being awake, but it is not difficult also to see this word being used to convey a further sense of awareness, of a wakefulness that is a characteristic sensation of wonder. Where previously Parkman had experienced something akin to but not quite nameable as the sublime in gazing over the Platte River valley, here an experience for which Parkman uses a related vocabulary remains akin to but unnameable by the "sublime." Otto uses the phrase mysterium tremendum specifically to denote the holy. Parkman (hardly a religious man) apprehends the "holy" as wonder: the "something impressive and awful" in the moment. It is no coincidence, Otto writes, that the sublime is inadequate to express the numinous and that, "[o]f directer methods our Western art has only two, and they are in a noteworthy way negative, viz. darkness and silence" (68).

Darkness and silence, what Parkman notes, are here not only witnessed by the one keeping vigil but also by all those other mute creatures: "I and the beasts were all that had consciousness for many a league around." Parkman, in a rather surprising moment, gives voice to that silent life beholding silent mystery. He shares something, participates in this life with them. This abundant, silent life becomes an occasion for reflection at later moments in Parkman's narrative, as, for example, while he is in the mountains of Colorado:

> Wild as they were, these mountains were thickly peopled. As I climbed farther, I found the broad dusty paths made by the elk, as they filed across the mountain side. The grass on all the terraces

> was trampled down by deer; there were numerous tracks of wolves, and in some of the rougher and more precipitous parts of the ascent, I found foot-prints different from any that I had ever seen, and which I took to be those of the Rocky Mountain sheep. I sat down upon a rock; there was a perfect stillness. No wind was stirring, and not even an insect could be heard. (192)

"Wild as they were...." Parkman's is no "howling wilderness," an image that Irving also evokes only to transform and undermine.[17] Parkman does not write, "wild <u>though</u> they were," as if there were a contrast to be drawn, a difference to be pointed out. His word choice instead conveys surprise, wonder that "wilderness" should, in fact, show such evidence of life. Parkman revises his readers' expectations and understanding here. Beyond "civilization" there lies, not desolation, but abundant, various life. The tracks of the various creatures tell as many tales, speaking as many lives. It is not ultimately of great importance that these lives are not human lives. It is, even, the most remarkable fact about them that they are not. From Parkman's commanding height upon the mountain, he finds there is nothing to "command": there is no life here subject to him, only the many paths of the many creatures that he crosses, crossing his own. What reigns, so to speak, is "a perfect stillness," very much in harmony with what Parkman apprehends at night, keeping watch.

Just before his vigil on the mountain, he was traveling with the Oglala band he has been staying with:

> As Pauline bounded over the rocks I felt her

> saddle-girth slipping, and alighted to draw it tighter; when the whole cavalcade swept past me in a moment, the women with their gaudy ornaments tinkling as they rode, the men whooping, laughing, and lashing forward their horses. Two black-tailed deer bounded away among the rocks; Raymond shot at them from horseback; the sharp report of his rifle was answered by another equally sharp from the opposing cliffs, and then the echoes, leaping in rapid succession from side to side, died away rattling far amid the mountains. (191)

In contrast to the silence and "perfect stillness" of much that Parkman sees, this passage, like that quoted earlier where he describes another scene of Indian life, suggests the sudden, amazing eruption of life, its amazing fleetingness. This is a scene that Parkman is able to witness in the way he witnesses it, after all, because the saddle on his own fleet animal comes loose. Sound is preeminent in this scene, much as, in the earlier example, "the wide shallow stream was alive with boys, girls, and young squaws, splashing, screaming, and laughing in the water." These are moments of bright joy and buoyant laughter, not so much set in marked contrast to the "wilderness," but rather, as suggested by that phrase "[w]ild <u>as</u> they were" (emphasis added), given in wonderful complement to this region.

It is perhaps an ominous sign here, much as the heavy trudging of the emigrants was in that earlier moment of somber gaiety, that the sound lingering over this subsequent scene is the echo of the rifle. That sound seems to

foreshadow the violence and bloodshed to come, the echoes amplifying the one shot into many, repeated. Parkman's narrative ends with this same sound of the rifle shot echoing, although now the connotations are substantially different. "My rifle," Parkman records, "an excellent piece, which [Henry Chatillon, their guide] had always been fond of using, is now in his hands, and perhaps at this moment its sharp voice is startling the echoes of the Rocky Mountains" (286). The rifle could not be in better hands, Chatillon being that person capable for those vast reaches. Parkman's gift to Chatillon, "startling the echoes" much as birds are startled and take wing, seems Parkman's way of vicariously remaining, of belonging himself, to these same regions. The rifle's "sharp voice" (a substitute for Parkman's) joins all the other voices, all the other sounds that add the sharp and sudden revelation of rich life to the "barren" places. Parkman has a place upon the plains because his voice sounds there, just as his voice sounds the plains in Oregon Trail. That place is thus, in this instance, this time-bound space, not a matter of possession but rather of participation. The living and not the holding is decisive here. Where possessions are taken as certainties, to treat life and living as certain is to treat them as possessions.

6. "The Entire Construction of a New and Sovereign State"

That participation is the decisive feature of the belonging which the travelers considered in this chapter encounter in the American West (as opposed to any form of possession, education, cultural literacy, passion) is a point

also established by Bayard Taylor very early in Eldorado: Adventures in the Path of Empire (1850).[18] "Nothing less than a marvel like that of California," he observes, "could have brought into juxtaposition so many opposite types of human nature" (3). Indeed, much more than the three travelers already considered in this chapter, Taylor makes this note of "juxtaposition" a recurring motif. In his 1896 biography of Taylor, Albert H. Smyth insists Taylor "was exactly of the mood and temper to appreciate what he saw in the young community" of California (76). It may be for this reason that, as Paul C. Wermuth remarks, Eldorado is "one of his best and most popular travel books" (18-19).[19] When Taylor arrives in San Francisco, he makes at once for the mining operations along the Mokelumne River. There, along "the river bottoms," he finds "a number of Americans, Sonorians, Kanakas, and French...at work in the hot sun" (69). Returned once more to San Francisco, he remarks that "[o]ur own countrymen seem to lose their local peculiarities in such a crowd, and it is by chance epithets rather than by manner that the New Yorker is distinguished from the Kentuckian, the Carolinian from the Down-Easter, the Virginian from the Texan" (93). This "crowd," in addition to the "Sonorians" and "Kanakas" he has already noted at the diggings, also includes "[t]he German and Frenchman.... Peruvians and Chileans...[and] Chinese" (93). These groups barely fill out the list of all those whom Taylor meets in California.

The effects of this mixture, this "juxtaposition," caused by California, reach far beyond California. Taylor

boards ship in New York in June, 1849, bound for Panama by way of Havana, New Orleans (where the steamer takes on board "Mississippians, Arkansans, [and] Missouri squatters" [8]) then south to Chagres, Panama. At Chagres, the boatmen who would take these people along their way to Panama City, "knowing very well that two more steamers were due the next day, remained provokingly cool and unconcerned. They had not seen six months of emigration without learning something of the American habit of going at full speed" (12). The boatmen are not slow to learn how to make this influx profitable. One of the boatmen taking Taylor and some companions to Gorgona, as he paddled, "kept time to the Ethiopian melodies he had picked up from the emigrants, looking round from time to time with a grin of satisfaction at his skill" (15). And at Panama City, Taylor finds a place "already half American. The native boys whistled 'Yankee Doodle' through the streets, and señoritas of the pure Castilian blood sang the Ethiopian melodies of Virginia to their guitars" (23). Taylor does not record these striking combinations as disconcerting.

Regarding Juan, the boatman, Taylor does admit he "preferred...hearing the native songs, which the boatmen sing with a melancholy drawl on the final syllable of every line, giving the music a peculiar but not unpleasant effect, when heard at a little distance" (15). Taylor had perhaps not expected to encounter these new combinations, but he does not bemoan them. He wants to experience what is specific to Panama, both in the people and the nature there, for the few days he traverses it. He is also wise enough, however, to realize that what is "specific" is always a matter of mixture

and gradation. What is sung in the "native songs," how they are sung and the language in which they are sung, all of these elements will yield their mixture upon reflection. They are "native" in the sense of some unadulterated essentiality only based upon an assumption that values such imaginary "purity" over the presumedly inherently destructive (anti-)"essence" of mixture. This is the rhetoric of the "half-breed" that Irving comes so roundly to reject.

There is no ultimate exclusivity and, indeed, throughout Eldorado Taylor is repelled by any evidences he crosses of attempts to enforce exclusivity upon emerging society. His stand is most clearly demonstrated in what he has to say about events at the California constitutional convention. In Monterey, Taylor notes with great approval the failure of a clause "prohibiting the entrance of free people of color into the state" (122). Likewise, when the convention members decide against slavery, he is "happy that in all the extent of California, from the glittering snows of the Shasta to the burning deserts of the Colorado, no slave shall ever lift his arm to make the freedom of that flag a mockery" (135). Moreover, when the issue of the voting rights of Native Americans and their descendants comes up, Taylor observes that the Californio members at the convention "will not be content to let it rest. Many of the most wealthy and respectable families in California have Indian blood in their veins, and even a member of the Convention, Dominguez, would be excluded from voting under this very clause" (123).

In California, acceptance seems to be a matter not of exclusivity but instead of wide participation. There are

various tangible reasons for this ethic (a labor shortage, a powerful and "racially mixed" minority population), but in themselves these fail to explain the matter for Taylor. Rather, an intangible spirit seems to animate life in California. It is not the material necessity of wide participation and further inclusion but instead the felt rightness of these things among the people there, the justice and fairness of acceptance and participation, that impresses him. Fuller had been wary of those settlers she saw, traveling to the Lakes region, who appeared vastly more allured by "what they should get in the new scene" than by "what they should do" or be able to become there (12). Visions of a more complete living paled before the prospects for a more profitable livelihood. The impulse of these settlers was, for Fuller, needlessly selfish, accumulative, exclusive. What they would be able to get for themselves they would partition for themselves. Rather than hoarding, Fuller encourages a doing, an outflow of energy and sharing. Thus she envisions a wider and more general participation. Taylor's comments on California speak a similar message; however, he renders a portrait of a place where doing and getting, sharing and hoarding, are in a strange sort of balance.

More than simply being felt to be right, this sense of justice and fairness--ultimately an ethic of equality--is expected of people in California. California, for Taylor, <u>is</u> in a sense this expectation. "Pulling rank" hardly works where all the visual cues that would enable it are absent. Taylor remarks, almost immediately upon arriving in San

Francisco, that

> [t]he mind, however it may be prepared for an astonishing condition of affairs, cannot immediately push aside its old instincts of value and ideas of business, letting all past experiences go for naught and casting all its faculties for action, intercourse with its fellows, or advancement in any path of ambition into shapes which it never before imagined. (46)

Taylor's language shows especial care. He does not say conditions in California are beyond imagination but rather that they present to the observer "shapes...never before imagined." The observer has never thought to extend or expand imagination in the direction of the living being done in California. It has not occurred to the observer that such conditions are possible: and here they are in all their possibility. Belonging in California, then, has become a matter of the capacity to expand imagination, of a capability for life and wonder. The imagination nimble and elastic enough, which can realize the possibilities offered there, is the one best suited for those regions. As shall shortly be discussed, these possibilities are not primarily material or commercial, for in California wealth itself must be reimagined.

It was precisely the inability to exercise the imagination, to realize possibilities, that proved so fatal to Mariana and the Seeress of Prevorst, who figure so prominently (as much by their absence as by their presence) in Fuller's account. Arguably, neither Irving nor Parkman

found pursuable possibilities for their own lives in their Wests. Both, though, arguably took back with them a realized possibility for wonder that neither could otherwise have had so forcibly in New York or Boston. As they learn that they do not "hate the object at which [they] are marvelling," they find themselves capable of living without knowing. If wonder in many instances spurs inquiry and the furthering of knowledge, that is to say, if wonder frequently results in and ends in knowledge, there is also wonder that remains, unassimilated, unappropriated. In place of knowledge, then, of certainty, the experience of wonder may instead result in contemplation of how to live responsibly, where emphasis must be placed on response.

Taylor's entire time in California may serve as an illustration of the need or demand for expanded imagination, the utter inadequacy of Home-bound notions. More specifically, however, he focuses upon this need, discussing people typically encountered:

> It was never safe to presume on a person's character from his dress or appearance. A rough, dirty, sunburned fellow, with unshorn beard, quarrying away for life at the bottom of some rocky hole, might be a graduate of one of the first colleges in the country, and a man of genuine refinement and taste. (207)

Such men, also, would expect to be taken for educated and refined. This situation also has the effect of producing a more democratic feeling, or at least an atmosphere of a more general equality, since it would never be possible to "rank"

yourself alongside others whom you knew it would be impossible to "sort" based on "dress and appearance": standard categories within class and race. Presumption itself, prejudgment, then, is manifestly unwise in Taylor's California.

Taylor makes a point similar to that quoted above when, somewhat later, he remarks

> [d]ress was no gauge of respectability, and no honest occupation, however menial in its character, affected a man's standing. Lawyers, physicians, and ex-professors dug cellars, drove ox-teams, sawed wood, and carried luggage; while men who had been Army privates, sailors, cooks, or day laborers were at the head of profitable establishments and not infrequently assisted in some of the minor details of government. (250)

Taylor makes it apparent that the ordinary list of respectability is entirely reversed. More than this, though, the ordinary standard (ordinary, that is, for Taylor's eastern readers) has become irrelevant. Old standards, Home standards, do not apply, and it would be the greatest mistake, folly, to "navigate" California by those signs. "Respectability" is no longer a quality to be measured by "dress." "Standing" is not a matter of the kind of labor, the occupation, in which a person engages. "Menial" loses whatever stigma may have attached to it. The new standard--for there is a standard even in California--is honesty. Honesty here should be understood not only in its more modern sense of having integrity and being truthful, but also in the

older, ultimately Roman sense of being virtuous. In this sense the idea of California as a "republic" takes on a much more robust significance. If for Fuller place was irrelevant so long as state of mind was unaffected, Taylor suggests, much as Fuller hopelessly hoped, that conditions in California had the potential to encourage moral development, offering a superior way of living responsibly.

This detonation of former conceptions also implies that wealth (literally and ironically) has been reconceived in California. The familiar bounds and standard measures of wealth break down. Taylor early on tells of "[o]ne of the common soldiers at the battle of San Pasquale," who "was reputed to be among the millionaires of the place, with an income of $50,000 monthly" (47). Such vast, scarcely imaginable sums have their pathetic consequences. Taylor is not blind to the unhappy side of California.[20] He speaks with a physician who "described to me several cases of nearly hopeless lunacy which had come under his care, some of them produced by disappointment and ill luck, and others by sudden increase of fortune. Poor human nature!" (244). Taylor's note of commiseration also seems to be a word play: regardless of "fortune," "human nature" remains somehow impoverished. To recall for a moment: Fuller, only a few years prior to Taylor, writes that "[w]e want a more equal, more thorough, more harmonious development, and there is nothing to hinder from it the men of this country, except their own supineness, or sordid views" (147). In a manner not unsimilar, Taylor observes that "[i]f anyone expects to dig treasures out of the earth, in California, without severe

labor, he is woefully mistaken" (71). Both emphasize the supreme importance of effort and of suitable expectations: a commentary also, perhaps, upon travel ("travail") itself.

The travelers taken up in this chapter did not find themselves traversing Paradise, nor did they expect it. California, Taylor makes quite plain, is a promising place where dreams may become living reality. What the dream happens to be, of course, is crucial. Fuller and Taylor, in thoroughly "American" fashion, are both hopeful that a new land may produce a new living, a new and better society, more harmonious, demonstrating a more balanced conception of inclusion. Parkman does not share this particular view, because he perceives more often than not the "supineness, or sordid views" in human action. This situation may be ameliorated depending upon social organization and traditions, but not essentially altered. Irving, perhaps most wisely of all, neither hopes for such a new living nor doubts the possibility of a more thorough, more harmonious acceptance. Instead, his enthusiasm is for just what he finds, just what he sees.

The last morning of their trek, Irving and his party breakfast on "turkey bones and a cup of coffee without sugar" (210). Toward the end of their travel, once more entering settled areas, Irving notes "a stable and barn, and granaries teeming with abundance, while legions of grunting swine, gobbling turkeys, cackling hens and strutting roosters swarmed about the farm-yard" (211). This return is a moment of celebration. Irving stops at the farm, where others of his companions have already arrived, dismounted, and begun

eating. "A fat good-humored negress received me at the door. She was the mistress of the house, the spouse of the white man, who was absent" (212). A reader's initial reaction to this description might be offense, as though Irving were describing some sort of "Aunt Jemima" character. But Irving should be understood differently here: everything he encounters speaks--laughs--abundance and plenty, including the people. This is a place of celebration, and this joy of celebration is not a little augmented by the fact that "the mistress of the house" is also "the spouse of the white man." No further commentary on this "race-mixing" is given. None is needed, for this is the place of celebration, acceptance, and thanksgiving: this is the place of the feast.

To know what that "nature" is, or may be, however, is an act of patience. Nothing displays its "nature" entirely and all at once. The observer cannot have any certainty about the "nature" that is developing, only a security or belief that time will make that "nature" more familiar, more intimate. This is once more, in a sense, exactly what Taylor means when he points out that

> [t]hose who, retaining their health, return home disappointed say they have been humbugged about the gold, when in fact they have humbugged themselves about the <u>work</u>. If anyone expects to dig treasures out of the earth, in California, without severe labor, he is woefully mistaken. (71)

Patience is laborious and time measures labor. For each of these travelers, the American West is thoroughly, whether generally or only individually, whether for good or ill, a

space of possibility. The "gold" of possibility, however, cannot be had without "work." The results are uncertain. Thus, it makes perfect sense that those who "return home" (emphasis added) will feel they have been deceived. The keenest deception, ultimately, is self-deception. The certainty behind this self-deception is not just that of Home and its closed system of "facts" and values, but also that life in California would simply be, without any demand at all, edenic. As Abroad, California would supply what Home cannot: this thought is at once to define Home (strictly in contrast to Abroad) and also, perversely, to suggest that Abroad could become a better Home than Home itself. In all these permutations the centripetal/centrifugal forces are entirely oriented around "Home."

One solution to this problem, as suggested by both Spengemann and John T. Jacobs, is the capacity of travel (particularly to less "civilized" locales) to transform perception, such that the traveler sees an intrinsic value and meaning emerging from travel itself by virtue of which the locations traveled in begin to offer their value and meaning.[21] The travel writer begins to see things, in other words, from the point of view of the local, or, more bluntly, of the native. The standard of Abroad begins to replace the standard of Home; this is seen as growth. What goes unrecognized, however (and very strangely so) is that the standard of Abroad is the Home-standard of those living or dwelling in that space. The traveler never discovers "Abroad" so much as an alternative Home, a new certainty, different from but no less certain than the old, familiar

certainty. Value remains firmly entrenched in the "Home" term. The sense of homelessness and the demi-urge of reunion that it prompts remains the motivating force within a travel narrative written from within that condition.

To a greater degree than the other narratives considered here, in Eldorado Taylor discovers that California continually offers places for him. He finds himself inadvertently drawn into or musing over attempting several occupations while in California. These places include a stint as "clerk-extraordinary" at the post office in San Francisco, when three months' worth of mail arrives all at once (168), later being mistaken first for a government official and then for a political candidate (197), and a momentary flirtation with turning squatter (238). Irving, Fuller, and Parkman also describe moments where they begin to live more immediately the life they otherwise observe. Permanently to take up any of these places, however, would be to cease travel; the travel narrative would end at that point. It is because of this implicit change that Taylor never wholly embraces the "opportunities" presented to him for remaining in California.

He remarks that "[s]ociety...was for the time cast into new forms, or, rather, deprived of any fixed form. A man on coming to California could no more expect to retain his old nature unchanged than he could retain in his lungs the air he had inhaled on the Atlantic shore" (247). Taylor's qualification is well worth noting. Society in California does not show a new form--not yet, at least--but rather has for the moment been "deprived of any fixed form." His

narrative, in fact, in its account of the California constitutional convention, is a narrative at least in part of the groundwork for the emergence of a "fixed form" for society there. So far as the kind of society likely to emerge there, Taylor hopes with some reason that a better one than in the East will be the result. The old divisions, however, are not far to seek in what Taylor describes: some become wealthy while others become impoverished. Despite a greater mixture of peoples, racial rhetorics are already at work. The changed nature of which Taylor speaks may, finally, refer only to his own, or else only to those who come to California as travelers, people who, by that very avocation, do not remain, establish, perpetuate.

IV: The Certainty of Revolution: The Latin Americas of Joel Roberts Poinsett, John Lloyd Stephens, William Henry Hurlbert, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., and Julia Ward Howe

Go where we will, to the uttermost parts of the earth, we are sure to meet one acquaintance: death is always with us.

--- John Lloyd Stephens

Oh, North of life! Oh, South of gorgeous dreaming!
Whence shall the undeceiving breezes blow?

--- William Henry Hurlbert

1. In the Midst of Revolution

For a variety of factors (historical, economic, social) Latin America came "late" both to revolution and "decolonization." With the notable exception of Cuba, which would experience its first war of independence after the American Civil War, Latin America was caught up in the violence of armed conflict at the time of these travelers' journeys. The social environment they describe must be understood in light of this. They encounter a political climate riven with rhetorics of certainty: the foreseeing of completion, of fulfillment, as a possibility only by the One Path. The travelers considered here take significant space in their narratives to reflect upon freedom and the several ways in which it seems presented to them. Each competing camp in these conflicts insists upon its own representation of freedom as the true representation: freedom's final identity. Thus, in considering the texts that follow, one recurring question asks what these writers have to say about

these rhetorics of freedom and the claims of these rhetorics to certainty. What causes manifestly ethical claims to be presented as fact, knowledge, absolute truth? How, in the midst of such an environment, where the only "resolution" will be through death and bloodshed, is hope--whether for justice or for life--possible?

These travelers in Latin America encounter the conventions of yet another system of identification norms and exclusions. What had begun three centuries before as a division between Spaniards and Native Americans, with the later infusion of African slaves, by the middle of the nineteenth century had become a blend of Spaniard and Native American, Native American and African, African and Spaniard. Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851), touring Mexico in the latter months of 1822, remarks:

> It is difficult to describe, accurately, a nation composed of such various ranks, and of so many different casts [sic] as that of New Spain. The most important distinction, civil and political, was founded on the colour of the skin. Here, to be white, was to be noble; and the rank of the different casts is determined by their nearer or more distant relation to the whites; the last on the scale being the direct and unmixed descendants of the Africans or Indians. (119)

By 1822, the colonial government had been driven out from Mexico and the scope of Spain's empire had shrunk considerably. The new order in Latin America, having nominally freed itself from Spain politically, retained the

fundamental divisions between classes or, more accurately, castes, as well as the division between the aristocratic and bourgeois elites that plays such a large role in the subsequent history of the region. These were all social divisions and exclusions that clearly carried with them a significant political effect.

These divisions, as Poinsett remarks, could include a racial element that would be quite familiar to an American audience. When Poinsett writes "to be white, was to be noble," "noble" implies both the possession of prestige and qualification for political power. The key difficulty for Poinsett, as he maps it out in the passage above, is being able to operate in a system where only the "endpoints" are plain. As Poinsett himself cautions his reader, the plurality of people in Mexico defies containment within what must thus be seen as only a schematic and preliminary chart. "White," and "noble," may be equivalent in some sense, yet the word that seems best to unite them, to make their relation clear, is culture. Ladinization, the adoption of Spanish culture, offered one way to move up "the scale": to, as it were, become "white," "noble." Lowell Gudmundson, writing of the situation in Central America, points out that "[s]ocial class and shared culture proved far more important in cementing elite unity than any racist hairsplitting" (121). With respect to Poinsett's observation, perhaps due attention should be given to Gudmundson's choice of "hairsplitting": where "the colour of the skin" serves as a scale, past a particular point its usefulness diminishes. Having said this, it must also be said that, divided by many

things as they were, the Liberal and Conservative parties tended to unite in continued maintenance of the privilege of skin, retained from Spain despite political independence. "It is, I think," writes Poinsett, "difficult to distinguish the African blood, after two crosses with the Indians. They lose entirely the negro features, and the mestizoes have straight black hair like the Indians" (141). The mixture of populations was going on throughout Latin America. Who, specifically, "the other" was, in terms of race, was not, perhaps, always so easy to determine.

The regional political turmoil punctuating these years additionally makes plain the presence of a third, unnamed party, whose goal--liberation--commendable in the ideal, was easily reconceptualized in the excitement of feeling the license of privilege and power. The oppressed, this third party, oppressed largely by virtue of "race," begin to come to awareness of their collective strength. This serves as an especially ominous sign for John Lloyd Stephens as he travels in Guatemala and Yucatán, witnessing what that awareness entails. The indigenous oppressed begin to perceive in themselves the potential strength to establish their own independence. Those who speak for and lead this population seek redress not through political forms, which cannot bleed and cannot cry for mercy, but rather from those who oppress this population in the day-to-day lives of its members. Those who oppress them are not particular individuals, but all individuals who are "white," that is, who possess what the oppressed do not.

Traveling in an environment of heightened absolutes,

these travelers encounter, among locals and for themselves, the fear and exhilaration of a political turmoil that the United States had not known for some time, though soon to rediscover. In the grandest view, these political struggles were struggles for independence, self-assertion, self-realization, and freedom. The travelers taken up here, though, also find it is difficult to distinguish such impulses, which they would have been able to sympathize with, from other impulses that seemed to move beneath the surface of rhetorics of freedom and self-determination. Fanaticism, racial hatred, intolerance, and the trappings of imperial aggrandizement were the features of the face which Poinsett and Stephens saw gazing from beneath the banners of revolution, no matter whether the opposed sides were formed of elites against each other or of elites against commoners.

Traveling through Central America and Yucatán, laboriously clearing and examining Mayan ruins at a time of acute political unrest, Stephens, upon first entering Yucatán, finds "[w]e were again in the midst of a revolution, but we had not the remotest idea what it was about" (CA 2: 320).[1] Travelers, as Stephens here points out, necessarily enter such tension and strife out of context, as it were: "in the midst." It is here that a reader encounters a peculiar horror and absurdity not only in Stephens's, but also in the traveler's predicament. This strife is not the traveler's struggle, yet the travel writer takes an interest in the struggle. These travelers, in writing travel texts, to that extent take part in the struggle. As travelers, though, the struggles they witness are always another's struggle. The

travel writer cannot to that extent participate in that struggle. The struggle affects the traveler decidedly, but the travel writer has no effect on the struggle.[2]

Be that as it may, these writers do have the advantage of another perspective, to whatever degree that other perspective provides some manner of advantage. Alternative, rather than another or other, is perhaps the best word to use here. When Stephens "called upon the chief of state" of Central America in San Salvador, he told those gathered:

> I had seen more of their country than anyone present, and spoke of its extraordinary beauty and fertility, its volcanoes and mountains, its immense resources and the great canal which might make it known to all the civilized world, if they would let the sword rest and be at peace among themselves. (CA 2: 103)

Though Stephens may seem somewhat presumptuous in his remarks, his narrative lends them a unique authority. Few of the people he spoke with, few of the locals with whom he traveled, had been beyond the confines of their own city, village, or valley. Because of his wide traveling in the region, Stephens may be said to have an awareness of the country different from though equally valid with that of those who had dwelled in and around one part of Central America their entire lives. Where the Central Americans might very well have a deep and abiding intellectual impression of what Stephens speaks to them of, the "extraordinary beauty and fertility" of the land for example, Stephens has had the privilege of fusing intellectual

appreciation with sensual perception.[3] The resulting awareness of the fullness of possibility available to the people of the region contributes markedly to Stephens's advocacy for peace, an advocacy for dialogue, compromise, negotiation, and the effort of understanding: the elements of acceptance overcoming exclusions.[4] Above all, perhaps, this is to advocate an awakening to wonder.

It is in the sense of incompletion that rhetorics of completion are formulated and cherished. The goal, rather, is to accept incompletion, perpetuating wonder, recognizing the ultimate failure of explanation. It is in the sense of incompletion that people may become open to each other. Incompletion demands change: change is hard, is stubbornly resisted. The change demanded is not change toward completion (expressed at times in what follows by "History"), but rather the change that comes from accepting incompletion, having the grace, so to speak, to accept it and live in that awareness. The conflicts amidst which Stephens and Poinsett find themselves, revolutionary struggles, depend upon a rhetoric of certainty: the "change" to be brought about is to be able to be who the rebels already are. The "change" is not an opening to others or a becoming, but rather a reestablishment. The ideologically charged nature of the conflict produces fanaticisms on each side. To grow to awareness of possibility, which in the specific context of this chapter has largely to do with accepting others and the final impossibility of explaining others away, is to be continually in struggle with fanaticism.

These travelers encounter firsthand and recognize the

legacy of colonial rule in Mexico and Central America, as well as its continuation in Cuba. They make observations on the division between wealthy and poor, an indigenous "race" consciousness possibly co-emergent with a "class" consciousness, and the central role of the Catholic Church in the lives of the people.[5] The process whereby human injustices are redressed and the profounder, progressive community will be established may indeed have something stirring in it in the ideal, as declamation. Amidst the actual resulting political upheaval, though, revolt, as Poinsett and Stephens particularly witness it, becomes a license to dictate and to extirpate, and precious ideas become a film only slightly obscuring the disproportions of fanaticism: "justice" wielded by retribution.

These struggles occurring after independence from Spain at once resemble and yet become acute distortions of similar conflicts that had occurred in the United States: whose social interests would prevail? what sociopolitical orthodoxy would reign? As Stephens makes plain, the third major question was the role of the remaining earlier population in post-independence society. Through these matters, through these recognizable yet peculiarly unfamiliar issues, an awareness of acute incongruity comes to characterize accounts of travel in Mexico and Central America.[6] This incongruity of loud rhetorics in its turn clamors in odd counterpoint to the impenetrable silence of the Mayan ruins, memorialized with undeciphered hieroglyphs.

This growing awareness, characteristic of the accounts of Poinsett, in his Notes on Mexico, Made in the Autumn of

1822 (1824) and especially John Lloyd Stephens, in Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán (1841), and Incidents of Travel in Yucatán (1843), is less prevalent in accounts of Cuba, which was not suffering in the throes of a general armed conflict at the time William Henry Hurlbert (1827-1895), Richard Henry Dana (1815-1882), and Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) made their trips. The sociopolitical tension between identity and freedom plays no less a role in Cuba, however. Dana observes, "[n]or is there, nor has there been in Cuba, in the memory of the young and middle-aged, debate, or vote, or juries, or one of the least and most rudimental processes of self-government" (81).

Several issues mark Cuba off from the rest of Latin America at this time, including its status as a colony of Spain, the slave economy on the island, and interest among some in the United States either in purchasing or annexing Cuba.[7] The United States was not alone in having designs upon the island. J. Fred Rippy, in his Joel Roberts Poinsett, Versatile American (1935), notes that, "[i]n fact, at this period five powers, besides Spain, were deeply interested in the fate of this little island: England, France, the United States, Mexico, and Colombia" (112). Hurlbert, in his Gan-Eden: or, Pictures of Cuba (1854), Dana, in To Cuba and Back: A Vacation Voyage (1859), and Howe, in her Trip to Cuba (1860), each make mention of the debate in the United States about Cuba.

2. Excess and a Politics of Improvidence

There is an evident accretion in those preexisting cities claimed by the Spanish. Poinsett notes that, except for Puebla, the other cities of Mexico "are situated upon the ruins of some city that existed at the time of the conquest" (40). The superimposition of Spanish structures upon native, the presence in contemporary buildings of stones from Aztec and Mayan structures, speaks at once of destruction, transformation, and the limited and appropriating character of both. Past and present are not so thoroughly divided, excluded, and are, in some respects, not remarkably divided or different at all. The Indian population, writes Poinsett, "were oppressed and trodden under foot by their emperor and caciques; and ever since the conquest, they have been oppressed by laws intended to protect them" (120).

Poinsett was Minister to Chile during the War of 1812.[8] His actions at that time decidedly transgressed the standard boundaries of diplomatic conduct. Rippy writes that he "not only instigated revolt in South America, but had actually accompanied the insurgent forces of Chile during a campaign and given military advice to their leader" (56).[9] At least one consequence of this very involved role in the affairs of the region was that, when he returned to the United States, Poinsett "was considered the outstanding authority of Spanish-American affairs" (Rippy 68).

In the late summer of 1822, Poinsett, at that time a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, set off on "a semi-official visit to Mexico in order to report on conditions there before the Washington government adopted a

definite policy toward the new emperor of that country" (Rippy 90). He returned by way of Cuba in January, 1823. For Poinsett, the oppression under which Mexico's indigenous population lived was in part the unavoidable consequence of an imperial system, with all its medieval trappings. The Mexican Revolution had promised to throw off the imperial grip, but the conservative victory heralded by Agustín de Iturbide's coronation as emperor by his troops pointed up the difficulty in establishing republican forms, let alone democratic institutions.[10] In an interview with Iturbide, Poinsett notes the emperor took "occasion to compliment the United States, and our institutions, and to lament that they were not suited to the circumstances of his country" (67).

Insofar as Poinsett was able to perceive them these circumstances together form a picture of a country with the ideal natural conditions for a democratic (republican) political system, not unlike the comments of Stephens to the government at San Salvador. Yet these same conditions circumvented the particular physical deprivation which, Poinsett implies, would be the impetus to political change. His understanding of democratic independence, the only possible foundation for a republican form of government, depends on transformation of lack into providence, providence (through industry) being fundamental to independence. Reflecting upon poverty, humanitarian aid, and begging in Mexico provides him an occasion to consider lack and providence more generally. "[W]ant and beggary," Poinsett argues,

> are found only in agricultural, manufacturing, and

> mercantile communities, and especially under mild climates and in fertile territories, or where, from excess of civilization, the poor are provided for by law. The reason is the same in both cases; [sic] the poor are rendered improvident by the provision made for them by nature, or by the regulations of civilized society. (41)

As he makes clear, this improvidence is not a peculiarity of the Mexican but of civilization--"excess civilization," as Poinsett terms it. It is this excess which prompts improvidence, but it is also that very surplus which can support a population despite improvidence. Where the poor (which, here, is to say those who cannot, or do not support themselves because unable to or lacking the opportunity to do so) are cared for, it is because the poor <u>can</u> be cared for.

While not an especially nuanced understanding of impoverishment, this remains a familiar understanding. The familiar element is the assumption that independence is tied to self-support (providence), that each must support him or herself, and that the best possible society is that which maximizes opportunities for self-support. The importance of "excess" to this understanding cannot be underestimated, for excess is at once the desideratum and that which inhibits further exertion. Excess is a state of rest, not to say a state of suspension. Only lack (something different from the "want" Poinsett mentions), particularly when real, but also when feared or anticipated, can spur exertion. This is why, for Poinsett, civilization, combined with fertile lands and mild climate, makes an especially poor combination for the

effort required to establish and maintain a democratic system: why there is no necessary connection between civilization and democracy (something Cooper also notes in discussing England).[11] This, for Poinsett, seems very much synonymous with the spirit of independence: not being made to do for another what that other can do for himself, and not being done for by others, to the enslavement of both.

Stephens, though discussing the area immediately around Lake Managua, makes a point seemingly in agreement with Poinsett's thinking: "it may be questioned whether, with the same scenery and climate, with wants few and easily supplied, luxuriating in the open air by the side of this lovely lake, even the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race would not lose their energy and industry" (CA 2: 11). Where there is food, shelter, and warmth, the physical requirements for life are satisfied. In Mexico, "[t]he lands are fertile, the climate benign, and man, satisfied with little and naturally disposed to indolence, plants and cultivates only so much as in ordinary times will yield him a comfortable subsistence. No provision is ever made for bad seasons" (Poinsett 74). Poinsett's train of thought runs something like this: failure to think ahead, to anticipate, is to fail to imagine that conditions could ever change, and this in turn indicates a lack of adaptability, an inflexibility in relation to change. Stephens paints a similar general portrait when he says of the natives in Yucatán that they "are all improvident; they anticipate their earnings, never have two days' provisions in store, and never keep any accounts." As a result, "[a] dishonest master may always bring them in debt, and generally

they are really so" (CA 2: 351).

A degree of providence, then, could be the means to prevent their victimization by those presently in power. This system characterizes relations between poor and wealthy even though, politically, there are no slaves in Mexico:

> By the Act of Independence, the Indians of Mexico, as well as the white population, became free. No man can buy and sell another, whatever may be the color of his skin; but as the Indians are poor, thriftless, and improvident, and never look beyond the immediate hour, they are obliged to attach themselves to some hacienda which can supply their wants; and, in return for the privilege of using the water, they come under certain obligations of service to the master, which place him in a lordly position. (CA 2: 343)

Stephens describes this system from a somewhat distant point of view, although also vaguely from the Indian point of view (though a reader might not immediately think so). Not apparently overly sensitive, his account here seeks primarily to be true to his own observations. This system of victimization is illuminated from another side when Stephens speaks with some from "the better classes":

> It was a matter of some curiosity to me to know how these men lived; none of them worked. Their only regular business seemed to be that of gambling. On taking a seat among them, I learned the secret from themselves. Each man had several outstanding loans of four or five dollars made to Indians, or he had

> sold agua ardiente or some other trifling commodity, which created an indebtedness. This made the Indian a criado, or servant, and mortgaged his labor to the creditor or master, [by] the use of which, in milpas or tobacco plantations, the latter lived. (Yucatán 2: 132)

Clearly, in the system of political philosophy to which Poinsett recurs, the want spurring effort cannot be satisfied by subsistence, but must have excess; excess (perhaps surplus is a better term) offers autonomy. That excess, however, must be the result of lack. Where independence (closely allied to providence) is at stake, excess cannot be the precondition. Where excess is the precondition it rests satisfied with subsistence, a sufficiency of the moment, "only so much as in ordinary times will yield...a comfortable subsistence." Subsistence defers providence, which is itself a sufficiency that, literally and figuratively, transcends the present moment. The system Poinsett subscribes to as a path to independence, to political freedom, must not only have excess, but excess guaranteed, or at least the reasonable hope of excess, surplus. This lack that ultimately produces excess may be the result of at least two factors, either separately or in combination: the natural environment or the political system. It is clear in Poinsett's Enlightenment-influenced thinking that both have an influence on social organization.

The guarantee of excess through providence and out of lack is important because, after all, a land like Mexico already offers excess, but unreliably.[12] The natural

environment of Mexico is, ordinarily, fruitful and sufficing. The Mexican people have plenitude, but without the appearance of comfort: a mark for Poinsett of the unreliability of their plenitude, but also of the political system under which they live. On his way to Queretaro, he stops

> opposite a large hacienda at a small collection of hovels, constructed with stones and mud, and thatched with straw. We found in these miserable habitations, in which we could not stand upright, the greatest abundance of the necessaries of life. At the one door of them, there were two sheep hanging, that had been lately killed; and the women offered for sale, turkies, fowls, mutton, corn, onions, and a great variety of fruits, vegetables, and herbs.
>
> The observation so often made and repeated, that where nature has done so much, man is indolent, applies forcibly to this country and to this people. To no part of the world, has nature been more bountiful, and in no part of it is there so little comfort among the people. So true it is, that nothing will supply the place of industry. (134)

Poinsett seems to make this criticism not so much out of anger or disgust as out of incomprehension, deep wonder. His comments reflect simultaneously something of an agrarian and a consumerist mode of thought in its association of independence with comfort, in the transformation of the "necessaries of life" (subsistence) into the something more

which makes life valuable (excess): the opportunities for self-cultivation that make independence meaningful. Without the capacity or opportunity to exercise it, independence for Poinsett ceases to be a signifying word.

Particular care seems to be called for in interpreting Poinsett. Comfort has psychological as well as physical valence. Comfort is not simply mental complacency. It is not a matter solely of living well and having a substantial collection of material possessions. It is also a measure of the use to which such things are put towards self-cultivation: education, improvement, growth. This is an expression of value: how life is ordered and to what ends it is so ordered. It would seem as if there is nothing in this system good in itself--even independence--except for the realization of potential: a good which is elsewhere though possibly near. Thus, Poinsett's is a vision of democracy with the end of maximizing the realization not of the life of the community but of the lives of the members of the community. It is for the benefit of its individual members, Poinsett might argue, that a community exists in the first place. Human life happens in community, society, but the crucial question is the potential of the one who has life within a community or society. A "society" cannot be alive in or of itself.

Such thinking becomes clear in Poinsett's contemplation of what he sees of the lives of laborers in Mexico, and the sense of political apathy he detects. He praises the industry and education of the laborers in the cities, but has a more mixed reaction to the laborers in the country:

> They are sober, industrious, docile, ignorant and superstitious; and may be led by their priests, or masters, to good or evil. Their apathy has in some measure been overcome by the long struggle for independence, in which most of them bore a part; but they are still under the influence and direction of the priests. They are merely labourers, without any property in the soil; and cannot be expected to feel much interest in the preservation of civil rights, which so little concern them.[13] (121)

What Poinsett calls the ignorance and superstition of the laborers of the countryside might alternately be called trust and faith in the right judgment of their priests.[14] Poinsett appears to have in mind here, however, the point that the laborers have not yet come to an awareness of separate interests. This is the meaning of their "apathy." They do not yet, according to his observations, see themselves as having a role or place in a common Mexican life. The thought has not yet occurred to them that their own best interests and the interests of those whom they regard as having just authority over them, just responsibility for them, might be quite different. Poinsett implicitly posits that the interests of the two groups necessarily are different, even incompatible. The unspoken question here is this: are the people not themselves capable of knowing and working for their own interests, rather than for those of a master class (or caste)? What appears on the one hand, then, as a stereotyped and bigoted portrait of a group of people

(ignorant and superstitious peasants), from another perspective is a radical diagnosis for democratic upheaval (the people are being kept in ignorance and superstition and must take their education into their own hands).

This ostensible lack of awareness of their own true interests is woven into the improvidence Poinsett observes: both are responses to what he earlier identified as a natural indolence in people as people. Much can be borne, if basic necessities are met at the moment. Something external to a person or a people, whether nature or others, must provide the push toward independence. A person or group must become aware of freedom, possibility, and of lack <u>as</u> lack, <u>as</u> something that can be redressed and amended through some particular course of action, or through some particular vision of the future, concept of History, ideology of Home. Consciousness, like providence, is born from an act of self-reflection, of considering needs and how best to meet them, not only in the present, but in the future, vigilant against the encroachment of lack. Consciousness and providence are informed by the contemplation of an elsewhere, whether of identity or of time, towards which a person or a people turns. This can be called Paradise, the Future, the State, the People, the Community, Home, or Abroad: the substantive form seems a mysterious guarantee for the content. Material incompletion leads to physical suffering. Suffering is here the breeding ground of resistance, of consciousness.

The human inclination to ease that Poinsett identifies resists those ligatures that would call forth future-oriented exertions. How could these poor people have or see a need

for or stake in, for example, property (whether land or labor) where they are satisfactorily provided for by another, whether "civilization," another person, or natural abundance? This is not to say, nor does Poinsett ever claim, that the Mexican peasantry does no work. The crops do not grow of themselves. But then, neither do rights, or reflection. Considering the division of land in Mexico, Poinsett notes that it "is, for the most part, in the hands of large proprietors. The peasants have no interest [a word that occurs in the long quote above] in the soil they cultivate. They receive wages in money as day labourers, or hold small tracts of land on the tenure of personal services" (123). Mexico's might as well be called a feudal system: the greater number, more or less in actual if not de jure bondage, supporting by their labor the absolute rule of the few. Stephens, in a moment of wonder, also notes the effect of this distribution while on his way to Uxmal: "Our road was by a bridle path over the same stony country, through thick woods. The whole way it lay through the lands of the provisor, all wild, waste, and desolate, and showing the fatal effects of accumulation in the hands of large landed proprietors" (Yucatán 1: 96).[15]

It is because of such evidence that Poinsett passes rather lightly over news of fighting at Vera Cruz: "I feel no sort of interest in the event of actions fought between Royalists and Imperialists in America. Neither party engage my sympathies" (66). Both parties stand for the perpetuation of a system requiring the majority to live on the subsistence of the moment, a sort of ultimate tyranny. People might

survive but do not, to Poinsett's mind, flourish in subsistence. To flourish requires excess, which requires a principle, a stake in or commitment to an idea explaining excess and its value. To call this a theory might be inaccurate; whatever name this explanatory idea may go by, it is a reason that looks beyond the present, without necessarily adoring History: a narrative of certainty in which actual human beings, individuals, play minimal roles. Out of this commitment to an explanatory idea an identity results, an expression of commitment. To work your own land in order to provide for yourself is the seal of independence for Poinsett. Such commitment requires subsequent allegiance to a matrix of other principles: stability, equality, and procedural justice, education and literacy among them. These are values that gravitate toward not only a concept of the individual, but also toward a concept of individual liberty. These principles or values, so far as Poinsett seems concerned, can best be realized and proliferated in democracy, in a republic.

Oppression, what might be called the politics of improvidence, requires no and in fact discourages any commitment outside of its version of identity, its political fiction. Oppression requires subsistence. In the Mexico Poinsett witnesses, oppression takes on a mercenary cast reflected even in the revolution sweeping the land:

> The people of this country, the Indians, samboes and mestizos, will flock to the standard of any adventurer, who will lead them to victory and plunder. This is the reason why we see the

> Royalists making head every where against the Patriots, and maintaining themselves in the country without a single recruit from Europe. These men care not for the cause in which they are engaged, and when sated with plunder, they abandon their leaders without scruple.[16] (181)

This mercenary picture of the population is the picture of the oppressed operating within a system of oppression. Without an alternative set of principles that are meaningful to them when set over against the opportunity to satiate themselves this very moment (which is, after all, itself also related to a principle), it is perfectly understandable that they would choose the plenitude of the present. They are not revolutionaries, and history is not History (Glorious Destiny) for them. Poinsett's wording suggests it ought to be the Patriots with whom the people ally themselves, since the Patriots would appear to offer the people a system that, if not entirely in their best interests, at least would be moreso than the current system.

It would be almost something of a comfort if the failure of the general populace to support the Patriots as opposed to the Royalists were inexplicable. Yet for Poinsett such support, while depressing, is hardly inexplicable. Regarding the oppressed in Mexico, he argues: "[m]easures must be taken to educate them, and lands distributed among them, before they can be considered as forming a part of the people of a free government" (120-121). A change in these circumstances may then serve to offset other circumstances, such as natural bounty and a history of authoritarian rule. Poinsett's

contention is partially echoed by Stephens:

> In my opinion, teaching might again lift up the Indian, might impart to him the skill to sculpture stone and carve wood; and if restored to freedom and the unshackled exercise of his powers of mind, there might again appear a capacity to originate and construct, equal to that exhibited in the ruined monuments of his ancestors. (Yucatán 2: 293-294)

It is indispensable to note the relation here between restoration to liberty and the restoration or renewal of creative energy and activity. Freedom is an expressive, a creative phenomenon: freedom builds. The general diffusion of education and proprietorship are the signs both of a free government and of the conditions necessary to maintain a free government: this is a government of community, for justice, by participation.

Such government, of course, is at least the ideal. When Iturbide laments to Poinsett that the institutions of the United States "were not suited to the circumstances of his country," and when it is recalled that Poinsett, speaking of the history of the Mexican people, says "[t]hey were oppressed and trodden under foot by their emperor and caciques; and ever since the conquest, they have been oppressed by laws intended to protect them," it becomes evident that the prevailing conditions, working against the growth and spread of what Poinsett calls "free government," are the result of the combination of several factors. The politics of improvidence, the expression in Mexico of this

combination of factors, turns upon the people to keep them comfortless amidst the excess which in the United States would be the sign of prosperity, fullness and, less secularly, divine blessing.

3. National Feeling

Not quite twenty years after Poinsett's return to the United States, John Lloyd Stephens traveled through Central America and southeastern Mexico. Intending to explore the ruins of Mayan cities, Stephens also entered the region in a diplomatic capacity, "[h]aving been intrusted by the President [Van Buren] with a Special Confidential Mission to Central America" (CA 1: 3). His mission was to make contact with the government of Central America, though he first had to find the government. While in Guatemala (at the time one of the states of the Central American republic) Stephens "attended the last meeting of the Constituent Assembly, which was held in the old Hall of Congress....On the wall were the arms of the republic, the groundwork of which was three volcanoes, emblematic, I suppose, of the combustible state of the country" (CA 1: 159).

This combustibility is brought home to Stephens in several instances. "There was but one side to politics in Guatemala," he writes. "Both parties had a beautiful way of producing unanimity of opinion by driving out of the country all who did not agree with them" (CA 1: 158). A local companion, walking about the streets of Guatemala City with Stephens, "pointed out several [of Rafael Carrera's soldiers] who were known to have committed assassinations and murders,

for which, in a country that had any government, they would have been hung" (CA 1: 171). Stephens arrived at a time when the short-lived Republic of Central America was breaking apart into the separate countries we are familiar with today. He was there at a time when the wheel of fortune was dragging the Liberal cause down and lifting up the Conservatives.[17] The result of several factors, this rupture took place, in Stephens's view, at least in part because there was "no such thing as national feeling. Every state would be an empire; the officers of state cannot brook superiors; a chief of state cannot brook a president" (CA 1: 290). Although "national feeling" is practically nonexistent, partisan feeling runs high. Just as those in power "cannot brook superiors," each rival vying for power cannot brook the other.[18] No stranger to party politics himself, this environment is nonetheless disturbing to Stephens, who witnesses it in perhaps its most exacerbated, fanatical form:

> Our worst party abuse is moderate and mild compared with the terms in which they speak of each other. We seldom do more than call men ignorant, incompetent, dishonest, dishonorable, false, corrupt, subverters of the Constitution, and bought with British gold; but here a political opponent is a robber, an assassin, and it is praise to admit that he is not a bloodthirsty cutthroat. (CA 1: 245)

The difference here seems to be between the unethical on the one hand, and the immoral on the other. Where Stephens suggests political opponents in the United States are

castigated for their weakness, laxity, or greed, in Central America they are made out to be monsters: evil pure and simple. It does not help to facilitate political debate that the actions of Iturbide in Mexico, or Carrera in Guatemala tend to bear out charges of inhumanity and brutality leveled by their political opponents, although those opponents themselves may not have been so very innocent either.

In Stephens's own time United States congressmen were beaten by each other in the Senate. South Carolina was asserting its right to nullify whatever federal legislation it saw as contrary to its interests. Slavery was never very far from the horizon. Newspapers such as the abolitionist National Era, published at Washington, called for calm and reasoned debate, while other newspapers, on both sides of the issue, clamored for secession or suppression: the absolute requirement and propriety of political violence. "We complain," Stephens continues,

> that our ears are constantly offended and our passions roused by angry political discussions; yet here it would have been delightful to hear a good, honest, hot, angry political dispute. I traveled in every state, and never heard such a dispute, for I never met two men together who differed in political opinions. Defeated partisans are shot or banished, they run away or get a moral lockjaw, but they never dare express their opinions before one of the dominant party. (CA 1: 245)

If Stephens's accounts of the Near East bore witness to the possibility, even though radically circumscribed, of

coexistence, his time in Central America reveals to him a system that entirely denies that possibility. And yet, this is not really so very different a situation from that already seen in previous chapters, whether in reflections upon English "national character" or Taylor's hopeful but historically doomed vision of California. Living together remains the hope, while not living together (life oriented toward a greater or lesser discord) seems to remain the typical condition. It would seem that the sense of possibility these travelers apprehend, freedom to be otherwise, more fully to realize themselves, is most forcefully presented to them where they are made painfully aware, not of their own restrictions, but of restrictions under which others live. This is only in part experience through sharp contrast.

The quasi-theocratic tendencies disturb Poinsett and Stephens who see them as essentially medieval holdovers of the conservative governments in Mexico and Central America. It is also the case, however, that the more "modern" racial rhetorics of Central American rebellions become equally disturbing because, perhaps, disturbingly familiar. Entering Central America through the British possession of Belize, Stephens is exposed at once to perhaps the most positive vision of race relations he is to find in the region. "Before I had been an hour in Belize," he writes,

> I learned that the great work of practical racial amalgamation, the subject of so much angry controversy at home, had been going on quietly here for generations; that color was considered a mere

> matter of taste; and that some of the most respectable inhabitants had black wives and mongrel children, whom they educated with as much care, and made money for with as much zeal, as if their skins were perfectly white. I hardly knew whether to be shocked or amused at this condition of society. (CA 1: 6)

This amalgamation seems the simultaneous and harmonious cohabitation of different "races" within the same body, whether social or physical. Stephens, naturally, approaches what he finds in Belize from a particular position (well-to-do, white, male) as is evident from the way in which he relates his noticing. As clearly, he also addresses these remarks to readers positioned quite clearly. In his address to those concerned with "respectability" (something akin, perhaps to the manufacture and maintenance of the image/ identity of normativity) Stephens reveals the relativity of respectability, and so of "normativity." He at least, it would seem, reveals that class supersedes race in Belize: and why not, then, in the United States?

Stephens's indecision as to "whether to be shocked or amused" is to imagine himself in two positions. One of these positions is with those who cannot imagine, those who would be scandalized to the core to imagine, that any "respectable" person could educate the "mongrel children" of their "black wives" "with as much care," and work for their well-being "with as much zeal, as if their skins were perfectly white." The other position is with those who fail to see what all the anger is about. The United States, within twenty years, was

to be riven by tensions and divisions that were, so far as Stephens could discern, simply not issues at all in Belize. Though a very serious tension in the United States, with very real consequences for the lives of millions of people, there was also something quite shockingly and absurdly unnecessary (and perhaps even meaningless) in it all.

In Mexico, Poinsett had seen very few people visibly of African ancestry. "That race," he remarks, "is nearly extinct in Mexico. In the capital I saw only three or four, and have not seen more than twenty since I entered the country" (141).[19] As quoted above, Poinsett also considers the effects of the mixing of the African and prior populations in Mexico. While in Mexico this mixing may provide a degree of mobility socially, the degree of mixing in Central America appears to have been much lower, particularly in Guatemala. In Central America especially, the Indian population appears to have been ready for revolt, both as an assertion of their identity--their claim to a particular fiction of freedom--and, interestingly, as a defense of the church against Liberal policies.[20] Their revolt, as Stephens reports it, was intimately connected to a campaign against the "white": represented both by actual bodies and by politically European thought. Reflecting on the native population in Guatemala, where Stephens had most opportunity to interact with the animating figures of the conflict, he notes:

> Naturally peaceable, and kept without arms, the conquered people had remained quiet and submissive during the three centuries of Spanish dominion. In

> the civil wars following the independence they had borne but a subordinate part, and down to the time of Carrera's rising they were entirely ignorant of their own physical strength. But this fearful discovery had now been made. (CA 1: 244)

Stephens's language creates the impression of a sudden explosion at the "moment" of the natives' discovery of their physical and, thereby, political strength. His presupposition of the "[n]aturally peaceable" character of a people, here Central American natives, accentuates the spasmodic quality of their realization. This realization locates the resource or potential for freedom within an identity, but simultaneously within violence, within, that is, the violent expression of an identity: violent expression as the only present possibility for this identity.

Within the conflict that Poinsett and Stephens witness, whether it is possible and, if possible, how someone might go about divorcing political participation from racialized terms are questions not taken up. The order of power in Central America retains a vertical character. The strength within that just mentioned identity, this "fearful discovery," Stephens suggests, rests upon four legs: past greatness, prior ownership, present oppression, and future retribution:

> The Indians constituted three-fourths of the inhabitants of Guatemala. They were the hereditary owners of the soil, and, for the first time since they fell under the dominion of the whites, they were organized and armed under a chief of their own [Carrera], who chose for the moment to sustain the

Central [Conservative] Party.[21] (CA 1: 244-245)

This uprising, while absolutely revolutionary, is not democratic but ethnic. The struggle is not to endow the People with power over their own lives but to endow only a certain kind of people with such power. Carrera's tenuous alliance with the Centralists, while quite suggestive of his, and so, to some extent, the movement's underlying system of values, underscores that this is a struggle between not three groups but two. This is not a struggle in which the Liberals and Conservatives fight over the natives while fighting each other.[22] Instead, the natives are arrayed against the non-natives. "Carrera was talked of as El Rey de los Indios, The King of the Indians" (CA 2: 111). Notions of hierarchy and aristocracy are not transcended. In fact, such absolute distinctions, compounded with the absolute distinctions of race, create an environment in which Stephens finds Carrera "more absolute master of Guatemala than any king in Europe of his dominions, and by the fanatic Indians called el Hijo de Dios, the Son of God, and nuestro Señor, our Lord" (CA 1: 195). The messianic rhetoric is in close relationship with the liberation rhetoric. The indigenous population, under Carrera's leadership, are more than ready "to make a bloody offering to the spirits of their fathers, and to recover their inheritance" (CA 2: 111). Politics and religion, nationalism and eschatology, are bound together and raised as the standard of fanaticism, which knows no peace except in the certain, absolute establishment and dominion of Home.[23]

The agrarian-democratic theory Poinsett subscribes to

places a premium upon individual ownership of land as the key to republican equality and responsibility. Democracy in this sense is quite literally the product of the soil. But this land that is the well-spring of popular rule was not in most cases "virgin land," unclaimed and available for the one from elsewhere to settle and dwell upon it. "[T]he dominion of the whites" had disenfranchised "the hereditary owners of the soil" (CA 1: 186, 1: 244).[24] Three hundred years after the beginnings of Spanish dominion, variables of history (circumstances, a given "thus") are eclipsed by absolutes of History (not thus but "this and no other"). Hereditary owners of the land upon which they dwell, the natives have their heredity and identity through the soil. It is "their inheritance." Their identity, their being, is the product of the soil. Blood and soil are one.

Thus two different strands of identity--political and ethnic--are woven together upon the same ground, becoming one. The rule of the People becomes the rule of a certain sort of people. All others must be debarred, politically and finally. If Carrera could or would not deliver their Destiny, then "the People" would carry out this ultimate exclusion for themselves:

> [I]t was reported that his [Carrera's] followers had renounced his authority and commenced operations on their own account, threatening the city [Guatemala City] with another invasion, determined, according to their proclamations, to exterminate the whites and establish a government of pardos libres (free tigers) and enjoy in their

> own right the lands which had devolved upon them by their emancipation from the dominion of the whites.[25] (CA 1: 186)

This is exclusionary politics through and through, and also reveals the legacy of exclusionary politics: within its own system, it offers no alternative to itself. The history of the desperation of the non-"white" population is suggested here, as well as the zeal of imminent retribution. The importance of land is also emphasized, and its essential role in the production of at least a particular kind of identity. Rather than going to produce an identity subservient to "the dominion of the whites," the non-"white" population, in their emancipation, will turn the land to the production of their own identity, produced for themselves, by themselves. This is what it is to "enjoy in their own right" these lands.

But this "national" self-production carries within it already the desire for self-consumption. It seems almost as if independence is a matter secondary here to identity. The reader is here ushered again into the presence of that familiar pattern where it is the purity of identity (the rites of blood and soil superseding and grounding all "rights") that ensures "freedom." Emerson wrestles with this problem as he ponders the tale of England; Irving offers a critical view of this pattern as he traverses the "debatable ground" at the center of his narrative.

The Native Americans of Guatemala seek to finish their identity by claiming what is "rightfully" theirs, but in what is the legitimacy of this claim? For surely even readers now, as well as Stephens and Poinsett in their time, are

aware of this claim, and at least from an ethical perspective grant that claim some degree of legitimacy. Is it the birthright of blood and soil? the right of use? restitution for oppression? Whatever the case may be, and whatever combination of factors go to make up the "right" by which the earlier people shall "enjoy" the land, Stephens seems to be aware that such a right must be implicit or explicit through a fiction, a narrative of identity which posits a prior freedom (from whites, the oppression of the other) and looks toward the realization now of what is also posited: a future freedom (from the oppression of the other, from whites).

4. Remembering Becoming

Stephens's account of Central America draws more tacitly upon thinking Poinsett makes more explicit: that liberty, to be realized, is dependent upon Land. "Land," however, can be literal, the actual soil, or figurative, the ground of self-representation: either way a reference point or point of measurement. Self-representation seems inadequate to express the various activities (self-expression, self-discovery, self-contemplation) that go toward comprising it. Self-realization might be more apt, yet it suggests an end in completion, full realization, while representation does not end. Further, like consciousness, representation grows and changes in response to circumstances.

Poinsett's concern, and to a certain degree Stephens's as well, is not primarily with his own self-representation, although this is necessarily part of his narrative. Both are more concerned with conditions in Latin America and their

bearing upon the ability of the region's people politically to represent themselves in a democratic way through republican institutions. These are the forms that both travelers implicitly take to be the form of the highest realizable political good. Phrased differently, one of their key concerns is to observe and reflect upon the local and available circumstances or conditions for people to live fulfilling lives, as defined and pursued by these people themselves. The recurring danger Poinsett and Stephens detect lies in the seeming inseparability, really the simultaneity, of what Stella M. González and Carmen G. Blázquez call "an explosion of both hate and joy" (71). Class may supersede race, but this is not to say nor even to suggest that race ceases to be a flashpoint.

Reliance upon a grounding for self-representation seems close to falling back into Spengemann's poetics of domesticity, where a person "has" him- or herself through the act of dwelling: physical possession implying metaphysical. But that grounding was made meaningful through its investment with a principle, as Poinsett's text suggests. Land in itself was not valuable. It was made valuable through what it could be made to produce, through its provision of the means to represent oneself, to experience the possibility of life's fullness. In like manner, then, the grounding of the poetics of domesticity, or even of the poetics of adventure for that matter, is not the essential element. Both, though locating this value differently, share the same value of enjoying life in fullness, certainly the end goal claimed by rhetorics of liberation. The poetics of domesticity finds

this enjoyment within the limits of Home and the image of complete identity established there. The poetics of adventure finds the enjoying in the continual revision of identity called forth through travel: the joy of coming upon opportunities for yet further fullness in unexpected places along the way, places where wonder makes itself felt. Home forestalls wonder, which only arises and thrives in that which cannot be explained away or be adequately ensnared by language. Any system with Home as its goal, its vision and rationale, must at some point commit itself to forestalling wonder. This entails a forgetting of wonder, which may also then be expressed as being infused by Home.

In one of his several reflections upon conflict in Central America, Stephens suggests "[t]he Centralists forgot that civilization is a jealous divinity which does not admit of partition and cannot remain stationary. The Liberals forgot that civilization requires a harmony of intelligence, of customs, and of laws" (CA 1: 155). The common element in both censures seems to be the danger of forgetting the unpredictability of becoming. Civilization is taken as a given, the product of History rather than a result of history. Becoming, though, continually outstrips what identity always struggles to keep up with and contain. The Centralists' political vision appears to wish to detain becoming, arrest it at a certain point: the point at which their supremacy is achieved and all serious rivals broken. In the case of Mexico, "the independence achieved under Iturbide....was...more concerned about the preservation of elite status than the implementation of policies to advance

equality to the masses" (Kirkwood 86).

Yet neither can becoming be cut off from where people and society have been, as if a radically new beginning could be made. This seems to be the political vision of the Liberals, and is entirely consonant with the observation Albert J. Von Frank makes, that "[t]o begin again is the liberal's ultimate dream" (145).[26] Revolution, as the disempowered might use the term--a complete structural change, the substitution of "a new conception of value for that of the ruling class" (Grene 111)--is more or less made impossible within the demands of remembering to which Stephens draws our attention. What he instead implies is a becoming that he understands as organic: development rather than disjuncture.

If Stephens finds himself in a situation where there is much forgetting, he also encounters a remembering in the uprising of people he takes to be the descendants of the Maya. This is a remembering in odd contrast to and complicit with yet another sense of the forgotten, for the Maya are themselves apparently almost totally forgotten. This, Stephens makes plain, was the intention of the policy of the Spanish, a policy that seems largely to have produced the desired effect:

> The pages of the historians are dyed with blood; and sailing on the crimson stream, with a master pilot at the helm, appears the leading, stern, and steady policy of the Spaniards, surer and more fatal than the sword, to subvert all the institutions of the natives and to break up and

> utterly destroy all the rites, customs, and associations that might keep alive the memory of their fathers and their ancient condition. (Yucatán 2: 291)

The blood dyeing "[t]he pages of the historians" is the blood of the natives; but that blood, while quite physical and actual, is also a metaphor for identity, and the bleeding of the natives upon the pages of the historians is the loss of the lifeblood of their particular understanding of their world as well as the sign of their physical death. To "kill" a people, then, is not accomplished through slaughtering them (although this too obviously takes place), but is brought about more inexorably and effectively by that "steady policy...surer and more fatal than the sword," of abolishing and demolishing whatever "might keep alive the memory" of that people's "fathers and their ancient condition." To kill remembrance is a necessary step toward killing hope, whether for a return, a restoration or, more simply, a renewal. Becoming is a remembering, death a forgetting.[27]

This policy was met with resistance, as Stephens also makes plain:

> History, dark as it is on other points, shows clearly enough that this now abject and degraded race did cling with desperate and fatal tenacity to the memory of those ancestors whom they know not now; the records of their conquerors show the ruthless and savage policy pursued by the Spaniards to root this memory from their minds. (Yucatán 2: 167-168)

If history records this policy and its resistance, however, it also records a significant degree of success through that policy, for that clinging "with desperate and fatal tenacity" to the "fathers" and the "ancient condition" of the natives apparently did not withstand, for these are "ancestors whom they know not now." The unusual phrasing ("know not now"), somewhat awkward, seems intentional. It tends to make the reader slow down or stumble, go back over the line, repeat it and, in repeating it, intone again the n-sound of negation within the alliteration.

It is important to recall Poinsett's contention that the "people," those who worked in order to support the ruling class, were deprived of freedom under either political structure: native or Spanish. The only way in which the people shall have their freedom (and through that freedom, perhaps, cease to be a "people" in the way it was just defined) is within a democratic republican system. Both Poinsett and Stephens are plain on this point.

The remembering that facilitates the political unrest, which claims the becoming of the indigenous population when it calls upon the memory of the Maya, is in a sense calling upon nothing. That "memory" itself must largely be reconstructed and thus is, largely, a fiction, a rhetoric aimed at achieving a particular political end. It is not so much the historical Maya (what and whoever they may have been) that are critical here, but the politically expedient "Maya." It is no longer possible to perform any of the rites, have any of the customs, make any of the associations that would identify a person as Maya and, through such

identification, enable such a person to lay claim to the property of the Maya. The Maya are gone and, even if their descendants live on, they are not <u>those</u> Maya. Rites and customs that may have been practiced by the Maya may have come down to these later people, but those rites and customs have undeniably been altered over time, and cannot possibly have been kept intact in their entirety: the ruined and overgrown temples make that much plain. Present oppression, and not past greatness, awakens a "remembering" (of race) and the rhetorics of the moment allow freedom scope only within and through their own construction and utilization of "race."

5. An Undisturbed Existence

Stephens takes great interest in the conditions of those among whom he travels. It is also true that this interest cannot easily be divorced from his marvel at the achievements of the Maya. "[T]he objects we were in search of," Stephens writes, "were not only interesting as the remains of an unknown people, but were works of art as well, proving, like newly discovered historical records, that the people who once occupied the American continents were not savages" (<u>CA</u> 1: 79). Carrying these thoughts further, Stephens envisages a civilization at once different but quite familiar:

> architecture, sculpture, and painting, all the arts which embellish life, had flourished in this overgrown forest; orators, warriors, and statesmen, beauty, ambition, and glory had lived and passed away, and none knew that such things had been, or could tell of their past existence. (<u>CA</u> 1: 80-81)

The "none" Stephens may have in mind may bear further thought. Regardless, all that now "speaks," here, are the works of art, "like newly discovered historical records." These, additionally, are only able to speak to Stephens because he is already familiar with the "language." The epic scope and Greco-Roman turn that Stephens places upon his description of all the things which stir him in considering the significance of what he was uncovering from the "overgrown forest" suggests something of his own value system. That system places a high value upon "art" as evidence of civilization as over against savagery.

Where there is art, his logic seems to say, there is civilization, and where there is civilization there are the familiar roles: orator, warrior, statesman. The parallelism following--"beauty, ambition, and glory"--is striking primarily for the way in which it seems to divide into faculties what, in the classical model Stephens has in mind, could be taken all together. In other words, in the <u>ideally</u> cultivated self (what civilization presents itself as aiming for) orator/beauty, warrior/ambition, and statesman/glory are all bound up together and cannot be extricated one from the other without diminishing the whole. Civic virtue and ethical virtue become one and the same. "Civilization" seems to hold out the promise of an environment in which a person may have the greatest opportunity to fulfill the best that it is possible to become, but it would be well to note here that such "becoming" is undeniably conditioned by the conventions and proprieties of the civilization in question, out of which such an evaluation is made.

As the venerable pattern suggests, it is not possible to keep the three elements balanced, harmonized. In coming back, late in CA, to the beckoning mystery of the Maya, Stephens invokes the course of empire:

> Here were the remains of a cultivated, polished, and peculiar people, who had passed through all the stages incident to the rise and fall of nations, had reached their golden age, and had perished, entirely unknown. The links connecting them with the human family were severed and lost. (CA 2: 302-303)

The ruins themselves speak of the Mayan fall from glory. That most of the ruins are almost completely grown over by, and fast becoming indistinguishable from the landscape suggests the forgetting that is falling over even the memory of the Maya. It seems, in each direction that Stephens turns, he encounters suddenly another trace of the Maya, foliage-embraced, broken, retreating into oblivion.

While such discoveries point to the fallen state, the wonder of continuing human life is forcefully brought to Stephens in moments like the following: "Corn was now growing among the ruins, the ground being used by an Indian family which claimed to be descended from the royal house. In one place was a desolate hut, occupied by them at the time of planting and gathering the corn" (CA 2: 152). The stirrings of his imagination find a focus in such moments of observing the present life of the region's people. Though here the tone of Stephens's language speaks to a sense of diminishment and loss, he also, within the same thought, seeks out that

which abides, in this case the regularized and recurring activity of "planting and gathering the corn." There is a hopefulness and a wonder in that recognition, tinged as it certainly appears to be with a helpless regret.[28]

Such fundamental activity of the maintenance of life, here carried out through cultivation, seems the one necessary ground and the site, despite all the fighting within the cities of Central America, for political change. Stephens, certainly no radical, is ambivalent about Central American politics and the possibility for happiness and freedom in the region. An adherent to an American/European liberal, democratic style of government, such as that to which Poinsett would appear to subscribe, Stephens, like Poinsett, notes the richness of the country several times, and sees in that richness the same potential for political harmony and economic prosperity. "The resources of this distracted country are incalculable," he writes. "Peace and industry would open fountains which would overflow with wealth" (CA 2: 21). This wealth overflow, this abundance, is one of the primary goods delivered through the system Stephens values.[29]

About to leave Palenque, Stephens records:

> Every male inhabitant came to the house to bid us farewell and wish us to return; and before starting we rode around and exchanged adios with all their wives: good, kind, and quiet people, free from all agitating cares, and aiming only at an undisturbed existence in a place which I had been induced to believe the abode of savages and full of danger. (CA 2: 311)

To be disabused of his prior opinion that Central America was "the abode of savages and full of danger," is in a sense also to be relieved of a set of "agitating cares," and so a gesture towards a free intersubjectivity, a meeting, if not clearly between persons of equal privilege, certainly between existents acknowledging each other. The struggles between Centralists and Liberals seems very far away in this moment, but the "undisturbed existence" sought by these villagers does not seem to have been a possibility at the time. All are caught up and carried along in the turmoil, whether they will or no, and that moment of tranquil coexistence, lost to actuality, returns once more to memory as a possibility earnestly to be wished for but seemingly impossible to realize. Thus, the seeds of revolution take deep root, as being-with-others, through loss, memory, anger, is reduced to being-with-my-fellows-against-the-other. Gudmundson quotes the Nicaraguan historian Jerónimo Pérez: "In Nicaragua, without exception, all love the Republic; unfortunately only for themselves, excluding all others" (91). Pérez's observation would appear to hold true more widely for the Mexico and the Central America that Poinsett and Stephens encounter. Possibly--but only possibly--after the storms of angry passion and (self)righteous violence pass, providence may swell once more and grow again.

6. The Turn to Cuba

The consideration of Poinsett and Stephens in Mexico and Central America has dealt in a very focused manner with the way in which they encountered political environments and with

the reflections to which wonder over those environments prompted them. These reflections were not offered as solutions to a situation, but rather as considerations upon the possibilities for those situations. The following consideration of travel narratives of Cuba, limited to the 1850s, attempts to consider how three travelers regarded themselves within what they encounter. Travel to Cuba was, necessarily, undertaken for reasons somewhat different from those which prompted travel to Egypt, or England, the American West, or even Central America. There were no pre-Columbian ruins in Cuba. It was an important island in the Caribbean, certainly, but these travelers did not find in it any sense of a core of culture (though William Henry Hurlbert makes a point of spending some pages discussing some of the poets of Cuba). In a way strikingly like the United States, because of what is taken as its lack of ancient native civilization, an autochthonous heritage, Cuba becomes a place for the present and of the future. Though Cuba had undergone and would again undergo political upheaval, these travelers found it politically relatively quiet. Without these other elements of fascination--antiquity and turbulence--what remained for Cuba to offer these travelers was itself.

While leisure had been for some time a facet of travel narrative, it serves as an impetus to travel in William Henry Hurlbert's and Julia Ward Howe's narratives.[30] They take serious things seriously when confronted with them, but it is the pleasure-element of travel, rather than the labor-element, that is the lens through which they view Cuba. Unlike Poinsett and Stephens, both Hurlbert and Howe wrote as

journalists. Howe, for example, had contracted to supply Atlantic Monthly with regular travel pieces while on her Caribbean trip.[31] It is also true, however, that each includes, as something of an epilogue, a more critical piece on what they gathered during their travel, suggesting the continuing expectation that travel writing would meet a critical call even while supplying "diversionary" reading.

Of the various travel works and locales considered in this study, these texts on Cuba cover the shortest periods of travel: several days, a few weeks at most. In this sense, they risk being the least "useful." They cannot provide any "knowledge" about Cuba, the "real" Cuba. It might be better to say, however, that these texts do not provide the kind of "knowledge" about "Cuba" that some readers might desire. Having said this, the most relevant issue then comes to the fore: what do these texts have to say about their direct object (Cuba) and their indirect object (what occurs to the travel writer to say while "on the ground")?

The epigraph of Hurlbert's Gan-Eden: or, Pictures of Cuba (1854) suggests a potentially rich intersection: "The place was called Gan-Eden, the Garden of Delight; and it belonged to the Caliph Haroun-Al-Raschid, who, when his heart was contracted, used to come to that garden and sit there; so his heart became dilated, and his anxiety ceased." The epigraph comes from "the Tale of Noureddin and the Fair Persian," one of the tales of The Arabian Nights. This drawing upon the Near East makes a remarkable connection, filled out somewhat further in the body of the text, where Hurlbert speculates that "what Leigh Hunt somewhere says is

not unfounded, that the Spanish character is less truly European than that of any other western people" (71).[32] It is perhaps not surprising that the sub-tropical climate and vegetation of Cuba would evoke images of Paradise, and from there a comparison to the Near East, but that invocation brings us strangely full circle.

8. The Lesson of Becoming

Gardens and garden-like spaces figured prominently in the discussion of travel narratives of the Near East: reflections at once upon people, societies, nature, time, identity and freedom. There, the garden could intimate a world and a kind of life outside of the predeterminations of "identity" as certainty. This was not a life in Nature but rather somewhere between nature and identity. This alternate and simultaneous world emerged through the sense of wonder, was engendered by and nurtured in this sense of the providential instability of Knowledge. Becoming, in light of wonder, became open-ended rather than foreclosed. Embracing what that open-ended becoming offered was an act of security. The past revealed that plans for the future were never quite realized, and certainly not in the way intended by the planners. Possibility intervened and interfered.

It is this understanding of and appreciation for possibility which may suggest the value of the exotic in these accounts of Cuba, expressed in part through images of the island as a garden. The vitality radiating from the exotic is the measure of the possibility it evokes, its potential for renovating life. The potential for renovation,

however, is in the same moment counterbalanced by the possibility of attempted appropriation, transformation of the exotic into an object to be possessed rather than a limit of becoming: which, as a limit, can never be possessed.

Hurlbert's narrative begins on a strong if risky note: "Cuba has no history" (1). By this he means that Cuba was not available to the West until Columbus. "Before Columbus all human history in Cuba is blank, after him it is all blood and business" (2). That blankness is not merely a lack of presence in the European imagination. The people living in Cuba at Columbus's arrival would surely have had an oral record of themselves. Hurlbert suggests that, with Columbus, "human history" arrives: "blood and business." The earlier population of Cuba had not been enjoying a prelapsarian so much as a pre-European state. To have been outside of that "History" would have been a blessing indeed. For Hurlbert, though, despite this violent historical track, "[y]et is that fair island a land of sirens to those who know it not; to those who have wandered there, a land of the lotus" (2). "Cuba" presents the danger of being swayed from purpose and, more indirectly but no less importantly, possibly also from History. The Homeric imagery suggests temptation and loss, but also perhaps the responsibility to appreciate those distracting temptations in a strangely engaged and yet distanced way. "Cuba" here, is only a temporary stopping-over point. The greatest risk is to view the surroundings differently, as a possible abode, as Home found Abroad, as an Abroad that may be used to establish Home.

Julia Ward Howe, in the middle of a "savage mood of

criticism" directed against the poor quality of art in Cuba (as opposed, it may be assumed, to that of Italy, or of France), turns to the

> palm-trees...unapproachable in beauty,--they stand in rows like Ionic columns, straight, strong, and regular, with their plumed capitals. They talk solemnly of the Pyramids and the Desert, whose legends have been whispered to them by the winds that cross the ocean, freighted with the thoughts of God. (55)

This surprising passage still, as Hurlbert's, evokes the classical world, but does so not to deprive the Cuban environment of its own identity but to add to that identity by connecting it to a wider world, while still allowing and requiring that it be what, in itself, it is: whatever that may be. Much of what that might be seems expressed in the idea of confident expression, of security, demonstrated by the palms. "The palm tree seems a kind of lusus naturae to the northern eye" Dana muses, "an exotic wherever you meet it. It seems to be conscious of its want of usefulness for food or shade, yet has a dignity of its own, a pride of unmixed blood and royal descent--the hidalgo of the soil" (47). This use of an aristocratic vocabulary, unfortunate in *one* sense because of its reliance upon notions of "purity," nonetheless highlights a crucial characteristic of dignity: an awareness of its own value as itself, rather than as a thing good for something else. Of what possible use is such a tree? It provides no food and it provides no shade. It is not an ideal tree.

What the palm tree does have, and all that it has, is its unjustifiable presence, a presence it did not and of course could not ask for. It is purely its existing. It is wonderful. In this, then, the palm tree, a joke of nature "exotic wherever you meet it," becomes a metaphor for the condition Dana finds himself in and also a figure for the wonder engendered through apprehension of that condition.[33] It would not be going too far to suggest that Dana at this moment in some indirect way recognizes that being is not finally subject to any one particular narrative: the essence of its joke being its transcending, being more than the sum total of words used upon it. Just as the trees transport Howe to a moment in which she, as they, may become attentive to that God-freighted wind (spirit?), so too Dana detects a premonition of being itself in those same trees, those same representations of the limit of being.

Hurlbert considers Cuba in light of but also as it must have been prior to the "blood and business" following Columbus's arrival. Like Dana and Howe, he finds himself thereby encountering being in and because of Cuba. He speaks of a "conspiracy of idleness," an indolence that is, strangely, far from the lotus-eater torpor the reader might have expected:

> Trouble not your brain with studious plans, for this conspiracy of idleness will surely defeat them all! Your indolence is indeed an indolence of incessant thoughts, but of thoughts that glide from the grasp of your will. They flow through your mind like the sap of life through every vein of

> this wonderful vegetable world around you. You are roused at last, only by the gathering sadness which this still stream has borne into your soul. (92)

"The divine South is full of sadness," Hurlbert writes somewhat earlier (78). The thoughts that could provide direction and destination to existence, rhetorics of destiny or History, "glide from the grasp of your will": will, it would seem, the one thing necessary in order to realize thought. This "indolence of incessant thoughts" that "flow through your mind like the sap of life" are thoughts that cannot be detained or shaped through the will and, in a sense, ought then not to be. Though within the mind, these are not quite a person's own thoughts. Rather, they seem, in their impermanence and suggestiveness, almost to be the thoughts of being, thoughts which, in Howe's vocabulary, are called "the thoughts of God." That phrasing opens up two possibilities: "thoughts of God" in the sense of thoughts taking "God" as their subject, and thoughts which, by their nature, belong to or are characteristic of "God."

These thoughts, with their sadness, rouse the subject in the second-person of Hurlbert's paragraph. His use of the second-person is a technique to reflect upon his own reactions, but also serves to address another, and is in that sense a gesture of dialogue. These thoughts serve in place of will, which would perhaps be the thing ordinarily to rouse someone: to activity, to doing, to "studious plans." Will follows the course it charts, self-sustained, self-sufficient. It neither questions nor doubts itself. It does not need a responsive other; it requires a compliant other.

While Hurlbert, because he ends his paragraph with a rousing, most likely intends the word in the sense of a shaking loose, as a person rouses her or himself from a dream, the other use of the word, with an implication of emboldening, also seems available. It is not the "studious plans," then, which finally rouse the recognition of an unjustifiable being-there. Such plans cannot achieve such a state, such an awareness, and are rather set against any such awareness. Instead, the experience of that "gathering sadness" by which "[y]ou are roused at last" accomplishes a mysterious emboldening, offers courage, security.

9. A Question of Justice

Having arrived in Havana and wondering what there was to do, what the sights to be seen, Howe, who often presents episodes of her travel in the third person, records a determination "to find the Havana of the poetical and Gan-Eden people, praying Heaven it may not have its only existence in their brains" (37). Latin America, as experienced by Poinsett and Stephens, had illustrated a contemporary moment of unpredictability and the various agonized ways in which groups attempt to lay hold of and transform that unpredictability of becoming into predictable realization of their (own) essence: the Destiny of their Identity. Cuba would subsequently experience such stirrings but at the time that Hurlbert, Dana, and Howe made their trips, that unrest was a few years in the future.[34] Cuba, then, that garden of Gan-Eden, where tranquility was found and restored to the disturbed, was another Paradise

emphatically lost. An undisturbed existence is necessarily a contradiction, if not an oxymoron. That paradise had never been. It had only been, perhaps, possible. For Hurlbert particularly, any possibility Cuba may have to become a "paradise," a place of freedom (just as the United States), had first to come to terms with slavery, which had grown greatly with the beginning of large-scale sugar cultivation and processing in Cuba.[35]

Although the people of Mexico and Latin America were nominally free, and none could be slaves, Poinsett and Stephens encountered and described systems of debt which seemed almost to replicate the institution of slavery. Dana, of the three travelers to Cuba, is the most explicit about and critical of slavery. Hurlbert and Howe, though, are not blind to it, nor to the role of the United States in Cuban slavery. "The excitement which is sometimes created by the news that a British cruiser has boarded an American vessel in the Cuban waters," Hurlbert pointedly remarks,

> would, doubtless, be considerably mitigated, did our patriotism reflect upon the disgraceful way on which our so-called "national honor" is constantly made to serve as a shield for the pirates of the slave-trade. The frequent advertisement in the Havana journals, of "a new, handsome, and swift American barque, entirely ready for sea," has a meaning easy to be mastered. (195)

Keeping in mind for a moment the role of the British here as at once making an outrageous exercise of power and enforcing their ban on the slave trade, we turn to Julia Ward Howe,

often ready herself to fall into an easy racist rhetoric. She offers a more pessimistic view of international pressure and politics to bring slavery to an end:

> The abstract principles of right and wrong we know, but not the processes, nor the duration of their working out in history. All the white handkerchiefs in Exeter Hall will not force the general Congress of Nations to decide questions otherwise than by the laws of convenience and advantage. England as a power has never lifted a finger nor a breath against Russian serfdom or Austrian oppression; and the Spanish government she is determined to uphold in Cuba is reeking with abominations of which she cannot afford to be cognizant. (235)

This is not to make "history" the process and duration of the working out of these principles (History), although that working out does occur in the course of time. The praiseworthy role of the British in enforcing their ban on the slave trade becomes open to a closer examination into the mixed motives behind it. Justice is not the sole factor or even, perhaps, the primary factor. Where England does take a stand, it is because taking that stand in that place is, to use Howe's phrasing, convenient and advantageous to England. This cynicism would perhaps seem to damn the possibility of any ethical action, but it might be better to say the possibility of any pure and disinterested ethical action.

This view of English use of power seems to go hand-in-hand with Howe's gradualist position on abolition. Mary H.

Grant records Howe's taking up of abolitionism as a result of the activities of her husband, Samuel Gridley Howe, one of the "Secret Six" who funded John Brown. Julia Ward Howe's first cause was women's rights, and abolitionism, it would appear, she did not see as integral to that cause. There are other reasons, however, for Howe's less than fervent abolitionism. As Grant notes: "[b]ecause her South Carolina relatives were slaveholders, she had been brought up to regard the system as a beneficent one" (130). It is also certainly true, as Grant goes on to state, that "[h]er abolitionist fervor was, in the Caribbean climate, seriously dampened by racism" (132). There are painfully blatant examples of this in what Howe has to say about the blacks of Nassau, but the more revealing moments are those where her racism does not so crudely occlude her observations.

Such a moment occurs in what she has to say about one of the slaves she comes across in Cuba, whom the reader knows only by the name Alexander. "His proud, impatient nature is little suited to his position, and every day brings some new account of his petulant outbreaks" (120). These "outbreaks" immediately are seen as instances of the desire to break out of slavery, "petulant" though they appear to Howe to be. The use of "petulant" makes Alexander out to be child-like, or wild. The word also, however, suggests useless resistance to what must for the time be endured. Readers of Uncle Tom's Cabin (published eight years earlier) may be familiar with this kind of thinking. Moreover, Howe appears to be musing over the assumption that nature ought to match position, that position ought to be an expression of nature, rather than a

subversion of aspiration. Howe's position here as racist seems oddly ambivalent, since it is not easy to conceive of a "proud, impatient nature" as belonging to another who is necessarily and irrevocably inferior. There is something too heroic about such a nature, conventionally romantic and tragic though that particular heroism might be. Still, Alexander's difference is not far to seek, even though for Howe he in many ways is quite similar, quite familiar:

> He is trying to buy his own freedom, and has something saved towards it. He looks as if he would do good service, with sufficient training. As it is, he probably knows no law, save the two conflicting ones, of necessity and his own wild passions. One of the sad thoughts we shall carry away from here will be that Alexander is to be sold, and his spirit broken. (120-121)

This last remark is prompted by Alexander's mistress, who constantly threatens to do this. "[S]ufficient training" is a crucial phrase here, as it also is for Howe's racism. Caught inescapably between "the two conflicting" laws of "necessity" and "wild passions" posed by Howe's rhetoric, Alexander can only be freed through "training" to another law. This would here be understood as much to mean being trained to reflection, and even patience in reflection, as it would training to a skill. Evidence of this training is implicit in his efforts to purchase his freedom, through whatever trade it is he happens to practice. This training, Howe appears to suggest without saying, can only come about as a result of the intervention of Alexander's owners, or of

owner society more generally. All this is quite familiar: a standard apology for imperialism, "the white man's burden."

"The enslaved race too, gradually conquering the finer arts of its masters, will rise up to meet the hand of deliverance, having in due course of time reached that spiritual level at which enslavement becomes impossible" (Howe 234). That "spiritual level," it is tempting to conjecture, would for Howe be the "human," the attainment of which level a reader might also detect in what she has to say regarding the views of Sismondi: "Nor will it much longer afford, let us hope, that the human tool shall work without the advantage that individual will and interest alone can give him" (235), a comment sparked by Sismondi's observation that "the idleness of the freed blacks" is attributable "to their entire want of interest in the landed property about them" (234).[36] This calls to mind the observations of Poinsett and Stephens regarding the distribution of land and the exercise of political rights among the people of Mexico and Central America.

10. Invalids

Howe's racism, censurable as it is, was hardly unusual for the time. More surprising are those moments in which these travelers appear to set aside unapologetic racism. This is why a short sentence Grant writes with respect to the Civil War is so ironically devastating when applied in the context of Howe's gradualism. Grant writes that "[t]he blood of men and women was a high price to pay for loyalty to an idea" (138). In the context of Grant's study, this is a

criticism of the human cost of the war itself, as well as the grounds for criticism of that war and all war. What this criticism seems to leave out (oddly) is the "blood" of the slaves themselves, shed for hundreds of years, not just five, "for loyalty to an idea": be that idea as extreme as white supremacy or as "respectable" as agrarian democracy as ultimately appropriated to the plantation system.

Identity, a recurring concept throughout this study, here may be spoken of as a person's relation to an idea, an idea of the human, whether expressed as an "is" or an "ought." This is the crux, the key difficulty, because the understanding of the travelers encountered in this study has been caught between these verbs, these visions. Dana's To Cuba and Back expresses this situation in slightly different terms. Considering "the political state and prospects of Cuba," Dana begins with a simple groundwork: "Of those who are governed by principle, each man's expectation or plan will depend upon the general opinion he entertains respecting the nature of men and of society" (130). From this idea, the rest (that is, any given person's interpretation of events and desires for the future) follows; of course there are several ideas, governing principles, and more than one can be present and in interaction with each other within an individual. The voyage readily becomes available as a metaphor for existence, which is always an existence with others, in their mystery as well as in their possibility for the mundane. Dana illustrates this existential "vagrancy" at the beginning of his narrative:

> A motley group are the passengers. Shivering

> Cubans, exotics that have taken slight root in the hothouses of Fifth Avenue, are to brave a few days of sleet and cold at sea, for the palm trees and mangoes, the cocoas and orange trees, they will be sitting under in six days, at farthest. There are Yankee shipmasters going out to join their "cotton wagons" at New Orleans and Mobile, merchants pursuing a commerce that knows no rest and no locality; confirmed invalids advised to go to Cuba to die under mosquito nets and be buried in a Potter's Field; and other invalids wisely enough avoiding our March winds; and here and there a mere vacationmaker, like myself.[37] (3)

Whether the "merchants pursuing a commerce that knows no rest and no locality," or the "exotics that have taken slight root," everyone included here participates in a peculiar invalidity. Each travels to take something into themselves, whether vicissitudes of profit and loss, "home," imminent death, or, as the "vacationmaker," the variety of existence: the wonder of this unaccountable "is." The invalidity of each, their "dis-ease," is brought home to them in that variety of existence, revealing in that very variety, malleability, and difference, a lack of justification for their own existence. This is not a doubt of the potential meaningfulness of an individual existence. It is a pervasive doubt in counterpoint with a wonderful security as to the necessity of that existence: being freed from History.

The disjuncture between necessity and meaning is well illustrated in the above quote by the "confirmed invalids

advised to go to Cuba to die under mosquito nets and be buried in a Potter's Field," but also by the "mere vacationmaker." The only necessity, and one that does not require the services of a philosopher to point out, is the necessity of imminent death. It is easy to neglect that this transition may also be regarded as death itself, because such a thought seems morbid through and through. American society, as Marjorie Grene neatly observes, is "a society whose cult is to forget all unpleasantness and therewith most realities, a society in which 'till death do us part' becomes 'as long as we live'" (28). To be aware of this journey to death is to be in keeping with a potent phrase of John Macquarrie, when he says the human existent "is always old enough to die" (197).

On the one hand, such thinking seems alien to the apparent optimism of the United States in the antebellum period, to the campaign of "go ahead." On the other hand, consciousness of death in the nineteenth century might have been more acute than with us, for they were very often generally closer to death than we are now. With much greater frequency, difficult to imagine today, children died. Women died in childbirth. People full of promise died long before any of that promise could be realized. Fevers and tuberculosis, pneumonia and influenza ran their own course, minimally affected by medical care. People died in their homes surrounded by their family, rather than in hospital rooms surrounded by monitors. This is not to say that death and attitudes towards it were not conventionalized. But the "mere vacationmaker," like the "confirmed invalid" who goes

to Cuba with his or her death, is suddenly called to necessity and to responsibility in a way that cannot be easily forgotten. This traveling is a movement that exposes Dana to suffering. Change, difference--these things also, past a particular point, become aspects of suffering. Certainty aims to bring suffering to an end. The responsibility for life may be said to begin, and not just for Dana here, when there is acceptance of death: suffering, difference, change, possibility, security.

It is in light of this that a passage from Hurlbert takes on a peculiar life of its own. "If a man is left alone with his ailing consciousness, unable to comprehend the life going on around him, brought into none but mercenary relations with his fellow-creatures, and cannot run away; a sick deer in a strange herd, what can he do but die?" (136). The phrase "fellow-creatures" bears several understandings, each of which, combined, suggests the confused intricacy of existence: perhaps felt at home, but brought home through travel. "Fellow" creatures, Hurlbert's words suggest, must first of all be in some way like oneself. There is something that unites such beings, something in common, and thus some community. Like does not conflict with but coexists with like, and so one ought to be in harmony with one's fellow creatures. But the peculiarity of this community is that its members are "brought into none but mercenary relations" with each other. Instrumental relations begin to but cannot fully capture what is meant. The object quality predominates over the subject quality. To be a subject, etymologically considered, is to be subject to something. Hurlbert suggests

our subjectivity is to what we cannot control or comprehend: the "life going on around" us, or our "fellow-creatures"--the subjects with whom and to whom we are subjected.

The only "exit" from this pervasive subjection is death: "what can he do but die?" Recalling the foregoing argumentation, this "dying" may be seen as an acceptance of death, an acceptance that enables life. To die, here, is to become able to live with an "ailing consciousness." That discovery does not commend a person to resignation, to inaction or a withdrawal from life, but rather to a resolution to action, to live. In political terms, Hurlbert makes this plain when he insists:

> Slavery is everybody's business. It must be attended to thoughtfully and reasonably, like all other business, but the safety and hope of mankind are lodged in the freedom and force of private opinion, and the true spirit of a Christian civilization makes every man a missionary, to contend in his way and measure, against every wrong which he sees and feels in a world full of wrongs. (188)

Revolutions will occur, bringing their changes of fortune, their promises, visionary identities, and their failures. It would seem, though, that the true revolution, the revolution within, is yet to happen. This is not a political revolution. Hurlbert invokes the missionary because mission (call) is here to be a person "to contend in his way and measure, against every wrong which he sees and feels in a world full of wrongs." That world of wrongs will not soon be

exhausted of its wrongs. Like that "sick deer in a strange herd," despair is not unexpected. The answer of outward revolution (certainty, identity, and History), though, is not the answer to this despair, this profound question. Home does not supply the material of paradise, nor does Abroad. The deer feels its homelessness: this is its disease, its despair. Abroad will not provide the solution. What these writers encounter, more quickly or more gradually, is an apprehension that the wrongful world is at one and the same time a wonderful world, and thus they go beyond the missionary's consciousness.

Howe has a premonition of the revolution within. "The enfranchisement of a race," she writes, "where it is lasting, is always accomplished by the slow and solid progress of the race itself. The stronger people rarely gives Freedom to the weaker as a boon,--when they are able, they rise up and take it with their own hands" (215). Written specifically with slavery and its end in mind, and certainly written from and espousing a politically "safe" position, Howe's observation seems simultaneously to have a wider application and relevance. Visions and plans and blueprints will come and go, but when a change does take place, it will have been because the conditions (external and internal) were right for the change. Howe's belief may endorse endurance, but hardly seems to endorse action. Yet to say this is to forget that endurance is itself action.

11. Certain Revolution and Wondering Resolution

Dana, describing the processing of sugar cane on Cuban plantations, finds in it an image of existence not far different from Hurlbert's sick deer:

> This is the way of the world, as it is the course of art. The cane is made to destroy itself. The ruined and corrupted furnish the fuel and fan the flame that lures on and draws in and crushes the fresh and wholesome; and the operation seems about as mechanical and unceasing in the one case as in the other. (58)

For "the way of the world" and "the course of art," a reader might substitute "being." The alluring flames seem in one sense the medium of transformation, the unending interaction between being and nonbeing, and thus there is the possibility of something affirmative here. Yet the note of resignation certainly brings the nature of that affirmation under scrutiny. To be transformed here is also to be utterly consumed. It is the loss, "mechanical and unceasing," of several things: innocence, clearly, but also integrity, both in the moral and in the psychological sense. In short, it is not at all clear to Dana, observing the crushing of sugar cane on a plantation in Cuba, that being, living, has any connection whatsoever to any narrative of Progress or History. This calls to mind the earlier question, found in Poinsett, of whether there was any necessary connection between civilization and democracy: human mechanisms, human ends. That question was there answered in the negative, as it would also appear to be here. There is no sensibly

discernible profound meaningfulness in the process, nor an end that would be a final destruction (overcoming) of the process. There is the incomprehensible but alluring flame and the disturbingly "mercenary" relation between that flame, the "ruined and corrupted," and "the fresh and wholesome."

There are keen tensions in this passage. To be "fresh and wholesome" seems as if it ought to be good, yet it is a state impossible to maintain, as if to remain in such a state would be to be untouched by being itself. That innocence and integrity of the fresh and wholesome, then, becomes repugnant, even if lamented when lost. The repugnance consists in the fact that the innocence and integrity of the fresh and wholesome is not suited to being: it places itself above or beside being, rather than within it. Yet the only available alternative to the fresh and wholesome is the "ruined and corrupted." The ruined and corrupted are consumed in the flame which will "process" the fresh and wholesome even as it consumes the processed. It is as if neither ever touches the other. They only meet, as it were, in the flame. Both positions or conditions are somehow separately and of themselves untenable. The fresh and wholesome and the ruined and corrupted are both equally repugnant to being. Only the flame suits it, but the flame does not explain itself.

This metaphor suggests itself when Dana comes to consider "the political state and prospects of Cuba" (130). He contends that any such consideration will necessarily be colored for each person by "the general opinion he entertains respecting the nature of men and of society," as has been

mentioned earlier. He then goes on to take two examples, which might, in light of the discussions of this chapter, be termed the examples of revolution and resolution. Those who hold to revolution are "impatient," and understandably so:

> No wonder such a one is impatient of the inactivity of the governed masses, and is in a constant state of surprise that the fraud and violence of a few should always prevail over the rights and merits of the many--when they themselves might end their thraldom by a blow, and put their oppressors to rest--by a bare bodkin! (131)

The example of resolution, on the other hand, considers

> that human nature is so constituted that the actual condition of civil society in any place and nation is, on the whole, the fair result of conflicting forces of good and evil--the power being in proportion to the need of power, and the franchises to the capacity for using franchises; that autocrats and oligarchs are the growth of the soil; and that every people has, in the main, and in the long run, a government as good as it deserves.... (131)

This latter opinion causes the person who holds it to "hesitate as to the invention and application of remedies" (131). These two views might be called idealism and realism, but to do so exposes the inadequacy of such terms. This inadequacy in turn underlines the untenability of either position in relation to human existing: neither finally can do full justice to it. Dana does not deny that "remedies"

will be invented and applied, nor does he censure any such activity. The "idealist" position, however, is a desire for the future, in light of which the present and all those occupying it become instruments. The future is desired because there, ultimately, is where freedom reigns, but more immediately the desire is for a return (though not by way of a retrogression) to integrity. The idealist view desires freshness and wholesomeness: the integrity of purity, eternal and free. But the fresh and wholesome was repugnant to being. The fresh and wholesome cannot conceive other than itself. To do so would be never to have had that freshness and wholesomeness at all (in the way desired). The idealist view, as portrayed in the quote above, involves a loss of consciousness, the stasis of purity. The revolutionary expresses this recognition, consciously or not, in the insistence upon an identity for freedom: his or her own plan. These words "fresh" and "wholesome," then, are suddenly metaphors for exclusion, fine-sounding principles for a much more problematic practice.

The example of resolution, ironically, finds no identity for freedom but is instead aware of the radical freedom of existing: the lack of necessity, of justification.
Yet this freedom is everywhere, to a greater or lesser degree, repressed. Ruin and corruption are the starting point and the endpoint. The flame is between, all-inclusive. It is ruin and corruption, not freshness and wholesomeness, which are the material for creation. Along one course, that awareness becomes the reference point for the sensation of homelessness. While revolutionary certainties, in response

to that sensation, envision the abolition of ruin and corruption, resolved security rules out nothing. This nothing is meant here in two senses: first, the "nothing" of the fresh and wholesome--necessarily outside of being--second, resolved security sees everything within being as possible: being as uniquely the field for possibility. "[E]very people has, in the main, and in the long run, a government as good as it deserves." The added emphasis draws out possibility, the hope and action of wonder. Wonder requires no one course of action in response to the challenge of human existing. Wonder does not say what must be done to have life. Wonder, occurring for each life, enjoins life.

Notes to the Introduction

[1] More broadly, the subject of travel itself has a somewhat fuller bibliography, including Robert E. Spiller's American In England, During the First Half Century of Independence (1926), Philip Rahv's Discovery of Europe: The Story of American Experience in the Old World (1947), Cushing Strout's American Image of the Old World (1963) and Foster Rhea Dulles's Americans Abroad: Two Centuries of European Travel (1964). Many of these studies turn to travel books (Rahv's is an anthology that uses excerpts from travel narratives), but do not primarily study the genre itself.

[2] Though it came just after the publication of Said's work, the brief moment of critical activity in travel writing just overviewed cannot be said to have resulted from that work's publication.

[3] For example, the historical "imperialist arc" of each country, as well as the American experience as a colony of England.

[4] This is certainly not to suggest that an awareness of human suffering plays no part in the narratives taken up in what follows: quite the opposite. The difference consists in how that suffering is encountered and accommodated. The very fact that the attempt is made in these narratives to accommodate suffering may be a significant point of difference from much current criticism.

[5] Joshua David Bellin, in his study of the role of the Indian in the development of American literature (2001), also appears to recognize the need for another perspective when he

discusses the benefits of an "intercultural approach." Such an approach recognizes "that the 'text' and the 'real' are not opposed but interrelated" (9).

[6] The conversation about authenticity is at the core of arguments over the real or illusory distinction to be made between traveler and tourist, travel and tourism. Jeffrey Alan Melton's introductory material in his study of Twain's travel books (2002) may serve as a recent example of the "anti-authenticity" camp. Larzer Ziff's Return Passages: Great American Travel Writing, 1780-1910 (2000) may serve as a recent example of the "pro-authenticity" camp. The caveat in all this is that "authenticity" must be understood in terms of individual change and growth: the capacity of experience to encourage personal revision. See what may be considered starting points in the recent study of travel (and travel writing): Dean MacCannell's The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class (1976) and Spengemann's The Adventurous Muse: The Poetics of American Fiction, 1789-1900 (1977).

[7] This value of change is the key point in studies of travel writing, the earlier and the more recent. Spengemann brings his study to rest where the traveler embraces change in embracing possibility. The Adventurous Muse opens noting that one of the most significant changes heralding modernity is "the meaning of change itself" (1). "Out of the earliest American discoveries...," he writes,

> there developed the feeling that the truest picture of the world is not a static, emblematic map viewed from heaven but a temporal progression of scenes viewed through the eyes of someone who

> simultaneously brings the landscape into being by perceiving it and comes into being himself by responding to it as he moves through it on the ground. (6-7)

Ziff follows Spengemann in this core assertion: the traveler's "individuality is, as it were, thrust upon him, and as a result the written account of what he sees and does serves inevitably to affirm the self he has discovered in the process of moving among strangers" (7). Although Spengemann does not give a name to it, that "feeling" signals his understanding and use of the sense of wonder. The development of that feeling--importantly, a feeling of simultaneity--is inseparable from "a progressive erosion of judgment by experience." This erosion significantly complicates the ordinary process: the derivation of "judgment from experience" (Spengemann 43).

[8] Nigel Leask argues that "travel writing's focus on 'first impressions' rather than philosophical comparison rendered it hospitable to wonder and curiosity long after these discourses had been rationalized out of existence in other areas of knowledge" (48). Travel writing becomes a refuge for wonder over the course of the period (1770-1840) Leask studies.

[9] Spengemann reflects the critical practice Melton identifies here. Spengemann's interest is not so much in travel writing as in the American romance as it develops out of the conventions of travel writing. Thus, while in many ways an informative and elucidating study, the impression tends to linger that travel writing for him is most valuable

as a precursor to the mid-nineteenth century American novel, rather than as something especially worthy in its own right.

[10] Caesar should not be misunderstood. Despite the increase of interest in travel writing, travel texts have not generally played a large role in courses on American literature. Americans in one sense seem never to leave "America," a point Melton makes as well when he contends that "the main goal of the narrative tour is to heighten one's love for home" (57). Further, as I understand him, Caesar suggests that American discourse has largely been concerned with those who come to America rather than with those who leave. Exceptions seem to "prove the rule," as narratives of leaving very often are (or are at least treated as) reactions to a "mainstream" discourse of American promise and superiority. Ann K. Douglas writes that what canonical authors have tended to do is to turn "their sights principally on values and scenes that operated as alternatives to cultural norms" (5).

[11] Compare Brooks to Ziff, more than a half-century later: "In scope, wealth of incident, and significance of detail, Stephens's narratives remain unsurpassed by the books of travel of any other American" (11). In language reminiscent of these commendations, Melton quotes Richard Bridgman regarding the requirements of travel writing: "curiosity, a reactive intelligence, and stamina" (3).

[12] Ziff identifies John Ledyard's Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean and in Quest of a North-West Passage (1783) as the first American travel book (as opposed to colonial American travel book, such as Sarah

Kemble Knight's Journal, written in 1704 but published in 1825). Among other critics, Robert E. Spiller offers Benjamin Silliman's Journal of Travels in England, Holland, and Scotland, and of Two Passages Over the Atlantic, in the Years 1805 and 1806 (1810) as candidate for the title.

[13] Adams is likewise sensitive to the connotations of "evolution." For his own work, "'evolution' means simply change, formation of a new species from old, and not progression toward a more advanced species" (Travel Literature 24).

[14] Batten notes the emergence in England "[d]uring the 1760s and 1770s" of "a new principle of selection, variously termed 'men and manners,' 'manners and customs,' 'character and manners,' or some synonymous expression" (96). By "the opening decades of the nineteenth century, two kinds of accounts achieved prominence: the purely entertaining travel book and the instructive travel guide" (Batten 29-30). Leask points to the same phenomenon (43). "[P]urely entertaining" should be taken to mean just that conveying facts and travel tips is not the primary purpose. Leask contends that, by around the 1820s, English "[t]ravel books were evacuated of scientific or scholarly specificity, and increasingly came to privilege authorial 'egotism' and entertaining reflections, often motivated by pious, patriotic, and imperialistic ideologies" (7). A similar, though not identical, pattern may be discerned in American travel texts.

[15] Issues of slavery, U.S. imperialism, decolonization, and nationalism, are at the center of the works of, for example, Robert J. Allison, Schueller, and Bruce A. Harvey.

In Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature (1978), Batten makes a remark similar to Adams's, when he notes that "[d]escriptions from travel accounts served as some of the most powerful ammunition in the century's theological battles over the pagan gods, natural religion, and human nature" (1).

[16] When read strictly within the limits of a writer's body of work, travel texts seem frequently to be relegated to third rank, behind fiction and criticism. Yet it is also true that a work such as Our Old Home is often read (when it is read) because Hawthorne wrote it, rather than because it is about England and Scotland. The same could be said for many of the other travel texts by known writers included in what follows. The point is that these texts will here be compared with each other, rather than with novels, stories, or criticism by the authors in question.

[17] This perhaps initially seems a small number, considering overall population, but it is not after all an insignificant number, particularly as it grows over time. A very reasonable if rough estimate of the total number of travelers over this thirty year period is 180,000.

[18] The "project" of travel narrative, understandably, is frequently taken to be the representation of the foreign (see for example Spurr 10-11, Leask 9). This contention, however, does not perhaps go quite far enough: subtending the representation of the foreign is the continual demand of the "subject-matter" for an altered perspective, a change of expectation. Where the critical emphasis is frequently upon the political consequences of such representation, I intend

to consider the consequences of encounter upon consciousness.

[19] Indeed, in his later study, Adams notes the "advice," given "about 1700 by the well-traveled François Misson: 'In proportion as one moves from country to country, one has the opportunity to note how in all things diversity reigns in the world'" (Travel Literature 192).

[20] The corollary is that the non-West is of interest and use only to the extent it offers itself (or can be made to) as the savior of the West. The power has not, in fact, changed hands here: The West yet demands a particular something that it desires from the non-West, and makes no secret of its (symbolic) ability to make the non-West "fulfill" that desire.

[21] Leask begins his study by delineating two senses of the word "curiosity" as used during the period of his study (1770-1840). The first is a pejorative sense: a trifle or oddity, an aberration. Of greater significance for him is the second sense, where curiosity "denotes an inclination to knowledge which will lead the observer to a rational, philosophical articulation of foreign singularities" (4). This, to a particular extent, is to follow the Cartesian formulation of wonder (which word Leask tends to use interchangeably with curiosity), of which more will be said shortly.

[22] It is here worth noting Batten's point that by the end of the eighteenth century, "significant amounts of autobiographical material had become integral parts of many travel accounts, making them seem increasingly like memoirs"

(79). Thus, change and learning (presumably themes of autobiography and memoir, no matter their particular relation to change and learning) become an integral feature of the travel book. Tourists, then, may very well not actually change or "learn" anything: they are not necessarily traveling for that reason. The travel writer's consciousness and sophistication of involvement with the material, however, is a requirement that necessarily dwells upon and conveys change, no matter how subtle, within that consciousness, brought about by that engagement.

[23] Bellin writes that

> the realness of persons or cultures in contact cannot be seen as opposed, superordinate, or ancillary to the contact situation; the realness of persons or cultures in contact is inextricable from, and must be sought in, the discourses of conflict, accommodation, and interchange that characterize encounter and its texts. (9)

Considering travel writing, then, the "realness" of encounter would seem to be a matter intimately imbricated with the "contact situation," which here would mean the narration itself as much as the meetings between existents.

[24] James Clifford writes a variation on this theme of travel's role in the transformation of society and social consciousness in Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century (1997).

[25] Schriber's understanding of home and transformation should be seen in conjunction with her thoughts about the changing role of the artist during the nineteenth century

"from that of the teacher actively communicating with the people...to that of an enlightener of the already enlightened" (169). In her phrase "actively communicating with the people," Schriber does not appear to consider whether "the people" being "actively" communicated with have any actual interest in the lesson of the teacher, or whether they even hear, understand or act upon the lesson in appropriate ways--"appropriate" itself a term needing some further inquiry.

Schriber almost certainly has Sir Philip Sidney's "Apology for Poetry" in mind, where he criticizes the philosopher because "he teacheth obscurely, so as the learned only can understand him; that is to say, he teacheth them that are already taught" (149). In contrast, "[o]nly the poet...lifted up with the vigor of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature" (145).

[26] The substantives of this discourse, it would seem, need as much scrutiny as those Spurr points to through Barthes (see Spurr 31).

[27] This language also evokes Spengemann's comments on the potential effects of travel upon consciousness, although he does not go on to emphasize the imperative of social transformation.

[28] Bellin advocates an "intercultural literary criticism," by contending that such criticism "argues that it is precisely through intimate, rich, dynamic interactions among multiple peoples that American literature exists at

all" (5).

[29] Frequently, however, this vantage is not given a chance fully to develop. Sam Keen observes that "[i]t is too often assumed that the mysterious is equivalent to the unknown and that, in light of adequate knowledge, mystery will give way to clarity. Such a view equates mystery and ignorance" (25). Fisher's Wonder, the Rainbow, and the Aesthetics of Rare Experiences (1998) tends at times to overlook this point.

[30] A current critical maneuver, employed to different degrees (by Spurr and Schueller, for example), is to take and apply this same criterion to "the ensemble of human relations" by which the temple exists, certainly in the past, but more importantly in what would here be the present of Stephens's narrative. This is to speak of, or to recover, the "materiality," the "actuality" of the situation: the "reality" over against which Stephens attempts to "impose" his "fiction."

[31] Lucian, a second-century Syrian, prefaces his True History with a caveat: "do not believe a word I say" (4). He explains his motive for travel: "Mere curiosity. I just felt I needed a change, and wanted to find out what happened the other side of the Ocean, and what sort of people lived there" (5). Sir John Mandeville (a fiction himself), commenting on both his work and human nature, notes "[f]or many men han gret likyng to here speke of struange thinges of dyuerse contreyes" (15). Indeed, "in its own day [the late fourteenth century]," remarks M. C. Seymour, "Mandeville's Travels was the most popular secular book in circulation"

(xx). In his Introduction to Polo's Travels, Ronald Latham suggests "[t]he book can be enjoyed by the modern reader, as it was by the contemporary, for its own sake, as a vivid description of a fantastic world so remote from his own experience that it scarcely matters whether he thinks of it as fact or fiction" (7).

[32] This is true not only for current criticism. Leask suggests that "[t]he unshackling of wonder from 'rational' curiosity may...have contributed to the demotion of travel writing from the status of 'philosophical' discourse to the realm of belles-lettres in the period under consideration" (29-30). Spurr at one point insists that he has no argument with the facts reported in the journalistic pieces he discusses (91). His interest, as he phrases it some pages earlier, "is to analyze analysis" (61).

[33] It is worthwhile to keep in mind Wermuth's implicit distinction between the form and substance of "culture," though the term must be approached and handled with caution and care, as it tends to get caught up inextricably in narratives of superiority and inferiority, and in that way is used to measure inclusion and mete out exclusion. Yet it should also be noted that, evidenced by the OED, long before "culture" had the sense of customs or artistic achievement (c. 1867), or the intellectual element of civilization (c. 1805), it was used and understood as early as 1510 to mean the "development of mind; improvement by education." It is probably no coincidence that this word enters English during the Renaissance.

[34] The expropriation of others is a note echoed in

Georges Van Den Abbeele, Travel as Metaphor: From Montaigne to Rousseau; in Buzard, The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918, and also in Spurr and Stowe. Consider, for example, Van Den Abbeele's contention that "tourists accumulate 'cultural experiences' that then increase their social value within their home communities" (xvii), or Buzard's comment:

> [a]s long as European travel--or 'travel', in the value-laden sense--commanded a price in the cultural markets of Britain and America, tourists would remain strongly motivated to press claims of having witnessed essential, symbolic qualities of the places they visited. (212)

Stowe has a rather more difficult relationship to the expropriation aspect, as becomes particularly clear in his discussion of Margaret Fuller's Roman letters.

[35] Said, drawing heavily upon Foucault, relies upon ideas of institutionalization and professionalization. Professional study and the production of the sort of regulated, reviewed, and approved "knowledge" that can only occur within and by virtue of the profession is not quite the background the travelers considered here (e.g., Hawthorne, Bayard Taylor, Julia Ward Howe) bring with them. Leask, discussing British travel works, suggests that in many of the texts he studies "the systematic protocols of natural history, antiquarian curiosity, and Taste...coexist in loose solution, reflecting the 'predisciplinary' nature of the genre itself" (48). The miscellaneous character of the travel text is frequently noted in the criticism, and the

texts that will be taken up in what follows certainly demonstrate this quality, this "predisciplinarity."

The response of a critic such as Spurr could very well be that "Westerners" are complicit in the production and dissemination of professional knowledge, no matter what they write or how they engage in any particular discourse. "The question that matters for this study," he says of his work, "is, finally, not how one literary form differs from another, but how writing works, in whatever form, to produce knowledge about other cultures" (10-11). The point I would make is that, past a certain point, travel texts are not finally concerned with producing that knowledge.

[36] Recall for a moment the nature of Brooks's evaluation of Stephens.

[37] This is an observation in keeping with such studies as the late Van Wyck Brooks work The Dream of Arcadia: American Writers and Artists in Italy, 1760-1915 (1958) and Joy S. Kasson's Artistic Voyagers: Europe and the American Imagination in the Works of Irving, Allston, Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne (1982). A deep rootedness, such as that ostensibly or perhaps actually found elsewhere, is not common in the United States: a traditional observation and point of departure in American literature. Philip Fisher uses a particularly apt phrase to express one aspect of this condition of homelessness in his Still the New World: American Literature in a Culture of Creative Destruction (1999). He mentions the "polyglot and minimally shared world" of people in the United States, the division between generations (among other groups) caused by life's continual

transformations.

[38] One need but glance at the titles of critical texts on travel (most of which have already been mentioned in this introduction) to see the frequency with which "home" and/or "abroad" appear.

Notes to Chapter One

[1] Porter was raised in Baltimore and was later a long-time resident of Pennsylvania (see Long's biography). One of the most prominent officers of the early United States Navy, for a time he was one of the three Navy Commissioners. In 1831 he was appointed charge d'affaires at Constantinople. As a naval officer, he was perhaps more well-traveled than the great majority of his fellow citizens. Van Wyck Brooks, in his World of Washington Irving (1944), notes that "[b]ecause of their wide-ranging travels the American naval officers were unusually cultivated men" (223).

He had been a prisoner for a year and a half in Tripoli early in his career. He had published a book on his South Pacific voyages made during the War of 1812, and had spent time in the Caribbean, first fighting pirates for the US, and then fighting Spain while in de facto command of the Mexican Navy (1826-1829).

[2] Von Hagen comments that this school "managed to turn out, in the course of a half-century, two vice presidents, sixteen senators, fifty members of Congress, two Supreme Court justices, ten governors, five cabinet members, and countless judges, lawyers, businessmen, artists, and writers with," he makes a point of adding, "the stamp of New England

upon them" (17). "Among the students of the Litchfield Law School who were connected with literature," writes Van Wyck Brooks, "were John C. Calhoun, Augustus Longstreet, George Catlin and John Lloyd Stephens" (80n).

[3] Bayard Taylor was even younger than Stephens (a decade younger) when he departed on his first trip to Europe, which would lead to his Views A-Foot; or, Europe Seen with Knapsack and Staff (1848), when nineteen. Taylor did not attend college but, as Wermuth observes, this European trip "was his Grand Tour and a substitute for a college education" (17). It must be added, however, that Taylor always considered what he saw as his lack of higher education a grave drawback to real and lasting accomplishment. His work during his final years--a translation of Faust and an intended biography of Goethe and Schiller--were to correct that perceived lack of scholarship.

[4] I shall abbreviate the titles of Stephens's works: Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and the Holy Land (EAPHL); and Incidents of Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland (GTRP). I shall abbreviate the works of Bayard Taylor in this way: Journey to Central Africa (JCA); Lands of the Saracen (LS). The term Arabia Petræa ("stony") comes from the ancient geographer Strabo, who divided the Near East into three parts: Arabia Felix, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Petræa (Von Hagen 52).

[5] Stephens's father, Benjamin, was a very well-to-do New York merchant. Stephens's maternal ancestors had been some of the first settlers in the area of Monmouth, New Jersey, and his maternal grandfather, John Lloyd, was a Revolutionary

War veteran. Benjamin was born a bastard who went on from such inauspicious beginnings to make his fortune, in true Jacksonian style (see Von Hagen 3-6).

[6] Poe's review appeared in the New York Review in October, 1837 and has been reprinted in several editions of his collected works. I refer to the 1902 collected works edited by James A. Harrison: Literary Criticism, Volume 3, which is Volume 10 in the set.

[7] Part of this popularity would have to be attributed to Stephens's bringing out the right books at the right time. As Malini Johar Schueller observes, "U.S. appetite for Oriental travel is evidenced by the fact that by the winter of 1838-39 Egypt had more travelers from the United States than of any nationality but the British" (29). His first two travel works were published in 1837 and 1838. Yet while contemporary circumstances may have provided the initial impetus to Stephens's success, his lasting reputation is the result of something more durable in the texts themselves.

[8] Finnie, in a bibliographical appendix to his Pioneers East, lists well over fifty works that either deal directly with or touch nearly on accounts of Americans resident for greater or lesser periods in the Ottoman regions. Among these accounts are travel narratives, memoirs, reports, and histories. I use "resident" here rather than the narrower "traveler" because some of these accounts were by missionaries, some of whom spent decades in the region and who in a sense became more properly residents than visitors. The traveler proper remains ever aware, even however dimly, of the impending conclusion of the journey.

[9] While Bayard Taylor is still remembered in some circles (Ziff's Return Passages: Great American Travel Writing, 1780-1910 will perhaps keep Taylor's name familiar somewhat longer) Paine remains an indistinct figure. I owe a debt of gratitude to Schriber's Writing Home for bringing me to Paine's work, apparently the only one she published. Schriber provides no biographical information on Paine, however.

Paine makes clear in Tent and Harem: Notes of an Oriental Trip (1859) that she comes from Vermont. She started on her tour in 1850. The book's copyright, entered in New York, is in the name of John Paine. Marjorie Strong, with the Vermont Historical Society, indicates that a Caroline Paine was born to Judge Elijah Paine (d. 1842) of Williamstown, Vermont in 1801. Her brother, Charles Paine (d. 1854), was for a short time the governor of Vermont (1841-1842). This Caroline Paine lived with her father until his death. At the time of Charles's death, Caroline was listed as a resident of New York. She had married her cousin John Paine, of New York, in 1856. Paine would have been close to fifty when she made her trip.

[10] Sultan Mahmoud II (1785-1839, r. 1808-1839) was noted, as evidenced by Porter's account, for his reforms, including the abolition of the powerful Janissaries, whom he wiped out practically in a single night. He and Porter appear to have been on friendly terms, the Sultan frequently visiting Porter at his residence. They had a common interest in naval matters. His son, Abdulmejid (1823-1861, r. 1839-1861), followed him as Sultan. His sultanate was also

characterized by reforms, but this time in Turkish history is perhaps better remembered outside of Turkey for the Crimean War.

[11] Paulding, "whose glory it was to have worked with Irving" (Brooks 174), became acquainted with Porter through naval connections. Paulding was Secretary of the Navy during Van Buren's administration.

[12] Schueller writes that "[i]t was particularly fortuitous for writers that in this highly charged political climate [of hardened racial attitudes], the Orient that became most familiar to the public at large was the Near East, which, with its mixture of cultures and races, questioned the idea of racial and cultural purity" (76). I would only add two points: the qualification that this "mixture" is not presented by the writers considered in this chapter as amalgamation; next, the qualification that the questioning of which Schueller speaks does not exist as an inherent virtue <u>of</u> the Near East but as a rhetorical possibility in the material that these writers present as the "Near East."

[13] "[T]he Reis Effendi, an official roughly equivalent to foreign minister" (Long 289).

[14] Stephens describes the Armenians in terms similar to those he uses to describe the Jews: "The Armenians are one of the oldest nations of the civilized world, and, amid all the revolutions of barbarian war and despotism, have maintained themselves as a cultivated people" (<u>GTRP</u> 1: 201). On a note which seems to bring us full circle, as it were, Porter

describes how an Armenian village "may be known": "by the neat cultivation, the fine shady trees, the mill-race, and an air of primitive patriarchal sort of comfort, which seems to be thrown over it" (1: 216).

[15] See Long, 312n. Even if Porter was an anti-Semite (this term here being used in the limited sense of anti-Jewish), loathing all Jews as Jews, my overall impression of Constantinople and Its Environs is that it is not an anti-Semitic work, and certainly not in the specific way just mentioned.

[16] "For three years [Porter] sent long, detailed letters about his exotic new environment and its people to James K. Paulding" (Long 292). Simply to assume that Porter never really intended for his correspondence to be kept private seems risky. It is also true, however, that the publication in newspapers and journals of letters from correspondents from throughout the country or abroad was a standard practice of the time, and that well-connected people writing such letters had to have known that their letters would almost certainly be published.

[17] This importance is more often implicit than explicit. See, for example, Spengemann 43, 74, 198; Van Den Abbeele xviii, 24.

[18] The four philosophers van Den Abbeele studies are Montaigne, Descartes, Montesquieu, and Rousseau.

[19] Another antebellum traveler who spent some time in Egypt as part of a general European/Mediterranean tour, David F. Dorr, records in his Colored Man Round the World (1858),

an experience in keeping with Stephens's observation: "In going to these pyramids, one walks over a pavement of dead bodies. I sunk in the sand, one hundred yards from the pyramid of Cheops, and my foot caught in the ribs of a buried man, which I afterward learned to be a mummy" (169-170 in Malini Johar Schueller, ed. A Colored Man Round the World).

[20] See Exodus 17.

[21] Taylor, though he does not mention Stephens by name, may very well have him in mind in moments when he feels a particular censoriousness toward travelers in the Near East (see JCA 45 [cf. Paine 92], 85 [cf. EAPHL 50], 126). For all his criticizing of the boorish and provincial behavior of other tourists, however, even Taylor succumbs toward the end of his time in Africa, looking over some mummies at Esneh. He notes that "the hair was still fresh and uncorrupted" on the mummy of a woman. "She may have been a beauty once, but nothing could be more hideous. I pulled off a small lock of hair, and took it with me as a curious relic" (JCA 508-509). While it is neither a withered hand nor a fleshless leg, Taylor still desires his "curious relic" and leaves his mark, if not his name, on at least one tomb.

[22] And, as a land rich in such lore, travelers frequently have the Bible in mind as well as in hand. Stephens quotes Isaiah 34 (EAPHL 234). Porter points attention to Proverbs 7:7-22 in order to bring his readers closer to how he experiences a sight of prostitutes outside Broussa (1: 255). Some pages earlier, he remarks "[h]ow often we are reminded of the expressions of the Scriptures by things which are brought daily before us here" (1: 235). For

another take on the way in which travelers to the Holy Land slip into biblical language as well as biblical reference, see Poe's review of Stephens's EAPHL.

[23] See for example Paul C. Wermuth's 1973 Twayne study of Taylor (43, 46). Wermuth, who edited Taylor's correspondence, does offer some positive criticism of Taylor as well in this study. Wermuth likely has in mind Richard Croom Beatty's Bayard Taylor: Laureate of the Gilded Age (1936). Beatty perhaps offers the most candid evaluation of Taylor when he writes that "it is evident that a taste for what [Taylor] wrote has waned" (vii).

Ziff, despite himself, regards Taylor as "the central figure in the history of American travel writing" (12), not only from the standpoint of production, but "also because he brings to the fore the entwined issues of racism and imperialism that are never far from the surface of other travel writings" (12). His ultimate criticism is aimed at Taylor's approach to travel writing as a professional undertaking. "[T]he practitioners of the profession he invented continue to follow his pattern in their search for more and more exotic places about which to write and stranger and stranger ways of reaching them" (169). Ziff's language makes plain the cultural unwellness (as it were) that he sees in this activity. What he leaves out at this point, however, Sara Mills supplies:

> Travellers normally only write (and are published) under the following circumstances: firstly, if they travel to well-established places (in this case, the writer has to produce something which is novel,

witty or erudite to compensate for the fact that they are writing about the well-known); secondly, if they write about travel to non-places (the Gobi Desert, Tibet, that is, places which have not been written about before); or thirdly, if they describe travelling by a difficult means of transport. (84)

[24] By such interaction, I have specifically in mind moments where Taylor records the things locals say to him, moments which clearly stand out for him as memorable and remarkable. Very early in his Journey to Central Africa, Taylor discusses the efforts he and his donkey-driver, Abdallah, were making to communicate, via Italian:

> The quickness with which these young Arabs pick up languages, is truly astonishing. "Come vi chiamate?" (what's your name?) I asked of Abdallah, as we rode homeward. The words were new to him, but I finally made him understand their meaning, whereupon he put his knowledge into practice by asking me: "Come vi chiamate?" "Abbas Pasha," I replied. "Oh, well," was his prompt rejoinder, "if you are Abbas Pasha, then I am Seyd Pasha" (19).

Further South on his journey, Taylor finally loses patience with the constant importunity for backsheesh:

> The word [backsheesh] is in every Nubian mouth, and the very boatmen and camel-drivers as they passed us said "backsheesh" instead of "good morning." As it was impossible to avoid hearing it, I used the word in the same way, and cordially returned the greeting. A few days previous, as we were walking

> on shore near Esneh, a company of laborers in a dourra-field began the cry. I responded, holding out my hand, whereupon one of the men pulled off his white cotton cap (his only garment), and offered it to me, saying: "If you are poor, take it." (JCA 159)

For similar exchanges, see JCA 410, 500, and LS 249. Ziff observes that Taylor's "ability to penetrate an alien society in order to represent it amounted, finally, to a tacit assertion of his, and by extension his readers', ability to dominate it" (121).

[25] Part of this contemplation, especially for Taylor, and to a lesser degree for Stephens, is to be found in their "passing" for Turks or Arabs, the deception which opens doors otherwise closed to them. Dressed in the style of the region, Taylor and Stephens have already gone a long way towards mingling successfully. In Journey to Central Africa, Taylor inquires of the caravan leader, Eyoub, as to whether he would be "kindly received among the Ababdehs" they were soon to visit:

> Eyoub declared that the men would be glad to see me, but that the women were afraid of Franks. "But," said Achmet [Taylor's guide], "the Effendi is no Frank." "How is this?" said Eyoub, turning to me. "Achmet is right," I answered; "I am a white Arab, from India." "But do you not speak the Frank language, when you talk with each other?" "No," said Achmet, "we talk Hindustanee." "O, praised be Allah!" cried Hosseyn [another member of

> the caravan Taylor particularly liked], clapping his hands with joy: "praised be Allah, that you are an Arab, like ourselves!" and there was such pleasure in the faces of all, that I immediately repented of having deceived them. (199)

For similar moments, see LS 285, 291, 306, 307-08, and particularly 358-59. Stephens does not have as much to say about his experiences in disguise.

[26] A contemporary work from which the Turks might be criticized would be Volney's Ruins: or A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires (1791, English trans. 1792). While Volney had traveled and written a book about those travels, Ruins is a philosophical and political treatise, one of whose basic assertions is that "if an empire has fallen to ruin or disappeared, it is because the laws were vicious or imperfect, or a corrupt government has checked their operation" (30).

[27] It is for this reason that the appearance of chameleons in Taylor's and Paine's accounts may be of interest (see LS 99, Paine 161).

[28] The story of Porter's illness comes out in small fragments throughout the second volume. "[T]o tell the truth," he begins, at the end of the first paragraph of the second volume, "I believe I have had the 'blue devils.' Were you ever troubled in that way? It is abominable, and serves only to reconcile one to death. If I had been in England, I should have hanged myself, or done something equally ridiculous" (2: 5). (See also 2: 131, 2: 144.)

[29] Which is not to say that Porter's account lacks such

requisite references to and observations upon Eastern "indolence." Indeed, Porter follows form perfectly in one of his descriptions: "all the eastern [sic] women are as like as two peas in the general outlines of their character--indolent and voluptuous" (1: 140). Writing of (presumably) the same women during the inclemencies of winter, Porter notes how

> each one has her favorite window, from which they undertake the inspection of so much of the crooked and dirty streets or lanes, as comes within the range of their visual organs--perhaps the limits may not exceed a few yards--perhaps less. Yet, there they sit "from morn till noon, from noon till dusky night," carefully noticing every thing that occurs within their respective districts. This affords subjects for conversation, and it is almost incredible what a quantity of interesting details they will find to communicate, in the course of a sitting. (2: 180-181)

30 "The Arabic, like the Hebrew, its sister tongue, and other old original tongues of Man, is a language of roots, and abounds with the boldest metaphors" (Taylor, LS 27).

31 The Wilkinson Paine refers to is Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (1797-1875), one of the premier English Egyptologists of the time. The work Paine refers to by Wilkinson is his Hand-Book for Travellers in Egypt, published by John Murray, of tourism fame, in London in 1847. The "large work, which is too voluminous for a traveller," which she refers to just prior to the material I quote is most likely his Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians

(1837), a three-volume work also published by Murray. Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), whose Society in America (1837) earned her much American attention, wrote Eastern Life Present and Past in 1848. Joan Rees studies Martineau's text in her Writing on the Nile: Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, Amelia Edwards.

[32] David Porter, by contrast, was not so much looking to be changed, or even looking to see how Constantinople changed him, as he was open to all he saw as it presented itself. It was not his goal, in other words, to "merge" with the "essence" of "the East."

Notes to Chapter Two

[1] Hawthorne makes a similar observation:

> they are beset by a curious and inevitable infelicity, which compels them, as it were, to keep up what they seem to consider a wholesome bitterness of feeling between themselves and all other nationalities, especially that of America. They will never confess it;--nevertheless, it is as essential a tonic to them as their bitter ale. Therefore--and possibly, too, from a similar narrowness in his own character--an American seldom feels quite as if he were at home among the English people. (64)

Stowe strikes a much more conciliatory pose toward England, though she does not give unreserved praise to land or people. Shortly after her arrival, while in conversation with her English hosts, she remarks to herself, "Why, these people are

just like home; they look like us, and the tone of sentiment and feeling is precisely such as I have been accustomed to" (10). Prepared for marked difference, Stowe is amazed instead by the continuing similarity.

[2] England's role as homeland applied even, as in Cooper's case, when several of his own ancestors did not come from the British Isles. It needs to be noted that Sunny Memories is an English edition of Stowe's Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands (1854) which includes only the English material. Its very small print and cheap paper suggest it may have been a book published with travelers in mind, either as an inexpensive book with which to while away the hours on or below deck, or else perhaps as a variety of guide-book.

[3] Obviously, it can be argued that a term like "temperament" is just as ideological as "race" or "nation." The point that needs to be made here is that none of these terms, apparently, is finally satisfactory to these writers as the one that has the ability to encompass all that is meant or implied in trying to account for what makes one group of people unlike another, whether in language, customs, costume, social structure, and so forth. Of the writers considered here, only Emerson deliberately and explicitly pursues the concept of "race/nation." Stowe gives it some thought, but Cooper and Hawthorne have little to say on that matter, focusing instead, as Stowe also does, on concrete things that for them express abstract matters, rather than reversing the process.

[4] Ralph L. Rusk, discussing English Traits in his Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1949), notes that "[d]oubtless,

praise of the Teutonic heritage of England as well as of America, a country that figured as a sort of transplanted England, was excessive" (394). Even so, Emerson's work sold "seventeen hundred copies...within four days" (393) and "within a month of publication, had sold 3,000 copies and was selling a new edition of 2,000" (395). Indeed, Robert E. Burkholder observes that "the book continued to sell at a rate unfamiliar to Emerson" ("Contemporary" 157).

[5] And this, despite one historical function of the cathedral as an expression of civic power and prestige.

[6] The form of English Traits has received a fair amount of attention, even in its own day. Robert E. Burkholder points to contemporary critics who found an "alleged lack of structural coherence" in the work ("Contemporary" 161). Joel Porte, however, suggests that "since such an omnium-gatherum [as the nineteenth-century travel book] will amiably avoid pushing toward overwhelming conclusions and let its appeal reside precisely in its miscellaneous character, any search for organic form seems defeated at the outset" (95). The relation between "organic" form and "overwhelming conclusions" implicit in Porte's comment seems worthy of further consideration, particularly in light of the travel text's "miscellaneous character" and what Sara Mills calls attention to regarding the "ways in which Western humanism has privileged the experience of the Western masculine elite as it proclaims universals about truth, freedom and human nature" (15).

[7] As Carl F. Hovde sums the matter, Emerson "wished in the work to generalize about the country's character" and

thus "seldom makes reference to [what were for him] particular and temporary conditions" (76). Spiller looks upon Emerson's "observations on English life" as "among his best work" (230). This seems to be the general consensus. Mark Van Doren, in his Introduction to The Portable Emerson (1946), remarks that "the book is powerful and delightful, and therefore cannot be overlooked. It is Emerson not at his most sententious but at his best" (2). Rusk, who may be excused a certain degree of partiality, claims "[a]s matters stood, no other American account of England could compare with this, and seldom had any traveler made so wise an appraisal of the character of a nation" (393-394). Jones, similarly, has courage enough to claim "no better book by an American about Victorian England (or rather Great Britain at midcentury) has ever been written" (English Traits ix).

[8] While Hawthorne has the most to say about English poverty, this does not mean that poverty in England made no impression on the other travelers: quite the reverse. See, for example, Gleanings in Europe: England 276, 279, and 281, where Cooper comments on materialism and social climbing as well as on poverty; Hovde quotes a letter Emerson wrote to Lidian Emerson in December, 1847, in which he notes the excruciating poverty in England (75); Stowe, like Emerson, spent time with the laborers in England and Scotland, but her comments say more about the dignity of labor and the laboring class, than of poverty per se (see 49, 54, 58).

In "Problems of the Picturesque: Nineteenth-Century American Travelers in Britain," Goluboff contends that "[m]uch of the interest of nineteenth-century travel books on

Britain comes from following the ways in which different travelers responded to the political dimension of the picturesque" (11). Ignoring poverty (the charge Goluboff ultimately leans toward) and failing to give as much attention to poverty as a given critic could wish to see, though, are two different things.

[9] Judy Schaaf Anhorn asserts that, "[f]ar from being a proof of Hawthorne's literary exhaustion, his English essays identify a new creativity in Hawthorne, in a book with merits of its own" (155). Anhorn is responding to those critics who view the bulk of Hawthorne's work from Marble Faun on as a record of repeated failure, especially marked in his attempts to write his "English" novel. Our Old Home then becomes something of an anomaly. Anhorn's contention seems correct, particularly if Hawthorne's text is viewed alongside other travel works, rather than seen as some manner of half-hearted "culmination" of his final, frustrated years. Nina Baym argues that "[t]he mind behind [Our Old Home] is sharp and clear, and the style of the essays--as all critics have admitted--is as good as Hawthorne's best" (252).

[10] With regard to the sociological and materialistic emphases of these studies, they are in keeping with work being done in the early 1990s in the Sociology of Tourism. John Urry, of the University of Lancaster, is perhaps the best known figure in that field, the American Dean MacCannell after him.

[11] Goluboff makes an observation quite similar in effect to Dulles's when, in discussing the American traveler's understanding of the term "picturesque," he writes:

"'Picturesque'...came to describe those places where associations to British literature and legend were strongest, those places, in other words, where encountered Britain conformed most closely to the Britain that Americans knew through books" ("Problems" 7). He goes on to argue that such an understanding runs the risk of blurring real political conditions. What strikes me in examining these texts is the constant consciousness that the picturesque is always already "picturesque." The travelers considered here, many of whom Goluboff cites, are certainly impressed and moved by what they encounter, but are neither blinded nor mesmerized. Rather, they seek (possibly unsuccessfully) to reconcile or at least balance what charms them with what repulses them.

[12] Moreover, time is, again, an essential factor. It should not be forgotten that, except in Hawthorne's case, the amount of time the other travelers considered here spent in England did not exceed several months. Cooper spent February to May of 1828 in England; Emerson spent several months between 1847 and 1848 there; Stowe April to June and then briefly in September, 1853. It is clear also from the gap of time between when they visited and when they published their travel narratives that up-to-the-moment information was not their primary concern. Not only was the travel itself a work of time, but the mellowing and maturation of the material itself, as it finally appears in the printed travelogue, is likewise a child of time.

[13] Although W. E. B. DuBois's time in Africa may serve to qualify Rahv's view, even this cannot nicely contradict it, since DuBois's education and professional life was so

completely "Western/European." The example of Dorr's Colored Man Round the World (1858) provides an instance where a slave, accompanying his master, seems to respond more to Europe, as someone descended from Europeans, than to Africa (Dorr visits Egypt) as someone descended from Africans. (Perhaps it is important to note here, as Schueller does, that Dorr was "a quadroon from New Orleans." If his "mix" had been less, the implicit logic seems to lead, then Dorr would of course have more readily identified with Africa and found Europe quite alien.) If an area other than Europe is included, it is typically the Near East. Ziff's Return Passages includes discussion of extra-European American travel accounts. Bruce A. Harvey also has recently studied American travel outside Europe and the Near East.

[14] This yearning for heritage is familiar to some Americans even now because it still provides a reason to travel to Europe (or, now, practically to any continent): locating distant relatives, seeing the place from which the great-grandparents emigrated.

As to nationality, the history of "nation" and its adjectival forms "national" and "nationality," the OED provides as the earliest instance (fourteenth century) not a meaning so much as a synonym: "race." Where the word "race" is derived from is, again according to the OED, obscure. The Spanish word "raza" seems a likely starting point, but even a Spanish equivalent of the OED fails to give a clear idea of the word's origins. Latin has nothing like it. In short, these words are in their own right as mysterious as that which they attempt to express.

[15] Consider the continuing American fascination with things British, as, for example, in the popularity of films set in England, the prevalence of British television shows on public broadcasting, or the media fascination (especially the tabloid media addiction) here with the British royal family. Not wealth alone, but wealth and aristocracy, seem to have a remarkable hold in American culture.

Spiller almost encapsulates the matter, when, indirectly referring to Cooper's remark, he concurs that "the dominant impulse of the visitor from a foreign land is the search for novelty, and naturally, the American, coming from a country in which everything was new, found novelty in the antique and passing phases of English life" (384-385). In the case of England, however, it is not merely "the antique and passing phases" that fascinate the American, but also the enduring (endearing) features: the monarchy and peerage are certainly among these features. D. H. Lawrence amuses himself at Cooper's expense on just this point in his Studies in Classic American Literature.

[16] "A titled and landed aristocracy, if anywise an evil and an encumbrance, is so only to the nation which is doomed to bear it on its shoulders; and an American, whose sole relation to it is to admire its picturesque effect upon society, ought to be the last man to quarrel with what affords him so much gratuitous enjoyment" (87).

[17] It is difficult to know what travel books on England by fellow Americans, if any, Hawthorne may have read. (The same can be said for each of these travelers. All of them used guidebooks, but travelogues are harder to detect.) I

find the passages from Cooper and Hawthorne so similar here that it seems difficult to believe that Hawthorne did not have Cooper's work in mind as he wrote these words, particularly since the nearly twenty years intervening had apparently not yet produced a qualitative change.

[18] The critical consensus, however, is that Emerson is far more ambivalent about America's prospects for carrying forward "English genius." Hovde observes that "while Emerson's usual tone makes a virtue of our possibilities, the occasional accompaniment of hope is an awareness that we are not yet as we should be" (81). For Phyllis Cole, in English Traits, Emerson is engaged in a "self-implicating analysis of England's machine-made society" (457). John Peacock draws attention to "the ambivalence that makes a middle-class individual [such as Emerson] feel affiliated to cultural consensus and yet repelled by social conformity" (68). Richard Bridgman holds that "Emerson saw plainly enough the limitations of 'our old home,' but he could not easily argue that those who had broken away to America were the heirs and refiners of its estate" (474). Finally, Goluboff finds that, mediating "between exhausted Britain and inchoate America," (154) English Traits demonstrates that "Emerson had by 1856 no facile optimism about the American future" (163).

[19] Mulvey argues that "Emerson was writing of the English as they were eventually to write of the Americans, as a people who had passed beyond the known restraints upon humanity and were beginning to make the world over in their own image" (Transatlantic 187).

[20] I have placed the word racism in quotation marks, not

because Stowe does not speak racism here, but because she uses "race" and "nation" in the same passage in an essentially interchangeable way. She precedes what I have quoted with the comment that, "[t]aking our developments as a race, both in England and America, we may be justly called the Romans of the nineteenth century" (147). Stowe was not uneducated, and so must have realized that Roman power, not unlike English power, was sustained through "mixture," as Emerson has observed. In short, the word "racist" simplifies the matter here in a way that really fails to do justice to the complexities (indeed, the perplexities) that Stowe, as well as these other writers attempt to deal with as they try to understand what they highly value.

[21] Hawthorne exhorts us to embrace and to be glad in these other orderings, and plainly does not see his own time as the pinnacle of History:

> let us welcome whatever change may come--change of place, social customs, political institutions, modes of worship--trusting that, if all present things shall vanish, they will but make room for better systems, and for a higher type of man to clothe his life in them, and to fling them off in turn. (60)

[22] Or, through their destruction, such artifacts become focal points for establishing the new regime and asserting its puissance, as with the destruction in March 2001 of ancient Buddhist rock sculptures by the Taliban in Afghanistan, or, to take a far older example noted in the previous chapter, the substitution of Christian and then

Muslim symbols for the ancient Egyptian in the temple ruins.

[23] Although not unhopeful or even unconfident about the United States, as Goluboff puts it: "Emerson is as unwilling to celebrate the westward course of empire as he is to deny the vigor and promise of America" (154). Moreover, to return to a quote used in a previous note, "Emerson had by 1856 no facile optimism about the American future" (Goluboff 163). Emerson's difficulty, as Bridgman states the matter, is that "England's limitations might finally prove to be the world's" (485). More specifically, these limitations would likely ultimately prove those of America as well. Nicoloff observes, "[w]hile to his American readers the book served as an indirect prophecy of future glory founded on historical necessity, it implied that the Americans, like their English ancestors, would find no ultimate escape from the limitations of finite existence" (241).

[24] See the concluding chapter of Walden. It is of perhaps further significance for this particular study that the object this artist sets himself to make is a staff.

[25] This may be a peculiarly Protestant understanding, in that the clergy, much less the presence of ministers, is barely alluded to when these writers consider cathedrals.

[26] Nicoloff notes that both Emerson and Carlyle "approached human history with a deeply religious and poetic wonder, and were content to assign many of its operations to the realm of the unfathomable and mysterious" (90).

[27] Lambeth Palace, in London, is the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Notes to Chapter Three

[1] American Studies may be said to have its very foundation in this question, from as early as Frederick Jackson Turner, through such works as Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth (1950) and The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (1964), to name only two. The frontier remains even now a symbolic zone and a place of symbolic exchange in current critical dialogue, as for example in the form of border studies.

[2] The basic arguments of Spengemann (1977), John T. Jacobs (1988), and Syed Manzurul Islam (1996) have to do with this learning to see what the local offers in its own terms. Spengemann and Islam, however, have little to say about these emerging possibilities in light of the return that is the ever present conclusion of the travel narrative. Travel narrative includes the return journey, though, no matter how briefly. This is the point much subsequent criticism discusses but does not illustrate: a travel-changed consciousness changing home. The traveler certainly returns but this implies no requisite commitment to transform home into Home. That impulse necessarily demands that abroad become Abroad: material with which to make home Home. In this sense, how has what is encountered abroad really been seen in its "own" terms?

[3] If "change" seems too absolute here--as indeed it may --complexity of response and a sensitive responsivity to ambiguity also characterize what I have in mind here. In either event, it is such evidence that typically marks the

literary from the non-literary travel narrative.

[4] McDermott does not wish to use "genre artist" in a derogatory or diminishing way. Critics do seem to have a curious relation to this text, though. This relation is illustrated, for example, when John Joseph notes that Tour "is a curious book" ("Romantic Lie" 128), or when Brian Harding rather early in his discussion states that "A Tour remains a puzzling work" (203), specifically with respect to Irving's relation to territorial expansion. Calling the book "[d]eft, evocative, and pleasant," Wayne R. Kime finds "A Tour suggests an elegant personal essay in narrative form" (251).

Kime's comment suggests part of the trouble that critics seem to encounter with this work. Being by Irving, Tour is expected to be "pleasant," perhaps even "deft," but to call it "evocative" seems to create an unfamiliar tension. The crux is this word "deft," for the general lack of elaboration within Irving's narrative becomes a point of interest for critics. Kime observes that Irving "permitted himself little space for elaboration but instead arranged the work as a medley of briefly sketched western scenes and topics" (241). Joseph suggests that Irving

> found that the travel journal provided a medium of surprising "purity" for the exercise of vision and style, there being no plot as such to which he should feel compelled to bend them, and character development amounting to little more than progressive sketches. ("I-tinerary" 46)

The result of working in this miscellaneous form is that

Irving is helped through it to, as Kime puts it, "record[] his developing ideas as, from day to day, he gradually builds up a budget of informed opinion about the West" (241). There cannot be enough stress laid upon this comment of Kime's with respect to each travel text considered in this study, not just Irving's.

[5] While some tribes may have been resident in the area for several generations, the Creek and Delaware were recent arrivals, having been forced to relocate in the years prior to Irving's tour. The expedition that Irving joined was gotten together for the sake of Henry L. Ellsworth, the government agent whose mission, as McDermott puts it, was "to treat with the western Indians" (xvii). Joseph is rather more explicit: Ellsworth's mission was "to undertake the relocation of certain Native American tribes from the Southern states to the Indian territory" ("Romantic Lie" 127). Kime adds that Ellsworth was to visit and inspect the lands set aside for the tribes that would be relocated (238).

[6] Stephen Greenblatt, in Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World (1991), notes that the building of some structure on a piece of "unclaimed" land was a legal mechanism among Europeans for establishing a claim, for demonstrating possession. Thus, several early explorers land at a place, build a hut of some sort, then leave. Of course, it can be objected that the place in question here most definitely belongs to the United States government, which exercises its power there as well as in the region generally.

[7] Peter Antelyes writes that "[m]uch time is spent in A

Tour defining the threat of the half-breed," specifically "by locating...frontier boundaries of race and class" (134). The anxiety Antelyes attributes to Irving is rather overstated. Jacobs has something initially similar to say:

> if the 'nondescript beings' are distasteful to Irving at this point, they will prove indispensable in the future; for...they alone can safely penetrate the chaotic darkness of the wilderness ...while maintaining at least a semblance of civilized standards and objectives. (68)

This notion of "civilized standards and objectives," in turn, is of great importance to Antelyes as he discusses the frontier's professionalization. Antelyes, though, reaches a conclusion rather similar to Jacobs's: "[u]ltimately the half-breed's role in the composition of the tour is as mediational figure, highlighting the need for a pattern of social hierarchy based on acceptable divisions and dualities" (136-137). By this formulation, Antelyes manages to keep ideas of race, class, and certainty foremost: the "divisions and dualities" acknowledged are only those that are "acceptable." Greenblatt offers a somewhat different account of the "mediational figure": "the go-between can also serve as the agent for a marvelous dispossession, a loss of the fiercely intolerant certainty that licensed unbearable cruelty" (150). Marina Coslovi argues that, for Beatte, being a "half-breed"

> turns out to be his most important trait. The narrative shows that it is precisely because he belongs to both the Indian and the white worlds--the two faces of the West--that he can understand

them so thoroughly....he is the only one really at home in the West. (193)

Coslovi uses "at home" differently from the way I am using the concept of Home in this study. For further material on the "half-breed," see Edward Watts, An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture (2002), 81-98.

[8] Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Christ the Center (1932) has provided me with this basic distinction between "what" and "how" questions as over against the "who" question. The important point to make here is that the issues involved with travel, writing, and representation are fundamentally and inescapably ethical. The ethical question, then (Who), becomes the most appropriate focus for critical thought. At this stage in criticism of the genre, to become caught up within matters of definition and causation, and to limit oneself to just these matters, hinders a much needed broader critical vision.

[9] Caroline Paine's comments on the Nile reflect this idea of the line and, like Irving's changing thinking, Paine's description points up the ambiguity and artificiality of the idea of the line, clear and clean or otherwise.

[10] For a recent study of the image of the "Indian" in American literature, see Joshua David Bellin, Demon of the Continent: Indians and the Shaping of American Literature, (2001).

[11] This same difficulty of wanting a book other than the one written is decidedly a note in criticism of Parkman's

Oregon Trail, best summarized by Howard Doughty in his eponymous 1962 study of Parkman:

> It is, we feel, fundamentally the nature of Parkman's experience itself with which his commentators quarrel; and the phantom of a great lost work on the West conjured up from the journals [that Parkman kept and from out of which Oregon Trail was written] is the projection of an a priori judgment as to the aspects of the West Parkman ought to have emphasized" (152).

The name Irving, or Fuller, or Taylor, or whoever could be substituted for Parkman's in considering the general spirit of Doughty's comment. There seems to be a sort of critical thought that understands itself as criticism only to the extent that it emphasizes what an author should have written, should have seen, should have praised, should have condemned.

[12] Mason Wade points out that Parkman, in fact, turned twenty-three while on the plains (284).

[13] Michaela Bruckner Cooper contends that Fuller "embarks on a textual journey among various and often mutually contesting or overlapping discourses that shape her response to the landscape and the people she encounters on her trip" (173). This language bears striking similarity to Spengemann's argument regarding the relationship between traveler and site of travel; likewise, it shows an interesting evolution of the critical vocabulary. This response (perception of the possibility of possibility) may be seen as a necessary result of these "contesting or overlapping discourses."

[14] What also seems illustrated here is something of that "shallowness of tenure" of which Frederick Turner speaks in Spirit of Place: The Making of an American Literary Landscape (1989). Coming from an environmentalist perspective, Turner argues that the problem faced by early American culture, passed on to subsequent generations, "was a lack of attachment to what was already ours, already possessed. It was a shallowness of tenure that expressed itself in all aspects of the national life as well as in our derivative literature" (12).

[15] See, for example, 24, 26, 62. Although the case can be made that Parkman's attitudes toward the Native Americans remains deeply prejudiced throughout Oregon Trail, a case can also be made that his thinking does undergo a significant, if not highly explicit, change. The most overtly biased language tends to come in the first pages of the text and becomes rarer as the narrative progresses.

[16] This description of the emigrants calls to mind Cooper's descriptions of the squatter Ishmael Bush and his family, in The Prairie (1827). It is not unlikely that Parkman had Cooper's language in mind here, as he was an avid reader of Cooper's works.

[17] Irving writes of the "wolves, who [at night] kept up the most forlorn concert of whining yells, prolonged into dismal cadences and inflexions, literally converting the surrounding waste into a howling wilderness" (183).

[18] At the beginning of his narrative Taylor includes a small amount of material on his five-day trip through Panama

and, at the end, an account of his month and a half long return trip from California through Mexico. This material is integral to Eldorado, as this is as much a book about Spanish America as the American Far West. Since this chapter deals strictly with the American West, though, and since the Mexican material comes after, rather than before the California material (and thus does not "set the stage" in quite the way that the Panamanian material does), I will not address the Mexican portion of the text.

[19] Each of the three works by Taylor considered in this study have fine qualities, yet his narrative of California stands out as the very best. In accounting for his view, Wermuth suggests that what makes this work more satisfying is the "less literary" quality of the writing, "for [Taylor] had fewer opportunities to genuflect to art, architecture, and other forms of beauty" in Eldorado (41). This does not seem an adequate explanation, though (I doubt Wermuth has Taylor's non-European narratives in mind here). Admittedly, Taylor must have felt some expectations from his readers regarding his travels in the Near East and Africa that he did not feel while in California.

[20] Nor to the faults of the people massing off to the diggings. "I believe," he writes,

> the controlling portion of the California emigration is intelligent, orderly, and peaceable; yet I never witnessed so many disgusting exhibitions of the lowest passions of humanity as during the voyage [to San Francisco]. At sea or among the mountains, men completely lost the little

> arts of dissimulation they practice in society. They show in their true light, and very often, alas! in a light little calculated to encourage the enthusiastic believer in the speedy perfection of our race. (28-29)

[21] Jacobs, who deals with frontier or, more widely, "nature" narratives, sees travel as a means of bringing "wilderness" back into the "civilized," of striking a better balance, in other words. Spengemann, whose main concern is the development of the American Romance and its debt to travel writing, looks to travel accounts by Sarah Kemble Knight, Irving, and Dana, as opposed to accounts by Stowe, Emerson, or Cooper. Implicitly, travel is not so much the main thing for Spengemann as exploration of a distinctly "primitive," natural space. It is in such space that, for these critics, "the authority and value of individual experience in literature" (Spengemann 198) can be established. For Spengemann particularly, the primitive is of value as it facilitates "the original form which arises from the unique experiences of a particular person in a specific environment" (52).

Notes to Chapter Four

[1] I shall abbreviate Stephens's Latin American works thus: Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán, (CA); Incidents of Travel in Yucatán, (Yucatán).

Regarding Central America, Gudmundson and Héctor Lindo-Fuentes point out that "the mid-nineteenth century" is "an exceptionally murky period in local history" (vii).

Gudmundson later continues: "Central American history is one of the most poorly understood of all Latin American histories, and the early years of independent life are the least well known in the region's historiographical context" (79).

[2] This way of phrasing the travel writer's situation is not unlike the way in which Michaela Bruckner Cooper characterizes Fuller's situation in Summer on the Lakes: "The artist, rather than becoming an agent of change, becomes a silent if unwilling accomplice in the maintenance of the status quo" (181). This, recall, is in marked contrast to Schriber's argument regarding the role of the travel writer/artist. Cooper contends that Fuller "reassigns the artist the role of historiographer, for, unable to affect the course of historical events, the artist records them after the fact in order to secure them a lasting place in history" (182). With the travel texts considered here, it is perhaps not the events per se that are secured that place in history but rather the situation and the perspective: not what the events were, but the manner in which they are presented.

[3] In making these observations to the Central American leaders, Stephens is in a sense exhorting a gratitude for divine providence, an element that shall play a larger role in the discussion of Poinsett to follow. Taking this beauty as a given and fertility as granted is in part to lose the feeling for possibility, for wonder.

[4] Stephens may also be said to be exhorting the Central Americans to develop a "national" consciousness, via the development, to use Frederick Turner's phrase, of spirit of

place. The Central Americans would have been at a point where such consciousness could assist rather than vitiate their common life.

More contextual detail will be provided in later notes, but here it needs to be observed that what Stephens found in Central America was not federated states along the lines of the United States, but "elite dominated 'city states' under one partisan flag or another" (Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes 82). The major population and power in Central America was in the North and West: Guatemala and El Salvador. These states were bitter rivals, with substantially different social conditions and political orientations: Guatemala having the highest indigenous population and being the core of Conservative/Centralist power, El Salvador being the leader politically in the Liberal movement and much more thoroughly acculturated to Spanish (European) ways.

[5] Lowell Gudmundson

> would suggest that the Liberal/Conservative conflict before the coffee revolution of midcentury can best be seen as an intraclass struggle among elites and would-be elites. Only in Guatemala, perhaps, can one see elements of interclass division in antagonistic bands rather than intraclass conflict. (82)

Further,

> [a]lthough more than one partisan author, and later historians as well, saw in such bloody conflict in the provinces an opposing class structure, of feudal and bourgeois tendencies, little evidence of

> it, beyond grandiose rhetoric on the part of the elite participants, can be found prior to coffee's advance in each country. (83)

Therefore, it would seem that much qualification and circumspection should be used in discussing "class" consciousness during the period covered by these travel texts on Mexico and Central America. Likewise, a particular awareness is especially called for regarding the "textualization" of these events, at the time and afterwards.

[6] The question of which political vision--federal or democratic, commercial/bourgeois or agricultural--would best allow the United States to prosper, as well as the question of what to "do" about racial others are questions already familiar to these writers. The particular way in which these questions and their local responses are enacted in Latin America is unfamiliar and even unsettling to them.

[7] The United States, along with England, had established strong commercial ties to Cuba by the end of the eighteenth century. It was at this time also that Cuba's sugar economy was growing tremendously. When the French seized Spain in 1808, the Spanish colonies, including Cuba, were "in an exposed strategic position," as Hugh Thomas writes. The result of this exposure was that it "caused President Jefferson to make the first of many United States bids to protect the island" (9).

[8] As the reader might have already known or guessed, Poinsett introduced the flower we call the poinsettia into the United States from Mexico. This may be what he is best remembered for now, but he was also a vigorous opponent of

nullification. Poinsett was born in Charleston, South Carolina. From relatively early in life, he was a traveler. He spent most of 1801-1808 abroad. He studied Medicine in Scotland and Military Science in England. He associated with the De Staëls in their exile. He traveled across the Scandinavian countries on his way to Russia, where he made an extensive trip through the southern as well as the European portion of that country.

He was Secretary of War during Van Buren's administration (1837-1841). The position itself may seem deceptively well-defined to readers now. The Secretary of War, however, was not only responsible, as Rippy notes, for "the organization, maintenance, and equipment of the army," but also for

> the supervision of public works and internal improvements of all kinds; the equipment and direction of exploring parties; the administration of the mineral lands of the United States; and indirect responsibility for the administration of pensions, the bounty land office, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (171)

Poinsett's role in Indian affairs deserves a further note, as, "[u]nder his administration more Indians were transferred across the Mississippi than under that of any other war secretary" (Rippy 183).

[9] Rippy's comment should not be taken to mean that South Americans were neither prepared for nor interested in revolt. Burton Kirkwood points out that "[i]n 1806 Great Britain briefly occupied Buenos Aires until local creoles organized a

militia and threw them out. The successful overthrow of the British reinforced the idea that the colonists controlled their own destiny" (71). Poinsett was entering a situation that was already volatile. His actions were motivated by pro-republican and anti-monarchical impulses. Rippy at one point calls Poinsett "a flaming evangel of democracy" (105), though this makes him out to be more zealous than Rippy's own narrative and the materials he analyzes would suggest.

[10] Agustín de Iturbide (1783-1824) was Emperor from 1822-1823. Iturbide had been emperor for a little more than three months when Poinsett arrived, and was deposed by Santa Anna some five months after Poinsett left. Kirkwood points out that "[f]rom 1821 to 1857 no less than fifty governments proclaimed control over" Mexico (89). Iturbide was driven into exile in Italy, returned, captured and shot in 1824. His remains were entombed in Mexico's National Cathedral in 1838.

[11] Poinsett can also be "charged" with expressing a Northwestern European bias, promulgating the myth of the Anglo-Saxon in much the same terms that Emerson will present it in 1856 in English Traits. It should also be kept in mind, though, that, as Gudmundson puts it, the "Liberal promise of progress and well-being," was going to be "along northern European or Anglo-Saxon institutional lines" (104). Further, the model for the elites, whether Conservative or Liberal, was the American revolution, which "had greater appeal than did the French" (Kirkwood 71).

[12] I am here not discussing the resources of Mexico so much as the way in which those resources, so far as Poinsett

could determine, were being harnessed. Kirkwood very importantly points out that, "[a]t the end of the eighteenth century Mexico was the richest of Spain's colonies in the New World. Of the income generated by its colonies, more than 60 percent came from Mexico" (76).

[13] Poinsett's anticlericalism is in line with Liberal thought in Latin America at that time. The church in Latin America had been a problem for the Spanish imperial authorities. "[B]y the eighteenth century," Kirkwood notes, the church "was the most powerful institution in the colonies" (69). It was "the largest money lender in Mexico; in fact, in the area around Guadalajara it loaned as much as 70 percent of the funds for commercial projects" (77). Economic development and thus economic (and in many ways political) power was in the hands of the church.

[14] It was a priest, after all, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who led the 1810 uprising in Mexico, but it was this same uprising that gave vent to much and long pent up anger, resulting in the destruction of property, in rape and murder. Stella M. González and Carmen G. Blázquez speak here of "an explosion of both hate and joy" (71). Writing of Hidalgo's uprising, Kirkwood notes: "[t]he events that followed...caused many Creoles, who had earlier advocated independence, to fear that the masses would threaten their position" (81). Gudmundson, on a related point, observes that "the Church...proved highly resourceful in exploiting lower-class religious fervor and xenophobia to counter Liberal claims for a secular national order" (100). "[I]t was through their policies on the Church," writes Gudmundson,

"that Liberals most consistently alienated the masses without routing their Conservative enemies" (100).

[15] Although the situation in Yucatán will demonstrate some differences from that in Central America, it is important to note, as Lindo-Fuentes does, that, "[g]iven its relative abundance, land was not the most difficult factor to acquire. Entrepreneurial ability, credit, and labor were, in that order, the scarcest factors" (15). Additionally (and this may apply more directly to the situation in Yucatán that Stephens observes), "[w]ith most of the population living barely above subsistence levels and with low productivity, internal markets were limited" (Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes 16). The relative arability of the land is another matter.

[16] Turning again to the Allende/Hidalgo uprising (an alliance which itself soon splintered), González and Blázquez point out that "Hidalgo struggled to keep his control over the undisciplined masses that followed him"; he "was successful by humoring the mob" (70, 71).

[17] Because of references that will subsequently be made, a longer contextualizing note seems in order. The Federal Republic of Central America lasted from 1823 until 1840. Its capital was located initially at Guatemala City, historically the economic hub of the region. After the Liberal victory in the civil war of 1826-1829 the capital was moved to San Salvador, in El Salvador. The republic was composed of what are now Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. At the end of the civil war, General Francisco Morazán of Honduras (1792-1842), became president. The Conservative leadership was exiled, policies generally

hostile to the Roman Catholic Church instituted, and many reforms--social, educational, judicial, and economic--begun. "[I]ndividual equality before the law" Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes point out, was one of the "classic Liberal issues" (2). As these scholars also observe, though, "Liberalism's strongest intellectual claims on its followers and society in general--individual freedom of thought and action and social equality--frequently led to frustration and disenchantment" (90). The following several years are marked by a general popular dissatisfaction with the policies of Morazán's government, partly because of their anticlericalism, but also because of a fundamental difference of sympathies between the urban and the rural populations.

An Indian rebellion took place in Guatemala in 1837, led by Rafael Carrera (1814-1865), who represented himself as "the arch-defender of the Central American folk" (Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes 9). He was successful in toppling the Liberal state government, and put in place a Conservative government headed by himself. The western part of Guatemala, however, a Liberal stronghold, seceded from Guatemala as the new state of Los Altos. Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica had all seceded in 1838. The conflict over Los Altos brought Morazán down in 1840, when he was defeated at Guatemala City, and guaranteed the supremacy of Carrera. Stephens was in the region from October 1839 to June 1840, in other words, right at the time of the Liberal collapse. Carrera would govern Guatemala until his death in 1865, having abolished elections in 1854. The Conservative governments which came to power in the several states were all opposed to reunification. Morazán, who had fled to Panama after his defeat, took power

in Costa Rica briefly in 1842 and was executed by firing squad shortly thereafter.

Of the caudillo (strongman) Carrera, it should be added that, despite his brutality and ruthless exercise of power, he kept Guatemala independent, pushing back William Walker's Nicaraguan expedition against Guatemala, twice fighting off Mexican annexation efforts, and containing expansion by British Honduras. Lacking any formal education and illiterate his entire life, he was also quite religious and apparently genuinely concerned for the indigenous people of Guatemala. Stephens, repelled by but also not entirely unsympathetic to Carrera, has this, among other things, to say of him: "So young [twenty-five], so humble in his origin, so destitute of early advantages, with honest impulses, perhaps, but ignorant, fanatic, sanguinary, and the slave of violent passions, he wielded absolutely the physical force of the country, and that force entertained a natural hatred of the whites" (CA 1, 197). "Rather than seek admission to the modern world of secular nation states, as Liberals had long advocated, the followers of Carrera shouted both 'long live religion' and 'death to foreigners'" (Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes 90).

[18] The reader might well ask where the earlier population fits into these struggles. Lindo-Fuentes remarks that

> [b]y the end of the colonial period in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, the process of "ladinization" (acculturation to Spanish ways, which sometimes were combined with miscegenation)

was well advanced, whereas in Guatemala most of the Indian population kept its language and customs. (24)

Moreover, "the largest number of Indians lived in Guatemala ...and the smallest number lived in Costa Rica" (23-24). Until the advent of Carrera, who galvanized the earlier people, the power struggle was largely between the elite factions, the Liberals and the Conservatives. "[T]he norm," Gudmundson writes, "was for the elites to fight each other viciously but to close ranks in suppressing any and all lower-class movements that threatened to overturn this predominantly intraclass or intraoligarchic political contest of Liberals versus Conservatives" (83). Speaking of the situation in Mexico, but characterizing the nature of the struggle throughout Latin America, Kirkwood points out that "[t]he upper classes [whatever their political leanings] sought to establish an autonomous government that would represent their interests, and the lower classes struggled against the dominance of the local elites" (75).

[19] Though Poinsett saw few people "visibly" of African origin, there were most certainly people in the region who had some degree of African ancestry. Gudmundson observes that "the vast Pacific plains of Central America, once they were almost completely emptied of native population because of disease, were given over to nearly wild cattle herds tended by the mulatto and zambo descendants of African slave cowboys imported for this specialized occupation" (123).

[20] Typical of the Liberal cause were "[c]alls for private land ownership," which "were usually heard in unison

with attacks on Church property" (Gudmundson 95). The common result was that "villagers...saw the Liberals as thieves more than they saw the Church as their exploiter" (103).

[21] Stephens's statistic, it should be noted, seems roughly correct. Lindo-Fuentes writes that, "in 1770 about 68 percent of the tributaries of the Captaincy General lived in Guatemala" (23-24), "tributaries" here meaning the earlier population. Some seventy years later, that number could be expected to have increased to nearly 75 percent.

[22] Gudmundson remarks that, "[i]ndeed, the Indians were not held in contempt so much as ignored. They simply did not exist politically in the minds of...Liberals, except as pawns in a game with other power contenders" (88). The same, with due qualifications, may generally also be said for the Conservatives.

[23] "Rather than the 'Rights of Man' and freedom of thought, this [Conservative indigenous] nationality would be part xenophobic, part religious, largely parochial and communal, and more inclined to Te Deums than Freemasonry and life presidencies than contested elections" (Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes 90). Not only do these characteristics speak to authority and restriction, but also to an overarching desire for certainty, for Home. Whatever "wonder" may emerge within such a system must already have been sanctioned, and must be already thoroughly controlled, as with adulation of the leader. "This and no other" is the public, official attitude of such a system. Wonder, as has been mentioned earlier in this study, is always an apprehension of the negation of that attitude. Any particular thus, marvelous in

itself, necessarily gives way to yet another thus. "Dialectic" and "progress" are words designed to capture this and more, but cannot adequately realize what is meant here.

[24] The point made in Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes's study bears repeating here, that "[n]early everywhere in mid-nineteenth century Central America land was in relative (and at times absolute) abundance, whereas capital (both material and human) and labor were lacking" (8).

[25] Richard L. Predmore, editor of the edition of CA used here, includes the following note regarding Stephens's phrase "pardos libres (free tigers)": "Stephens has probably mistranslated pardo. In various parts of Latin America it means 'mestizo' or 'mulatto'" (1: 186n).

[26] It could be objected that Von Frank's subject--frontier consciousness in American literature--bars his observation from being applicable in a Latin American context. It seems to me, however, that what has been shown about the Liberal program in Latin America through the studies of Kirkwood, and Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, indicates otherwise. It also bears pointing out that the point at which the Liberals attain power is the very point at which they too will arrest becoming.

[27] Stephens's phrasing of the plight of the descendants of the Maya here should call to mind also the same aspect in his characterization of the Jews in his Near Eastern writings. The narratological role of a "vanishing people" is certainly not confined to Native Americans. A similar role can be found for the Saxons in travel writing on England (and

the Celts as well).

[28] Consider in comparison the comments of Porter and Stephens on Scio, the handling of English ruins and cathedrals, and the great vistas in Parkman.

[29] Santayana, critically considering the background of American values, perceptively asks "[w]as not 'increase,' in the Bible, a synonym for benefit? Was not 'abundance' the same, or almost the same, as happiness?" (86).

[30] William Henry Hurlbert (1827-1895), a South Carolinian like Poinsett, graduated from Harvard in 1847 and from Harvard's Divinity School two years later. After spending two years studying at Berlin, Rome, and Paris, he returned to the United States and became a Unitarian minister, though he did not remain in the ministry long. He thereafter spent a year at the Harvard Law School.

It was just after his year in law school that Hurlbert traveled to the Caribbean. He would have been twenty-six at the time. Some of his travel letters appeared in the abolitionist National Era, letters that were incorporated into Gan-Eden. He would go on to visit Mexico in 1866, being "invited to the capital by Maximilian" (Appleton's 328). He revisited the Caribbean in 1871, accompanying "the U.S. expedition to Santo Domingo, during which time he wrote and published the most complete account in any language of the modern history of that island" (Appleton's 328).

[31] Mary H. Grant, in her Private Woman, Public Person: An Account of the Life of Julia Ward Howe from 1819 to 1868 (1994), notes that "A Trip to Cuba brought in one-quarter of

the sum she had been promised" (141). What that sum was is not disclosed. It is unclear whether Howe's work had subsequent editions. The same holds for Gan-Eden. In the case of Dana's To Cuba and Back, C. Harvey Gardiner, in his Introduction, informs us that the work "sold as widely as did Two Years before the Mast....For decades it ranked as a guide-book of sorts....By 1890 at least a dozen American printings had been issued" (xv). The work remained in print through World War One (xv). Samuel Shapiro, probably drawing upon the same sources (e.g. the biography by C. F. Adams), says much the same thing (110). Poinsett's work had an English edition in 1825. In the case of Stephens, CA went through twelve editions in three months (Von Hagen, Editor's Introduction, Yucatán xv). There are at least twenty-two editions of Yucatán (Von Hagen, Editor's Introduction, Yucatán xviii).

[32] Recall here that Bayard Taylor's Lands of the Saracen includes time spent in Sicily and Spain. For more on travel accounts of Spain itself, see Pere Gifra-Adroher, Between History and Romance: Travel Writing on Spain in the Early Nineteenth-Century United States, (2000).

[33] Robert L. Gale speaks of Dana's "complex intellectual, rhetorical, and emotional response" to Cuba (148). Just before this, he notes that "Dana's book overflows with devoted observations of natural and man-made beauty in Cuba" (147). Some of all this seems reflected in Dana's comments just quoted.

[34] This same point was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Hugh Thomas points out that the Ten Years War,

Cuba's first war of independence, began in 1868 (20).

[35] Among the causes for the rise of sugar production in Cuba, Thomas offers "the emergence of a class of landlords interested in developing their land and promoting wealth, rather than in preserving status" (5), or, it might be added, general equality. Thomas describes a generally Liberal (versus Conservative) economic vision, though not necessarily accompanied by an equally liberal sociopolitical vision. A picture emerges in Thomas's description of a Cuba much more open to or available for technological innovation and improvement than Central America at around the same time, spurred by the sugar industry. This progressive outlook was contemporaneous with a substantial increase in the slave population on the island. Thus, ideas for revolution and independence for Cuba from Spain

> did not prosper...for a simple reason: the spectre of Haiti. No sane Cuban planter was ready to risk a serious quarrel with Spain and the Spanish garrison if there were the remotest danger of the opportunity being exploited by leaders of a successful slave revolt. (Bethell 10)

"French planters," Thomas notes, "brought not only terrible stories of murder and revolution but also many useful techniques" for sugar production and processing (9). Haiti was not of concern to the Cubans alone. The 1804 slave revolt, as Kirkwood points out, "shocked the landowners and elites" of Mexico as well (71).

[36] Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de Sismondi (1773-1842): a widely read Swiss economist and historian, a critic of

industrialism who called for social reforms in the interests of the working class.

[37] Dana "had spent twelve memorable days on Cuban soil" as Gale puts it (81). While this is perhaps the shortest amount of time spent by any of the travelers considered in this study, the result suggests that quantity, or length of time, is not always and necessarily the first consideration. This is particularly true where travel writing (as it has been here) is seen as a form of literature rather than reportage or ethnographical field notes. It is certainly the literary qualities of Dana's To Cuba and Back that prompt Gale to call the work "uneven but never dull," "spotty but also canny, penetrating, and challenging" (150, 165). Regardless of whether Dana came away with the Truth about Cuba, the goal of these discussions has been to demonstrate that he did, in fact, come away with truth about "Cuba": the result of his attentive encounter, the interaction of his imagination with what he encountered, the meaningful transformation of what he encountered by his imagination.

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