

ANTHROPOLOGY AND TRAVEL: PRACTICE AND TEXT

(Translation)

The author reflects on the relationship between anthropology and travel with regards to travel practices and their textual products. The text analyzes ethnographic and travel writing authority founded in the experience of the ethnographer and the travel writer, and the material conditions of fieldwork and travel writing with reference to the practice that relates them – travel.

Key words: *ethnography, travel writing, travel, field work, ethnographic authority, travel writing authority*

I hate travelling and explorers.
(Claude Lévi-Strauss 1992 [1955]:17)

INTRODUCTION

In spite of Levi-Strauss's grumpy protesting against travelling and explorers, not even he could deny that anthropology and travel are intrinsically connected. Since the 'prehistory' of the development of field research and even since the emergence of its modern variant, Malinowski's stay on Trobriand Islands¹⁴, which has changed and framed the self-conceptualization of Western anthropology, travel (to the field, from the field and return to the field), has been inseparable from anthropological practice. Furthermore, anthropological theory and gathering of ethnographic data have long depended on travelers, missionaries and merchants, with whom they have even shared the guidelines and queries for the collection of ethnographic data.¹⁵

¹⁴ This idea on the sudden 'emergence' of the field method of participant observation and immersion in the researched community through the prolonged stay on the field, covers up a more *gradual development* of the methods of field research (Urry 1972) and more gradual conceptualization of cultural/social anthropology as the discipline the identifying feature of which is field research. The idea on the emergence, rather than gradual development of the methods of field research is referred to by Stocking as 'the mythical charter' (Stocking 1992).

¹⁵ For example: *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*.

On the other, textual, side of this relationship, and due to the emerging interest in the textual nature of ethnography which, as any (other), even literary, text, uses certain rhetorical techniques, anthropologists have pointed to similarities between such rhetorical techniques used in ethnographies and travel writing and discussed “[t]he format and rhetorical conventions of the ethnographic monograph [...] in the context of other types of writing whose content was often very similar [travelogue, missionary letter, diary and journalism]” (Thornton 1983:503).

The aim of this article is to point to the similarities and analogies between an anthropologist and travel writer, with regards to the practice – travel and field research, the *experience* of the travel writer and ethnographer, and the textual product – travel writing or ethnographic monograph.

MATERIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS OF TRAVEL AND RESEARCH

Both travel writer and anthropologist-ethnographer have to travel in order to write:¹⁶ anthropologist/ethnographer within the archetypal model of fieldwork¹⁷ and travel writer in all those popular notions about the ethos of their ‘job’.

¹⁶ The relationship between travel/research and writing is not simple, straightforward or unambiguous, but this will be discussed in more details later in the article.

¹⁷ The concept of the field in anthropology has, however, changed since that formative period. Over the last several decades, anthropologists have turned towards the research of the nearby, familiar and personal, and certain national traditions, including Croatian ethnology, have been constituted from the beginning as the sciences of the familiar. This does not mean that different paradigms were replacing each other, on the contrary, they co-existed, but the idea of the field experience and its paradoxes have been under scrutiny. Field research was always deeply problematic (even Haddon and Malinowski were partially aware of that), but this problematic nature has not been discussed in anthropological texts until recently. Even courses on methodology of research were not taught at departments of social/cultural anthropology (see, for example Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Over the last few decades, the field is increasingly being discussed as a constructed, rather than as a given concept (see, for example Amit 2000). Fieldwork (with its most significant and ‘most famous’ variant – participant observation) is discussed in the context of inter/cross/trans/disciplinarity in science, and its fetishization is seen as an attempt at setting

In the formative period of the conceptualization of fieldwork and its establishment as the distinctive feature of social/cultural anthropology (as a way of establishing boundaries with other disciplines which have studied culture and society but used a somewhat different methodology), anthropologists were traveling to ‘exotic’, geographically remote locations to study different aspects of social and cultural life of a community, immersing themselves into the researched community (also called *primitive*)¹⁸. Bronislaw Malinowski was the key figure in this ‘mythical history’ of Western anthropology, when he, at the beginning of the 20th century, travelled to the remote Trobriand Islands, descended “off the verandah” and into the village center and invented participant observation, thus setting the ground for modern anthropological research, moreover, for the identity of Western anthropology. The title borrowed from Greek mythology, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, is probably no coincidence, and it is interesting on several levels. On one hand, it is “one of the most common tropes in literature of travel, the myth of the golden fleece (as narrated, for example by Apollonius Rhodius in his *Argonautica*)” (Borm 2000:85). On the other hand, it reveals something about Malinowski’s textual strategies and what Clifford will later call ‘ethnographic allegory’ (Clifford 1986), as well as something about Malinowski’s belief that ethnography “ought to endeavour to present its results in a manner exact but not dry”(Malinowski 2004 (1922):xvii). Borm identifies the title and the subtitle (*An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*) as a ‘trope of pleasure and instruction’ (Borm 2000:85), borrowing the idea from Charles Batten Jr., who detected it in the

boundaries and preserving the identity of the discipline in a context in which those boundaries are increasingly blurred (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Amit 2000). The applicability of anthropological methods in the context of *mobile, global, postcolonial world* (see, for example Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Clifford 1997) is also questioned, as methods which, at the moment of their introduction, were aimed at the study of ‘supposedly small-scale societies’ (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:3).

¹⁸ Some other socio-cultural-anthropological and ethnological traditions, however, have not been constituted (neither in their formative periods nor later) around the concept of the field research of the ‘far away’. For example, since its establishment (and after), Croatian ethnology has been constituted as a science of the *familiar* and relatively *nearby*, at least in that sense that it researched its own national culture.

18th century travel literature. Furthermore, this dramatization of experience is related to Malinowski's talent for self-promotion. It was "Malinowski's ambition and 'entrepreneurial talent', rather than simply the intrinsic intellectual merits of his program, that enabled him to secure the support of the Rockefeller Foundation [...] which [...] enabled him to institutionalize his perspective"(Gupta and Ferguson 1997:7).

But, before we engage into the 'overdetermination'¹⁹ of Malinowski, let me point to some of the guidelines for demystification offered by the history of anthropology. The idea of the 'detailed research of a limited area' came from natural scientists, specifically from the team of scientists researching topics from zoology in the Torres Strait in the late 19th century (Stocking 1992). That team, whose most prominent members were Alfred Haddon, William H.R. Rivers and Charles Seligman, who would later become known as 'the Cambridge school', travelled to the Torres Strait for the first time in 1888 with the intention to study extensively "the fauna, the structure, and the mode of formation of coral reefs" (Stocking 1992:21), in the evolutionist vein. Their second expedition to the Torres Strait was motivated exclusively by the intent to collect ethnographic data. Only shortly before this breakthrough (which, according to Henrika Kuklick, should be interpreted in a wider context of tendencies in natural sciences from the end of the 19th century, with increased specialization in natural history, the formation of disciplinary boundaries and an increased awareness of the need for field research under the newly emerging conditions of increased disciplinary stratification (Kuklick 1997:49)), the situation in anthropology was significantly different. 'Armchair' anthropologists were building their theories on the basis of the material collected in the field by government officials, missionaries, travelers. There was, therefore, a division of labor: before the "fusion of the roles of observer and theorist" (Kuklick 1997:59), the academic elite on the pyramid's top of the pyramid was building theories

¹⁹ John Hutnyk claims that, due to the textual 'revolution' in anthropology which was, admittedly, necessary and important for demystification of objectivism, "Malinowski has become a cartoon character" and that because of the analysis of the textual establishment of authority of the ethnographer and the rhetorical techniques used in anthropological texts (especially those of Malinowski), "reading Malinowski has become, via Clifford and others, overdetermined" (Hutnyk 2004:19).

based on the data collected by those at its bottom. Such fieldwork was based on manuals, such as, for example, *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*²⁰. Haddon himself, the member of the afore mentioned Cambridge School, frequently relied on the accounts of travelers and missionaries. It was Malinowski, with his dedication to breaking all bonds with the Westerners²¹ and learning the native language as an integral part of the new research method, who put an end to this practice²², even though he too went through a phase of armchair theorizing. At that time, *experience* (of fieldwork) was profiled as the “defining property of truly scientific research” (Kuklick 1997:59).

Taking into consideration what has been already said about the context in which the research method of Malinowskian type was, among other things, determined by economic factors and before we engage into the analysis of intra-textual specificities of ethnography and travel writing, let us briefly consider the material conditions under which anthropological field research, scientific work in general and travel writing are conducted today,

²⁰ A handbook of field research, jointly published by the British Association for the Advancement of Science, BAAS) and Royal Anthropological Institute and reprinted numerous times. *Notes and Queries* continued the long tradition of questionnaires and guidelines which government officials, travelers, missionaries, etc. brought with them to travels and missions and, following their guidelines, collected ethnographic data (mostly) in the colonies. This handbook itself was primarily intended for travelers and non-anthropologists who were collecting data which were used by armchair anthropologists for building theories (Stocking 1992).

²¹ Malinowski’s diary, which was discovered and published during the 1960s (Malinowski 1967) has revealed, among other things, that Malinowski was not in complete isolation from whites.

²² It is important to mention that, thanks to the research on the history of anthropology in the last few decades, the establishment and incorporation of Malinowskian paradigm of research in anthropology, including participant observation, was the consequence of many factors, not all of which were related to the inherent value of the method itself. Stocking, for example, states that the condition for financing of the researchers of the International African Institute was to enroll in Malinowski’s one-year seminar (Stocking 1992:58). Furthermore, it seems that participant observation was the result of the process which Malinowski gradually developed on the basis of the field experience of other scientists and “a result of his praxis in the field and not a natural outcome of his previous life or theoretical ideas” (Roldan 1995:143).

since we have established that there are undisputable analogies between the two fields. Rarely, if ever, can we find in ethnography or in a travel account, reference to those material conditions of the production of knowledge. However, they are of extreme, if not even crucial, epistemological importance. If we revisit the prior note on how Malinowski's method of research was institutionalized and the fact that certain material conditions of financing enabled it, and if we take into account the current state of financing of scientific research and scientific work in general, regardless whether it was, as in case of cultural anthropology, a research of the *faraway* or the *nearby*, it will become clear that scientific research does not exist in an economic vacuum. There is a key, very 'prosaic element' in the existence and epistemological implications of any research in any scientific field, namely the money. It is similar with travel writing, the difference being that in its printed form it is placed in a market position somewhat different than an ethnographic text in a journal or in a printed book. George Stocking has outlined the development of field research in British anthropology and, through detailed archival work, has revealed some of the conditions and circumstances on which the institutionalization and establishment of the fieldwork of Malinowskian type was based (Stocking 1992). This type of fieldwork has subsequently spread on other national disciplinary traditions and has become the identifying feature of cultural anthropology as a discipline, even in popular notions. It would be comforting to think that this method has been established in anthropology due to its 'inherent' quality and its suitability to the discipline. The reality is, however, somewhat different from this harmonious image of the lonely scientist who, undisturbed by the external stimuli and realities, sits in his tent, talks to the informants and then, in the peace and quiet of his study, transforms field notes into ethnographic text. On one hand, this simplified version of a messy, hard and incoherent (inter)subjective experience that is fieldwork (and the equally problematic translation of such incoherent experience into a coherent text, with all its implications, on the level of scientific authority and all others), has brought about a whole range of misconceptions and paradoxes which cultural anthropology is still trying to resolve, and which cannot be simply put aside by the textual analysis of the establishment of ethnographer's authority or by the recognition of the 'fictional' nature of the ethnographic text. On the other hand, it seems that it has contributed to the image of a

non-problematic nature of scientific work, materially and otherwise, has separated the scientist from the material and social reality in which his/her work exists, and finally, has placed scientists and the science itself into an ivory tower of scientific production which exists for its own sake, devoid of any social and political relevance in a wider public domain. Such notions obscure the material background of the research which was politically determined. It goes without saying that for each discipline the questioning of its own paradoxes, established notions, one's own authority, etc., are useful, even necessary for creating a critical habitus, however, when they become an end in itself and when they are disconnected from the 'real world', the discipline soon becomes enclosed in a hermeneutical vicious circle. This is one of the reasons why it is necessary to demystify this image and to put scientists and their scientific work in social, political and material context which depends on a number of factors. Some of them include the financial conditions which are necessary for the research to start in the first place. Other factors, which are inseparable from the financial conditions of the production of knowledge, are the tendencies in the production of knowledge in general, which are in the present moment inseparably linked to the present crisis and its causes - the logic of capital (which re-defines the priorities in the production of knowledge which should, supposedly, solve the crisis). Under such conditions, the financing becomes excessively insecure, scarce and dispersed and the results of research, its dynamics and epistemological implications have to co-exist uncomfortably with the expectations of financiers. In such a situation, when scientists are forced to balance between the source of money, their own scientific communities and their own expectations, the coherent and ethically appropriate inclusion of subjects/object of research in the equation becomes extremely difficult. The material and political conditions of the production of knowledge and the priorities of the cash offices (of different centers of power) intended for scientific research are different from the period when Haddon, Rivers or Malinowski were doing their research, the period of 'high imperialism' (Mills 1991:1).

To these conditions and the context of the production of knowledge should be added the increasingly frequent demands for scientific mobility which is supposed to improve science, knowledge and scientific research. In the academy this mobility is conceptualized and represented harmoniously, as an opportunity for widening one's horizons (such was, after all, the

conceptualization of modernist travel) and gaining new knowledge, while in reality it is a condition which is put in front of the increasingly precarious academic workers and serves the purpose of collecting ‘points’ in the attempt to preserve one’s job, while those same displaced laborers are added to the number of other displaced individuals which disturb the romanticized modernist monolithic notions of travel as pleasure. Of course, my intention is not to compare the scientists in mobility programs with involuntarily displaced persons, such as refugees, but the fact remains that the past romanticized notions about going to universities and research centers which are bursting with intellectually stimulative atmosphere, in which knowledge and ideas are readily exchanged, are rapidly collapsing before the pressure of scientific precariousness, commercialization of science and knowledge and overall existential insecurity. Such a concept of mobility, more romantically called exile, is connected with the modernist celebratory discourse on the ‘artist in exile’ and exile as the “ideology of artistic [and scientific] production” (Kaplan 1996:28). Modern critical discourse which problematizes the questions of exile has the tendency “to remove itself from any political or historically specific instances in order to generate aesthetic categories and ahistorical values” (ibid. 28). This modern-romantic notion about exile as productive and stimulating is however, far from the reality a mobile scientist is facing today, himself probably frequently caught in a trap of discrepancy between the romantic notion and the shear reality.

ETHNOGRAPHIC AND TRAVEL WRITING EXPERIENCE AND ITS TEXTUALISATION

In his article in which he problematizes different modes of the establishment of authority in an ethnographic text, Clifford identifies four types of ethnographic authority: experiential, interpretive, dialogical and polyphonic; “[n]one is obsolete, none is pure” (ibid. 54)²³. Experiential authority was established and consolidated in the period from the end of the 19th century to 1950s. The beginnings of its formation coincided with

²³ In other words, different forms of ethnographic authority are not chronologically replacing one another, they co-exist, sometimes even inside a single ethnographic text.

the beginnings of the development of field research in anthropology and with the ‘fusion of the role of the observer and theorist’ – a field researcher who collects ethnographic data and who is armed with and legitimized by scientific objectivity and theory, and the “literary charter of this new authority is the first chapter of the *Argonauts*, with its prominently displayed photographs of the ethnographer’s tent pitched among the Kiriwinian dwellings” (Clifford 1988:28). Hence, after the anthropologists have stopped relying on the accounts of field data collectors, travelers and various interpreters, their authority was increasingly based on the *experience* of fieldwork: “Experiential authority is based on a ‘feel’ for the foreign context, a kind of accumulated savvy and a sense of the style of a people or place” (Clifford 1988:35), while “the experience of the researcher can serve as a unifying source of authority in the field” (Clifford 1988:35). It is on this experience of travel, the experience of being in another place, in a foreign culture, that the authority of travel writer and travel writing are based on, the experience is what makes his/her text credible. On the other hand, even though it is “difficult to say very much about experience. Like ‘intuition’, it is something that one does or does not have, and its invocation often smacks of mystification” (Clifford 1988:35), this can be true of ethnography, but in travel writing invoking experience is not merely an unstable background of authority. In other words, in a ‘scientific’ text, such as ethnography, which is (after all) sustained not only by experience, but also by institutional and disciplinary history and the authority of rationalist science as such, there is no place for experiential subjectivizations; travel writer is subjected to somewhat different forces and milder restrictions.

Ethnographic and travel writing texts are further connected by one of the basic paradoxes of anthropological habitus. Namely, fieldwork, as it has already been mentioned, is based on a *personal* experience, while it is exactly the *personal* which is stubbornly being pushed to the margins of the ethnographic text, purifying it from all traces of subjectivity. In her article in which she emphasizes the discursive practices which ethnographic writing has been borrowing and is still borrowing from other genres, such as “travel books, personal memoirs, journalism, and accounts by missionaries, settlers, colonial officials, and the like” (Pratt 1986:27) and the presence of the ‘tropology of travel writing’ in ethnographic text, Mary Louise Pratt notices that in traditional ethnographies personal narrative, unless published as a

separate book dealing with the experience of fieldwork, usually appears in the introductory chapters, stories about the arrival to the field, meeting local people and potential subjects of the research, difficulties with which the researcher was faced, etc. (see Pratt 1986). Pratt relates this textual strategy, i.e. the combination of ‘personal narrative and impersonal description’, with travel writing which commonly combined those two techniques by the 16th century. This ‘narration-description duality’ has been preserved in travel writing until today, albeit in different ratios. While, according to Pratt, in the older travelogues, narration dominated over description, “[b]y the late nineteenth century [...] the two modes often had about equal weight in travel books, and it was common for a trip to result in two separate volumes” (ibid. 35). Unlike travel writing, in ethnographies description was superior to narration, which remained restricted to the ‘arrival stories’ which “display clear continuities with travel writing” (ibid. 35).

Furthermore, both the ethnographer and the travel writer are faced with the difficulty of translating experience into text. The complexities, multiple meanings and intersubjectivity of fieldwork are blurred by the coherence and organization of the ethnographic text, and in the mentioned discrepancy between the subjective *experience* of fieldwork and objectivity, as demanded and sought by the final product of fieldwork – ethnography, in this process of translation, of editing one into the other, “[m]uch must be left behind” (Pratt 1986:33). In an ethnography, as well as in a travel text, in this complex process of translating experience into a coherent text, the author is the final authority who decides what will be included and what will be left out. Sometimes those absences and selections are revealed by the author²⁴ himself/herself, and sometimes they can be only guessed by a careful reader. We can, for example, ask ourselves what exactly has been ‘omitted’ from her text by Dervla Murphy, who has visited our regions²⁵

²⁴ Malinowski’s note in the Foreword to the *Argonauts*, is only one such example: “This account has been culled, a preliminary monograph, from Ethnographic material, covering the whole extent of the tribal culture of one district.” (Malinowski 2004 (1922):xvi).

²⁵ “I had first traveled this road by bicycle in 1963 [on her way to India] – then by bus in July 1989, on my way to visit my daughter when she lived in Skopje – and again by bus in March 1990 on my way to Romania” (Murphy 2002:4-5). This quote was taken from the first part of her book *Through the Embers of Chaos. Balkan Journeys*, where she described her visit to Croatia in 1991. She returned in 1999, when she was passing through Croatia on her way to Serbia.

several times and who constantly reminds us in her writing that the text has been reconstructed from field notes and diaries she was keeping during her travel (*being there – writing here*). What was reconstructed, added, removed, dramatized in the dialogues she ‘quotes’ in the text? What was taken over from ‘traveler’s cheat sheets’, the travel writing (the inevitable Rebecca West), historical and other references which she had read before, during and after the travel (since she was not bounded by the restrictions posed by the scientific text and did not need references to signalize whether a certain idea or conclusion was her own)? What happened between the travels (1991 and 1999) and the creation of the text (again *being there-writing here*)? And so on.

Ethnographies and travel writing also share the hybridity of genre. For example, in his analysis of the analogies between travel writing and ethnography, Jan Borm concludes that both are hybrids. Reading the *Argonauts*, Leiris’s *L’Afrique fantome*, Lévi-Strauss’s *Tristes Tropiques* and discussing with the works of Mary Louise Pratt and James Clifford (both were writing about the analogies between travel writing and ethnographic text), he concludes that those two hybrid genres are overlapping in many ways (understanding the term genre as a flexible term in terms of literary theory), and that the differences between them are observable in the “predominance of certain elements or sets of components over others” (Borm 2000:92), while he places Leiris’s *L’Afrique fantome*, Lévi-Strauss’s *Tristes Tropiques* somewhere in between ethnography and travel writing. It has been already mentioned that ethnographic text borrows from travel writing certain narrative and discursive techniques (Pratt 1986), while travel text is frequently defined, or escapes definition, by way of its hybridity. Namely, due to the renewed interest in travel, displacement and textual products of those practices - travel writing, in a post-disciplinary field in which travel and travel writing are observed in the context of problematizing identity, (post)colonialism, imperialism, etc., the definition of genre has been forgotten and is given “as an implied assumption or non-verbalized obviousness” (Duda 1999:1). As a hybrid genre, travel writing is commonly defined “in-between” genres and discourses, as a “genre composed of other genres” (Campbell 1988:6), on the border between ethnography, literature, historiography and journalism, as well as a combination of different discourses inside a single text.

POLITICS AND POETICS OF TRAVEL IN THE CONTEXT OF ETHNOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL WRITING

James Clifford was the one who has perhaps most explicitly engaged into the relationship between anthropology and travel, emphasizing, among other things, the importance of travel for anthropological fieldwork and the need for the re-conceptualization of field work (and culture) as *dwelling-in-travel* (Clifford 1997). In this way, the ideas of the locality and static nature of enclosed culture are de-throned, while the practices of displacement are presented as constitutive for the notion of culture. Furthermore, the idea on the existence of enclosed cultural regions existing as strictly defined, with own identity, prior to establishing a contact with other communities is also demystified: “Cultural centers, discrete regions and territories, do not exist prior to contacts, but are sustained through them, appropriating and disciplining the restless movements of people and things.” (Clifford 1997:3). This de-throning of an enclosed region (existing *elsewhere*) as the bearer of cultural difference is an important critical moment in cultural anthropology, which, as a regional science (Gupta and Ferguson 1997) has been based on the “naturalization of cultural difference as inhering in different geographical locales” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:8). Anthropology, according to Clifford, should emphasize the importance of travel and displacement not only in fieldwork, but also on the level of theory, because “travels and contacts are crucial sites for an unfinished modernity” (Clifford 1997:2), while the locality of cultures consequentially erases the history of contacts, cultural exchange and inter-cultural influences. Clifford thinks that anthropology should focus on “hybrid, cosmopolitan experiences as much as on rooted, native ones” (ibid. 24). However, the question (which Clifford, granted, could not have answered at the time he was writing this article) remains – what happens with new forms of displacement which are the result of the new logic of capitalism?

Clifford does not suggest the fetishization of travel at the expense of dwelling. However, it is difficult not to get the impression that his “tipping the balance toward traveling” whereby “the ‘chronotope’ of culture [...] comes to resemble as much a site of travel encounters as of residence; it is less like a tent in a village or a controlled laboratory or a site of initiation and inhabitation, and more like a hotel lobby, urban café, ship or bus” (ibid. 25),

nevertheless contains certain elements of non-critical and universalist Western trope of travel, implicitly glorifying it. In that sense he overlooks for example, the flows of people in daily 'transit' (from home to work and back), their identity and social/historical situation being more determined by their existential problems, than by questions of their own displacement. In other words, while our eyes are fixed on the dynamics of a hotel lobby, the symbolical practices which are occurring in it, the fluctuation of contemporary *flâneurs*, what remains hidden is the world of chambermaids, cleaners, porters. As Clifford said: "Every focus excludes; there is no politically innocent methodology for intercultural interpretation" (ibid. 19). However, an anthropologist in the present moment still has to choose whether his/her focus will be the hotel lobby or whether he/she will look beyond it. It would be unjust to claim that Clifford was unaware of the trope of 'travel' being linked to "a history of European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic, recreational meanings and practices" (ibid. 33), or that he was not attempting to de-stabilize such Western-centric conceptualization of a distinct, positive vision of travel by searching and identifying its alternative, repressive and involuntary, negative meaning. However, the impression remains that something is escaping his focus²⁶. Clifford's attempt of stretching the Western (elitist, recreational) concept of travelling to the more repressive forms (for example, slave trade in the Atlantic, immigrants, war refugees, etc.), did not particularly impress John Hutnyk either: "Just considering the absurdity of including the racist violence and atrocity of the slave trade under any revamped notion of 'travel' would be

²⁶ Let us consider for a moment Clifford's analysis of the hotel metaphor. In one segment of his text in *Travelling Cultures*, revisiting the concept of culture as simultaneously a place of dwelling and traveling (and in the contest of his past interest for surrealist art in the context of Paris), he sees a hotel as an epitome of "a specific way into complex histories of traveling cultures (and cultures of travel) in the late twentieth century" (ibid. 31). Even though he admits the contemporary problematic nature of hotels in terms of "class, gender, race, cultural/historical location and privilege" (ibid. 31), and of the image of the hotel as "an older form of gentlemanly occidental travel, when home and abroad, city and country, East and West, metropole and antipodes, were more clearly fixed" (ibid. 31), one problematic aspect escapes him: what about the hotel as a place of class inequality and injustice in the context mentioned earlier, in which, while observing the travelers (women, men, black, white, Easterners, Westerners), we miss all those who stay behind, working behind the scenes of this ever mobile world, the *dwellers-in-the-midst-of-travel*?

sufficient to show the likely inappropriateness of generalising extensions of the travel trope in its Euro-American modes.” (Hutnyk 2004:23). Hutnyk, however, admits that those questions (for example, can slave trade be considered travel) still turn our attention to the “violences underlying all travel, including that which enables ethnographic projects, such as the colonial power that makes the world safe for ethnographers and tourists” (ibid. 23). A similar problem is visible in the post-disciplinary field which deals with cultures of travel and travel writing. This discursive field of scientific production which deals with the practices of travel, displacement and textual products of these practices and which observed those practices in the context of problematizing identity, (post)colonialism, imperialism, etc., requires re-conceptualization in the contemporary historical moment. Apart from the fact that, according to Caren Kaplan, discussions on travel and displacement in Western criticism rarely take into account the material conditions under which those practices exist and last (Kaplan 1996:1), we cannot discuss them in terms we used to several decades ago, when the material and historical conditions of travelling, production of knowledge and circulation of ideas on the scientific market were significantly different. Similarly, it is impossible, at least in the European context, to discuss those issues without taking into account the political project of the European Union, the closing and opening of borders and geopolitical changes which have occurred during the last few decades, as well as the recent economic, political and social situation, both in Europe and globally. Furthermore, in the literature on travel and travel writing there is a tendency to mythologize and fetishize travel, the reference points being mostly elite, individualist, Western recreational travel for pleasure, with frequent lamentations on how the tourist boom caused the degradation of ‘authentic’ travel and the frequent distinctions between the ‘true’ traveler and tourist-consumer (both on the part of travel writing authors and those who analyze their texts). However, alongside the global and local presence of tourism, there are many more people who travel, move around, change places, as economic migrants, workers, war refugees, victims of natural disasters, ‘humane dislocations’, etc. Hence, what is rarely analyzed in this post-disciplinary field, are those involuntary displacements motivated by negative political and social phenomena, and different categories of travelers such as “the occidental ethnographer, the modernist expatriate poet, the writer of popular

travel accounts, and the tourist may all participate in the mythologized narrativizations of displacement without questioning the cultural, political, and economic grounds of their different professions, privileges, means and limitations” (ibid. 2). Thus “Euro-American discourses of displacement tend to absorb difference and create ahistorical amalgams” (ibid. 2), representing travel as ‘mystified universalism’. Kaplan offers some useful terminological guidelines for de-homogenizing and challenging the monolithic nature of the conceptual field of travel, analyzing in her study “a variety of historical constructs of modern displacement: leisure travel, exploration, expatriation, exile, homelessness, and immigration” (ibid. 3). However, following Hutnyk, we have to ask ourselves whether the Western trope of travel can be ‘purified’ of its baggage in order to include those ‘negative’ visions of travel or whether we need a completely new concept which would encompass them in a way freed from “a history of European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic, recreational meanings” (Clifford 1997:33).

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