

To Vincent Woropay,  
and also to Carolyn Hayman,  
to whom I promised this dedication  
in a childhood pact.

*Pleasure and guilt on  
the Grand Tour*

Travel writing  
and imaginative geography  
1600–1830



CHLOE CHARD



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## *Introduction*

### Pleasure and the language of travel writing

Travel writers have often reflected on the pleasures that their commentaries might offer the reader. One of the more unexpected analyses of such pleasures is found in the Marquis de Sade's novel *Juliette* (1797); the eponymous heroine explains, with delicate irony, that she feels that her readers, their imaginations inflamed by the proliferation of 'détails lubriques' within her narratives, may feel a certain relief when she interrupts the tale of her sexual adventures in order to offer an account of her travels in the environs of Naples, thereby providing the opportunity to fall back restfully upon 'des descriptions plus douces'.<sup>1</sup>

Other travellers, in contrast, have defined writing about the foreign as possessing a power of its own to inflame the imagination. Lévi-Strauss, at the beginning of *Tristes Tropiques* (1955), suggests that travel books promise to restore to the reader a sense of otherness – an excitement in encountering cultural difference which has been lost in travel itself, as a result of the distressing seepage of the 'sous-produits maléfiques' of Western civilization into the rest of the world: 'Je comprends alors la passion, la folie, la duperie des récits de voyage. Ils apportent l'illusion de ce qui n'existe plus et qui devrait être encore, pour que nous échappions à l'accablante évidence que 20 000 ans d'histoire sont joués.'<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Waugh, in *Labels: A Mediterranean Journal* (1930), analysing a less subtle genre of travel writing, 'the advertisements of shipping companies', discerns in these advertisements a similar power to displace mundane reality. He considers their attractions for 'the middle-aged widow of comfortable means':

<sup>1</sup> In Sade, *La Nouvelle Justine*, vol. IX, pp. 338, 339: 'lubricious details'; 'more soft and gentle descriptions'.

<sup>2</sup> p. 27: 'harmful by-products'; 'I understand, then, the passion, the madness, the deception of travel books. They bring with them the illusion of that which no longer exists and which should once again be present before us, in order for us to escape the overwhelming evidence that twenty thousand years of history have played themselves out.'

These widows, then, celibate and susceptible, read the advertisements of steamship companies and travel bureaux and find there just that assembly of phrases – half poetic, just perceptibly aphrodisiac – which can produce at will in the unsophisticated a state of mild unreality and glamour. ‘Mystery, History, Leisure, Pleasure’, one of them begins. There is no directly defined sexual appeal...<sup>3</sup>

Giuseppe Baretti’s explanation of the appeal of travel writing, at the beginning of his *Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy* (1768), seems, initially, very different from these visions of alluring exoticism:

Few books are so acceptable to the greatest part of mankind, as those that abound in slander and invective. Hence almost all accounts of travels, published within my memory, have quickly circulated, and were perused, at least for a while, with great eagerness, because they have been strongly marked with these characters.<sup>4</sup>

At this point, however, Baretti identifies the quality within the foreign that ‘slander and invective’ so successfully offer up to the reader:

Men are fond of the *marvellous* in manners and customs as well as in events; and a writer of travels, who would make himself fashionable in his own country is generally polite enough to bring from abroad abundant materials for gratifying at once, the malignity and the love of novelty, that must predominate in so many of his readers.<sup>5</sup>

He voices, in other words, an assumption spelt out more explicitly by Lévi-Strauss and Waugh: the assumption that a traveller engaged in translating the foreign into discourse will set himself or herself the task of producing an effect of pleasure by imposing on the topography of foreignness a demand for some form of dramatic departure from the familiar and the mundane.

Baretti, Lévi-Strauss and Waugh all imply that the travel writer who finds a lack of evidence of otherness within the foreign can always invent such otherness – or, at least, conjure it up through some form of rhetorical ‘duperie’. Writings that exclude this possibility often register anxiety or disappointment at an absence of alterity. Rousseau, discussing how to manage travel in *Émile* (1762), laments the difficulty that the traveller encounters in the contemporary world, which he sees, like Lévi-Strauss, as one in which ‘les caractères originaux des peuples, s’effaçant de jour en jour, deviennent en même raison plus difficiles à saisir’. For Herodotus,

Ctesias and Pliny, in contrast, grasping the traits of different peoples in their full diversity was relatively easy, since distinctions between them were far more strongly marked.<sup>6</sup>

Without constructing any such grand historical vision of encroaching sameness, a great many writings include complaints about the lack of alterity in individual places: the lament ‘It might be London’, uttered by the heroine of E.M. Forster’s novel *A Room with a View* (1908) on her first evening in a Florentine *pensione*, recurs, in various forms, throughout the history of writing about the foreign.<sup>7</sup> Waugh, in *Labels*, remarks: ‘The only place that I can think of at all like the town of Gibraltar, is Shoreham-by-Sea in Sussex’ – a comment that only produces its full effect of venom when he explains: ‘For those who have at any time had occasion to pass through it, or, worse, to stop there, I will add this modification – that they must think of Gibraltar as a Shoreham deprived of its two churches, and scoured of all the ramshackle, haphazard characteristics which make it relatively tolerable.’<sup>8</sup>

Travellers, then, impose on the foreign a demand that it should in some way proclaim itself as different from the familiar. At the same time, they define their own task as one of grasping that difference. Travel writings regularly note the disadvantages of those travellers who, for whatever reason, are unresponsive to alterity. Giovanni Battista Belzoni, in his *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs, and Excavations, in Egypt and Nubia* (1820), describes a type of traveller who, having lived too long among foreigners, ‘is so thoroughly initiated into their customs and manners, that those which shock at first sight, lose their effect on him; he... does not reckon any thing he beholds extraordinary or worth attention, though perhaps even of the greatest consequence’.<sup>9</sup> Byron contemptuously describes a woman ‘fast asleep in the most anti-narcotic spot in the world’ (in Switzerland, between the Château de Chillon and Clarens), and then cites yet another example of dispiriting unresponsiveness: ‘I remember at Chamouni – in the very eyes of Mont Blanc – hearing another woman – English also – exclaim to her party – “did you ever see any thing more rural” – as if it was Highgate or Hampstead – or Brompton – or Hayes.’<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> pp. 593, 594: ‘the original characters of different peoples, growing fainter from day to day, become for that reason more difficult to grasp’.

<sup>7</sup> p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> p. 158.

<sup>9</sup> p. 109.

<sup>10</sup> Byron, *Letters and Journals*, vol. V, p. 97. Byron continues: ‘– “Rural” quothe! – Rocks – pines – torrents – Glaciers – Clouds – and Summits of eternal snow far above them – and “Rural!”’

<sup>3</sup> pp. 41, 42; emphasis added.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*; emphasis added.

In acclaiming the foreign as gratifyingly dissimilar from the familiar, travel writing employs a range of concepts of otherness: ‘the marvellous’, as cited by Baretti, for example, the ‘wonder’, and concepts of the strange, the singular and the astonishing. Accounts of foreign places also make use of a range of specific tropes and rhetorical strategies, some of which recur in writings of many different periods, in order to affirm that the subject of commentary has managed to grasp the topography in its full alterity, and is offering it up to the reader as an object of pleasurable speculation. The simplest of such strategies is to sprinkle the commentary lavishly with foreign words; conveniently made visible even at a casual glance through the use of italics, terms borrowed from other languages assure the reader that the traveller has indeed managed to collect evidence of a difference from the familiar. Hester Piozzi, in her *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany* (1789), asks: ‘What... can make these Roman ladies fly from *odori* so, that a drop of lavender in one’s handkerchief... is to throw them all into convulsions thus? Sure this is the only instance in which they forbear to *fabbricare su l’antico*.<sup>11</sup>

One particular rhetorical trope plays a major part in representing the foreign as dramatically different. This is the trope of hyperbole: the same rhetorical figure that Byron sees the Englishwoman at Chamonix as so signally failing to achieve, when she reaches for the cosy familiarity of the term *rural*. Specific varieties of hyperbole are considered in detail in the chapters that follow. All these varieties elide alterity with drama; in acclaiming the topography as dramatic, striking and remarkable, they affirm at the same time that it has supplied the evidence of difference expected and required of it. Travel writings often suggest that the perception of a need for hyperbole is one of the features that differentiates the traveller from those without experience of travel. Horace Walpole comments on his own description of the journey over the Alps: ‘This sounds too bombast and too romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has.’<sup>12</sup> Byron remarks in a footnote to a dramatic account of an Italian sunset in Canto IV of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1818): ‘The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or an Italian sky, yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening... as contemplated... during many a ride along the banks of the Brenta.’<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Vol. I, 417–18.

<sup>12</sup> Walpole, *The Yale Edition*, vol. XIII, p. 182; letter to Richard West; this section of the letter is headed ‘Aix in Savoy, Sept. 30th’.

<sup>13</sup> Byron, *Complete Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 228; note to stanzas 27–9.

A theme that recurs throughout the history of travel writing, and that presents the topography itself as endorsing the impulse to move beyond boundaries inscribed in the structure and etymology of hyperbole (a ‘throwing beyond’), is excess. The diversity of utterances produced by this theme include – unsurprisingly – much ‘slander and invective’ of the kind described by Baretti. The Gothic novels of the 1790s enthusiastically exploit the hyperbolic potential of immoderation in the warm South: Ann Radcliffe’s *Sicilian Romance* informs the reader that the lives of the Marquis de Mazzini and Maria de Vellorno ‘exhibited a *boundless* indulgence of violent and luxurious passions’.<sup>14</sup>

The proliferation of hyperbole in travel writing is also endorsed through elisions between, on the one hand, the rhetorical impulse beyond constraining limits realized within this trope, and, on the other, the traversals of geographical boundaries entailed in travelling. Chapter 4, ‘Destabilized Travel’, considers the symbolic traversals of bounds that are presented as accompanying the geographical crossing of limits in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century writings. ‘Destabilized Travel’ and ‘Hyperbole and Observation’ both examine elisions between hyperbole, travel and yet another exceeding of bounds: the movement beyond the mundane and familiar entailed in confrontations with the sublime.

Hyperbole, however, is, at various points in the history of travel writing, defined as a trope that involves taking grave rhetorical risks: a trope, in other words, that lays the traveller open to accusations of affectation, pretentiousness, a craven reliance on the conventional formulations of others, a naïve proclivity to be much too easily impressed, or simply a general lack of discrimination.<sup>15</sup> Travellers often parody the hyperbolic language of their precursors: as Paul Fussell has pointed out, Evelyn Waugh mocks a well-established convention of declaring ‘I shall never forget...’ when he observes: ‘I do not think I shall ever forget the sight of Etna at sunset... Nothing I have ever seen in Art or Nature was quite so revolting.’<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> p. 194; emphasis added.

<sup>15</sup> As Nicholas Thomas points out in ‘Fear and Loathing in the South Pacific: Colonial and Postcolonial History in Popular Fiction’, contemporary travel writing (‘much of what appears in *Granta*, for example’) often avoids the ‘overplayed interests in discovery or adventure’ that have provided nineteenth-century and twentieth-century travellers with one means of generating hyperboles, and instead finds satisfaction in those details that allow the reader to adopt a stance of lofty postmodernist detachment: ‘the failures of nationalism, the flaking paint, the natives with personal stereos, the fake tribal dances, are dull and sleazy and tell us little about a wider world except that we are the only ones able to detect the ironies’ (*In Oceania*, pp. 156–67; p. 167).

<sup>16</sup> Waugh, *Labels*, p. 139. See Fussell, *Abroad*, p. 183.

Such parodies are especially common between (roughly) the 1740s and the 1830s, when travel writing makes great use of a rhetoric of intense emotional responsiveness. John Moore, mocking hyperbolic responses to works of art in *A View of Society and Manners in Italy* (1781), observes that ‘if you are violently bent upon being thought a man of very refined taste, there are books in abundance to be had, which will... furnish you with suitable expressions for the whole climax of sensibility’.<sup>17</sup> Unsurprisingly, travel writings of this period often employ a self-protective irony, which acknowledges the temptation to become carried away by linguistic immoderation, and proclaims the traveller’s ability to view this temptation from a stance of critical detachment. Patrick Brydone, descending Mount Etna in his *Tour through Sicily and Malta* (1773), indulges in some giddily ‘elevated’ musings: in such regions, he loftily observes, ‘the mind considers the little storms of the human passions as equally below her notice’. Slipping on the ice, however, he suffers a sprain: ‘and your poor philosopher was obliged to hop on one leg, with two men supporting him, for several miles over the snow’. This calamity prompts him to detach himself, with some show of embarrassment, from his previous rhetoric of hyperbole: ‘our wags here allege, that he left the greatest part of his philosophy behind him, for the use of Empedocles’s heirs and successors.’<sup>18</sup> Thomas Gray, in a synopsis of the ‘Travels of T.G., Gent.’, includes an ironically inflated account of crossing the Alps, which might be seen as defending his other epistolary accounts of this experience from charges of naïve effusiveness: ‘visits the Grande Chartreuse:... horrore and terrors on all sides. The author dies of the fright.’<sup>19</sup>

The trope of digression or divagation, which also plays a conspicuous role in travel writing, provides one means of generating such self-protective ironies, and so countering the incipient effusiveness of hyperbole: just as the traveller seems to be working up to a ‘climax of sensibility’, as John Moore puts it, he or she veers off towards some completely different object of commentary. The structure of hyperbole is transgressive, involving a movement beyond the bounds of mundane or trivial utterances (and, in its more extreme form, a movement beyond the bounds of verisimilitude); digressiveness, therefore, deflates hyperboles by deflecting their transgressive thrust. The first-person narrative of travel – a genre much used to comment on the foreign during the period considered in this book – is inherently divagatory, simply in the sense that it allows the subject of commentary to move

<sup>17</sup> Vol. I, p. 63.

<sup>18</sup> Vol. I, pp. 216, 217, 219, 219.

<sup>19</sup> Gray, *The Poems of Thomas Gray*, p. 114; letter dated ‘March 12, N.S. 1740’.

easily between one domain of objects and another, to shift back and forth at will between specific objects of commentary, and to pause in the account of a particular place, in order to reflect at length on some idea that springs to mind.<sup>20</sup> De Sade, scornfully rejecting the Abbé Richard’s tidy-minded accounts of Italian cities, affirms his own freedom, in describing Naples, to call up individual objects of commentary at will: ‘Je n’ai suivi aucun ordre dans cette tournée parce que j’ai vu que cette manière méthodique et pédantesque ne servait jamais à rien.’<sup>21</sup> Charles Dupaty, at the Palazzo Pitti, in Florence, draws attention to the pleasurable disorderliness of following the train of thought prompted by specific objects – in this case, paintings depicting the death of the rich and the death of the poor – by eliding thematic and geographical digression. The images before him prompt him to reflect sadly on social injustice; by the time he reaches the gardens, the divagatory impulse has somehow led him over the Atlantic: ‘mon imagination avoit passé en revue tous les maux de la civilisation; elle entroit dans les forêts du Canada, pour interroger, sur le bonheur, la vie sauvage’.<sup>22</sup>

In many cases, digressions distract the reader by introducing a proliferation of bathetically mundane and trivial details. Gray’s ironic synopsis of his travels includes observations which imply that the traveller, attempting to appropriate the foreign in tones of hyperbolic drama, will nonetheless inevitably be drawn to trivia: ‘Returns to Lyons; gets a surfeit with eating ortolans and lampreys’, ‘Locked out of Parma on a cold winter’s night... Despises that city’, and (at Modena), ‘How the duke and dutchess lie over their own stables, and go every night to a vile Italian comedy; despises them and it, and proceeds to Bologna’.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> James Clifford, in *Routes*, p. 66, notes the range of different preoccupations of first-person travel narratives when emphasizing the contrast between the *récit de voyage* and the specialized genres of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – such as the account of anthropological fieldwork. Digressiveness has often been seen as characteristic of the novel (see, for example, Cascardi, *The Subject of Modernity*, p. 113). My own view of the relation between the two genres is that travel writing can more easily establish a sense of order and closure, simply by reference to the structure of the traveller’s itinerary (real or fictionalized), and, authenticated and anchored by the narrative framework of a journey, can indulge in a more untrammeled digressiveness.

<sup>21</sup> Sade, *Voyage d’Italie*, p. 385: ‘I have not followed any particular order in this tour, because I saw that this methodical, pedantic style was completely pointless.’

<sup>22</sup> Dupaty, *Lettres*, vol. I, p. 186: ‘my imagination had passed in review all the evils arising from the state of civilization; it was entering the forests of Canada, to reason upon happiness, and a savage life’ (*Sentimental Letters*, vol. I, p. 146). For an account of a much more elaborate geographical digression, in William Beckford’s account of St Peter’s, Rome, in *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents* (1783), see Shaffer, “‘To remind us of China’”, pp. 224–35.

<sup>23</sup> Gray, *The Poems of Thomas Gray*, p. 114; letter dated ‘March 12, N.S. 1740’.

Aldous Huxley, in *Along the Road: Notes and Essays of a Tourist* (1925), defines his own proclivity for digressive fantasy as a major advantage on his travels: 'excessive and promiscuous inquisitiveness, so fatal to a man who desires to mix in society' is, he claims, 'nothing less than a necessity' to the traveller.<sup>24</sup> An equally resolute commitment to divagation is registered in one of the most influential of late eighteenth-century travel narratives: Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768), in which the traveller-narrator, Yorick, replaces the major sights of the Grand Tour by a series of minutely analysed social encounters (for the most part, flirtatious encounters with women). In Paris, Yorick directly explains the importance of digression to the assimilation of the foreign: 'The man who either disdains or fears to walk up a dark entry may be an excellent good man, and fit for a hundred things; but he will not do to make a good sentimental traveller.' *A Sentimental Journey* ends with a triumphant displacement of hyperbole by the digressive details of social exchange: just as the traveller is embarking on the traversal of the Alps, he is sidetracked into a complex 'Case of Delicacy' with a woman in an inn.<sup>25</sup>

Hyperbole and digression, as this last example suggests, map out two conflicting approaches not only to travel writing but also to travel itself: the traveller can either be swept beyond the bounds of the mundane, or can evince a paradoxical fascination with varieties of mundaneness even when confronting the topography of the foreign. Most travel narratives oscillate between the two approaches, but some register a decided preference for one or the other. W.H. Auden, in the letter 'Hetty to Nancy' in his *Letters from Iceland* (1937), a book compiled in conjunction with Louis McNeice, sets up an ironic opposition between, on the one hand, the sublime natural features such as the cascade of the Gullfoss that he and McNeice visit in the course of a camping trip, and on the other, the incidental events that punctuate their journey. Auden's intermittent hyperboles are, for the most part, rhetorically straightforward, in the manner satirized by Gray: at the Gullfoss, '*I was scared stiff*' He nonetheless proclaims the attractions of a more digressive approach by establishing – and recklessly exploiting – a self-conscious pretence that he is a female traveller, Hetty, writing archly and loquaciously to a female friend. McNeice, too, becomes a woman, Maisie, who encourages an irreverent attitude towards the sights: 'While the others were taking a morning look at the rainbow spray of the Gullfoss Maisie and I had our first lapse from esprit de corps and sneaked into the little tin house which caters for

<sup>24</sup> (London: Chatto and Windus, 1925), pp. 26–7.

<sup>25</sup> Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, pp. 107, 120.

trippers where we had some very good coffee.' Maisie's very opposition to intense encounters with the sublimities of nature – 'the Grand Open Spaces' – is recorded in language of such a stream-of-consciousness kind that it precludes any possibility of hyperbolic intensity:

Talking of the G.O. Spaces Maisie says they are a closed book. I have been wondering if this would be considered an epigram because I couldn't see that it was very funny and Maisie is supposed to be witty, but then it is different in London, where people have always been drinking sherry before you say anything to them.<sup>26</sup>

### Imaginative geography and the Grand Tour

Travel writings, it should be evident from the commentaries quoted so far, are, throughout their history, closely concerned with the traveller-narrator's own rhetorical strategies, and with the rhetoric of other travellers: the task of finding the forms of language to translate the topography into discourse is a recurrent object of discussion. Travel writings usually acknowledge, too, that travel entails the construction of particular myths, visions and fantasies, and the voicing of particular desires, demands and aspirations. Byron, in Venice, writing to his sister Augusta, self-consciously offers her the pleasures of the Gothic novel's imaginative vision of the Roman Catholic South, as a fantasmatic mise-en-scène of the foreign and the forbidden: 'I am going out this evening – in my *cloak & Gondola* – there are two nice Mrs. Radcliffe words for you.'<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, travel writings include utterances in which the subject of commentary claims to be concerned primarily with the ordering of knowledge of the world. All the writings discussed in this book provide information about a particular topography of the foreign – whether or not they define the provision of information as their primary aim. Many of them also assume that the reader might visit that topography in person, and might well make practical use of some of the information – whether in finding acceptable inns to stay in, in selecting the principal works of art to view in a specific city, or in avoiding unhappy emotional entanglements with foreigners. Even works that proclaim themselves as fictional offer both information and practical advice. The visit to Capri in de Sade's *Juliette*, which provides the heroine and her two female friends with a chance to speculate about whether they can imitate the debauches of Tiberius, is introduced by a description that would hardly

<sup>26</sup> Auden, *Letters from Iceland*, pp. 161, 172, 155.

<sup>27</sup> Byron, *Letters and Journals*, vol. V, p. 145.

seem out of place in a guide book: 'L'île de Caprée, qui peut avoir environ dix milles de circuit, est partout environnée des plus hauts rochers; on n'y aborde, ainsi que je viens de vous le dire, que par le petit port qui est en face du golfe de Naples...'<sup>28</sup> Ann Radcliffe, embarking on a narrative of horror in her *Mysteries of Udolpho* (the novel implicitly invoked by Byron in the letter just quoted), published in 1794, does not disdain to give the reader a hint about the good sense, when travelling in the Pyrenees, of 'providing against part of the evil to be encountered from a want of convenient inns, by carrying a stock of provisions in the carriage'.<sup>29</sup>

Both these sets of claims on the part of the subject of commentary – the claim to be manipulating language and engaging in a form of imaginative seduction, on the one hand, and, on the other, the claim to be ordering knowledge and, however obliquely, offering practical advice – are constantly combined within travel writings. The intersection of these two claims produces a network of rhetorical and theoretical strategies for understanding and appropriating the foreign that I term an *imaginative topography* or *imaginative geography*: to borrow the formulations used by Christian Jacob in defining the concept of a map, an imaginative geography marks out both a 'space of privileged projection for desires, aspirations, affective memory, the cultural memory of the subject' and, at the same time, a space governed by the demands of a field of knowledge.<sup>30</sup>

This book is concerned with one particular imaginative topography: the topography mapped out by reference to the practice, theoretical rationalization and fantasmatic vision of travel on the Grand Tour. Its primary focus is on the ways in which pleasure of various kinds is registered in

<sup>28</sup> Sade, *La Nouvelle Justine*, vol. IX, p. 364: 'The island of Capri, which measures around ten miles in circumference, is everywhere surrounded by extremely high rocks; it is only possible to land there at the little port, opposite the Bay of Naples.'

<sup>29</sup> p. 28.

<sup>30</sup> Jacob, *L'Empire des cartes*, p. 16: 'un espace de projection privilégié pour les désirs, les aspirations, la mémoire affective, la mémoire culturelle du sujet'.

The terms *imaginative geography* and *imaginative topography* are used here to name both particular regions, in their roles as fantasmatic *mises-en-scène* of foreignness, and the activity of mapping out and delimiting them. (The practice of imaginative geography, in other words, produces a range of different imaginative geographies of foreignness.) Edward Said, in *Orientalism*, defines imaginative geography in the latter sense when he notes that 'men have always divided the world up into regions having either real or imagined distinction from each other' (p. 39). Some pages later (p. 71), he offers a more extended definition: 'Imaginative geography... legitimates a vocabulary, a universe of representative discourse... Underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse... is a set of representative figures, or tropes. These figures are to the actual Orient... as stylized costumes are to characters in a play.'

the language of travel writing: the rhetorical strategies that serve to appropriate this topography as a source of pleasure, the specific concepts of pleasure, enjoyment and gratification that are formed (including the pleasure of travel itself as well as the delights of this specific category of the foreign) and the pleasure located in the process of translating the topography into discourse. As a number of the writings quoted so far demonstrate, many of the strategies that serve to register pleasure are also employed in accounts of quite different regions of the world, written at quite different periods of history: all imaginative topographies to which the genre of the first-person narrative of travel is allotted authorize the freedom of digressiveness, for example. I am concerned, obviously enough, both with the features of travel writing in general that are shared by writing about the Tour and with the concepts and strategies formed in relation to the specific desires and demands that the topography of the Tour is seen as inviting.

Like most other scholars in the field, I view the concept of the Tour as one that determines the way in which travel in Europe is envisaged and undertaken from the beginning of the seventeenth century up until 1830 or so.<sup>31</sup> Towards the end of this period, approaches to travel – not only to this topography, but also to others – split into two opposing attitudes, both of which still play a crucial part in determining the ways in which encounters with the foreign can be described or imagined today. One of these approaches, which is first discernible in travel writing at the very end of the eighteenth century, is the view that travel is a form of personal adventure, holding out the promise of a discovery or realization of the self through the exploration of the other: according to this view – which, for convenience, may be termed the *Romantic* approach – travel entails crossing symbolic as well as geographical boundaries, and these transgressions of limits invite various forms of danger and destabilization.

The second approach appears at about the same time, and presents itself in more or less explicit opposition to the Romantic view of travel. This is the approach of the tourist, who recognizes that travel might constitute a form of personal adventure, and might entail danger and destabilization, but, as a result of this recognition, attempts to keep the more dangerous and destabilizing aspects of the encounter with the foreign at bay.

Both tourism and the Grand Tour are most frequently defined by scholars as social practices, to be located within the field of social history. Bruce Redford, for example, in *Venice and the Grand Tour*, declares:

<sup>31</sup> Edward Chaney, in *The Evolution of the Grand Tour*, places some emphasis on English travellers who visited Italy slightly before this period (see pp. 58–87), but nonetheless asserts that the late eighteenth century 'may be regarded as the climax of the Grand Tour' (p. 114).

For purposes of this study... the Grand Tour is not the Grand Tour unless it includes the following: first, a young British male patrician (that is, a member of the aristocracy or the gentry); second, a tutor who accompanies his charge throughout the journey; third, a fixed itinerary that makes Rome its principal destination; fourth, a lengthy period of absence, averaging two or three years.<sup>32</sup>

John Urry, in *The Tourist Gaze*, defines the Grand Tour less narrowly, noting changes in its thematic focus and in the relation between the traveller and the objects of commentary, as well as in the social groups travelling over the period between 1600 and 1800. Once he distinguishes between the Grand Tour and tourism, however, he returns to social history for the terms in which to define the historical discontinuity:

But before the nineteenth century few people outside the upper classes travelled anywhere to see objects for reasons unconnected with work or business. And it is this which is the central characteristic of mass tourism in modern societies, namely that much of the population in most years will travel somewhere else to gaze upon it [*sic*] and stay there for reasons basically unconnected with work.<sup>33</sup>

My own analyses of the Grand Tour, of Romantic travel and of tourism have a quite different focus. In approaching the Tour by reference to the history of its imaginative geography, rather than its social history, I attempt to chart not changes and discontinuities in travel itself, but changes and discontinuities in the forms of language employed in travel writing. More specifically, I am concerned with a discourse of travel: with the range and limits of what can be said or written about the topography of the Grand Tour over the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>34</sup> This book sets out to analyse various aspects of the rules and regularities of such a discourse: the delimitation of a field of objects, the positions that the speaking subject is able to assume (in relation to these objects, for example, and in relation to various forms of authority), the concepts formed within it, and its themes, arguments, assumptions,

<sup>32</sup> p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> p. 5.

<sup>34</sup> The term *discourse* is used here with reference to the account of what constitutes a discourse given by Michel Foucault in *L'Archéologie du savoir*; see, in particular, pp. 44–101; see also the account of how it is possible to intervene in a discourse in Foucault's article 'Réponse à une question', pp. 850–74 (in particular, 852–3). Like Lisa Lowe, in *Critical Terrains*, p. 10, I feel that it is worth emphasizing that I view a discourse not as 'fixed' and 'monolithic', but as 'a multivalent, overlapping, dynamic terrain'.

rhetorical strategies and theoretical options.<sup>35</sup> I also trace some of the ways in which the discourse of European travel maps out its relation to other discourses: writing about the Grand Tour draws, for example, on concepts and theoretical options formed within discourses such as aesthetic theory, art criticism, geology, botany and demography, and within other discourses of travel, such as primitivism, Orientalism, and Romantic Hellenism.<sup>36</sup>

It is worth emphasizing at this point that I am not primarily concerned here with defining the rules of a particular genre of travel writing. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, various types of discursivity, invested with their own specific literary or non-literary status, are allotted to the domain of the foreign. These types of discursivity include, for example, the practically orientated listing of places to visit and objects to view, first-person narratives of journeys composed for publication or circulation among friends, diaries of private jottings, theoretical exposition and scientific enquiry, poems concerned with particular places, or with some general theme that prompts reference to the foreign, and fictional narratives. Some of these types of discursivity are identified by contemporaries as forms that predominate in a number of individual works, and such bodies of works are classified as genres.<sup>37</sup> Much of the material

<sup>35</sup> These last two categories are viewed here as two aspects of the same category; all rhetorical strategies embody various theoretical assumptions, and map out some kind of explicit or implicit argument, while all theoretical options assume some kind of rhetorical function.

Concepts, it should be emphasized, are seen here neither as corresponding to lexical definitions nor as consisting of abstractions, situated in the realm of thought, and invested with an identity exterior to the particular linguistic forms that they may assume; they are viewed, rather, as indissociable from the network of rhetorical and theoretical options that constitute the conditions of their formation. My interest lies not with what was thought or felt about the foreign, but with what it was possible to say and write about it.

<sup>36</sup> For an account of the relation between geology and travel writing, over the later part of the period of the Grand Tour, see Hamblyn, 'Private Cabinets and Popular Geology', pp. 179–205.

<sup>37</sup> The definition of the term *genre* that is adopted here, then, is that of a notional unity conferred on a body of individual texts over a particular historical period, on the basis of certain features that these texts all share. This definition is one that is put forward, for example, in Tzvetan Todorov's *Les Genres du discours*, p. 49.

One of the main points of difference between a discourse and a genre, as defined here, lies in the fact that a genre is always identified on the basis of the definition of certain groups of utterances as possessing some overall coherence that allows them to be described as individual 'texts', 'works' or 'books'. The regularities by which a discourse is defined, on the other hand, are found within a field of utterances that may, individually or in groups, be situated within any written or spoken context whatsoever, whether or not they form part of a sequence of utterances that can be defined as a single literary whole.

analysed here is taken from works that situate themselves within the genre of the first-person narrative of travel, but much is also taken from works of other genres, such as novels, aesthetic treatises, and essays on art.<sup>38</sup>

### The Grand Tour as narrative

How, then, can the Grand Tour be defined, once the terms of definition have been shifted out of the domain of social history into that of imaginative geography? First, by noting a crucial determinant of the ways in which the traveller is able to claim the topography of the Grand Tour as a source of pleasurable alterity, when translating it into forms of language: the movement from North to South that the Tour entails. William Beckford, for example, presents his own origins in northern Europe as essential to the delight that he feels in travelling through 'a continual bower of vines' near Lucca:

These arbours afforded us both shade and refreshment; I fell upon the clusters which formed our ceiling, like a native of the north, unused to such luxuriance: one of those Goths, which Gray so poetically describes, who

Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,  
And quaff the pendant vintage as it grows.<sup>39</sup>

Attempts to define the Grand Tour on the part of social historians often become enmired in debates about whether or not the Tour should be seen as a narrowly British practice, and about the exact extent of the area that it covered: whether or not, for example, it included travels to Greece, and whether northern European countries such as Holland and Germany should be seen as an integral part of it.<sup>40</sup> My own way of handling these questions is simply to adopt the view that a traveller on the Grand Tour, in order to be identifiable as such, should locate the point of origin of his or

<sup>38</sup> The first-person narrative of travel is taken as the point of definition of a genre throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From about the mid-eighteenth century onwards, however, works appear such as Thomas Nugent's *The Grand Tour*, in which the reader is offered practically orientated, impersonally presented enumeration of sights to visit. Such works are seen as constituting a new, quite different genre of travel writing: that of the guide book. The definition of the narrative of travel then shifts slightly in relation to this new genre; the personal nature of the impressions that first-person narratives offer is more strongly emphasized, and such narratives acquire a more markedly 'literary' status.

<sup>39</sup> Beckford, *Dreams*, p. 152; Beckford quotes Thomas Gray, 'The Alliance of Education and Government: A Fragment', Essay 1, lines 56 and 57.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, chapter 2 of Black, *The British Abroad*, pp. 14–85.

her journey somewhere in northern Europe, should aim to travel to the southern side of the Alps (whether he or she plans actually to cross these mountains or to arrive in Italy by sea), and should register a desire or intention to visit Rome, whether or not such a visit actually proves possible.<sup>41</sup> For most of the history of the Tour, this practice of travel also entails an assumption that the traveller is likely to return to northern Europe. (Such an assumption is intermittently thrown into question within the approach to travel as transgressive and destabilizing. Byron, in Canto IV of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1818), leaves some room for doubt as to the answer when he asks himself: 'and should I leave behind / The inviolate island of the sage and free, / And seek me out a home by a remoter sea.')<sup>42</sup>

An analysis of the discourse of European travel, then, could easily include writings in most of the languages of northern Europe. I limit my area of enquiry here, however, for the most part, to writings in French or English, which situate themselves in some way within European culture (as opposed to works in these languages that unequivocally establish the traveller's point of origin somewhere outside Europe), and describe the Alps and Italy. English and French writings exhibit an array of shared discursive regularities, and are so closely interlinked through networks of reference and quotation that any study of English writings would in any case constantly be concerned with references to and adaptations of French commentaries, and vice versa.<sup>43</sup> One particular French account of the works of art to be viewed in Italy – Charles Nicolas Cochin's *Voyage d'Italie* (1758) – is extensively quoted and adapted – often without acknowledgement – by

<sup>41</sup> Early seventeenth-century travellers often note the dangers, for Protestants, of visiting Rome, and describe the adjustments to their travel plans which they make as a result. See George Sandys's account of Rome in *A Relation of a Journey*, p. 309, beginning: 'Having staid here four dayes (as long as I durst)...'. Thomas Coryate, in *Coryat's Crudities*, fails to proceed towards Rome from northern Italy, but 'Richardus Cordet' nonetheless obliquely defines Coryat's journey as a movement in the direction of the Eternal City in the poem that he contributes to the verses that precede the traveller's narrative (lines 17–18; unpaginated prefatory section): 'No more shall man with mortar on his head / Set forwards towards Rome'.

<sup>42</sup> Stanza 8, lines 7–9, in Byron, *Complete Poetical Works*, vol. II, p. 127.

<sup>43</sup> To note the close interconnections between French and English writings is not to deny that some distinctions might be drawn between them, within a study that set out to identify such distinctions. John Barrell, in *The Political Theory of Painting*, pp. 39–45, argues that there is a major difference in approaches to pleasure and civic virtue in British and French art criticism – an area of commentary that overlaps to a large extent with accounts of travel in Italy. This book, however, is concerned with charting discursive regularities that can be discerned within writings in both languages, and not with establishing the extent of any variation between travel literature in English and in French.

British travellers.<sup>44</sup> Early nineteenth-century British travellers in Italy constantly refer to Germaine de Staël's novel *Corinne; ou, l'Italie* (1807), in order to define and reflect on their own experiences of travel.<sup>45</sup> Writings in German and other northern European languages are, with a few exceptions, only rarely drawn into this particular network of cross-reference; the one striking instance of a body of work by a German writer that English and French travellers repeatedly invoke is supplied by the writings of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, usually cited by these travellers with reference to French or Italian translations.<sup>46</sup>

The Grand Tour, as just defined, has a clear narrative structure. Richard Colt Hoare, quoting Conyers Middleton's *Letter from Rome* (1729), maps out a version of this narrative:

I have often been thinking (says Mr. Middleton in his Letter from Rome,) that a voyage to Italy might properly enough be compared to the common stages of journey of life. At our setting out through France, the pleasures that we find, like those of our youth, are of the gay fluttering kind, which grow by degrees, as we advance towards Italy, more solid, manly, and rational, but attain not their full perfection till we reach ROME; from which point we no sooner turn homewards, than they begin again gradually to decline; and though sustained for a while in some degree of vigour, through the other stages and cities of Italy, yet dwindle at last into weariness and fatigue, and a desire to be at home, where the traveller finishes his course, as the old man does his days, with the usual privilege of being tiresome to his friends, and by a perpetual repetition of past adventures.<sup>47</sup>

Other travel writings, too, implicitly proclaim the traveller's assumption that the Grand Tour has its own established sequence by anticipating

<sup>44</sup> Compare, for example, the accounts of a *Judith and Holophernes*, attributed to Caravaggio, at the Palazzo Zambecari in Bologna, in Cochin, *Voyage d'Italie*, vol. II, p. 158, and in Miller, *Letters*, vol. II, pp. 27–8; for direct references to Cochin, see Miller, *Letters*, vol. I, pp. 130, 131, 254, 257, 281, vol. II, pp. 19–20. Compare also the descriptions of Veronese's *Judith and Holophernes* in Cochin, *Voyages d'Italie*, vol. III, p. 157 and Gibbon, *Gibbon's Journey*, p. 74.

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, Anna Jameson, *Diary of an Ennuyée*, pp. 110, 206, 209.

<sup>46</sup> In English and French travel writing, Winckelmann's most famous work, his *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1764) is usually cited (where travellers acknowledge the reference) in one of the two French translations or in Carlo Fea's Italian edition of 1783. Germaine de Staël's *Corinne* is one of the few works published in French or English over the period of the Grand Tour that frequently alludes to German literature.

<sup>47</sup> Hoare, *A Classical Tour*, pp. 96–7; Hoare quotes, almost word for word, Conyers Middleton, *A Letter from Rome*, p. 8.

specific increases or decreases of strangeness, drama or pleasure as the traveller progresses. Piozzi, visiting a 'conservatory' of 'syrens' in Venice, exclaims: 'Will Naples, the original seat of Ulysses's seducers, shew us any thing stronger than this? I hardly expect or wish it.'<sup>48</sup> Gilbert Burnet charts a sequence of increasing and decreasing fascination through an explanation of his decision to travel back northwards by sea:

It is true, I lose the sight of *Turin, Genoa*, and some other Courts: but though I am told these deserve well the pains of the Journey, yet when one rises from a great Meal, no Delicacies, how much soever they might tempt him at another time, can provoke his Appetite. So I confess freely that the sight of *Naples* and *Rome* have so set my stomach that way, that the Curiosity of seeing new Places, is now very low with me, and indeed these which I have of late seen, are such, that places which at another time would please me much, would now make but a slight and cold Impression.<sup>49</sup>

One chapter of this book – 'Destabilized Travel' – is especially concerned with elements of the narrative of the Grand Tour. This is because, in examining the Romantic approach to travel, the chapter considers the partial displacement, at the end of the eighteenth century, of the view of travel as a form of detached observation by the view of travel as a form of personal adventure, which entails transgression – the crossing of boundaries – and, as a consequence, also entails risks and dangers. The Grand Tour, as narrative, entails a number of traversals of boundaries: the traveller crosses not only the great natural barrier of the Alps but also, for example, the boundary represented by the Roman Campagna, which supplies a space of anticipation in which to await the momentous encounter with the Eternal City itself, and the boundary of the Pontine Marshes, which separates Rome from Naples and the warm South.<sup>50</sup> Hoare, in designating Rome as the site of 'solid, manly, and rational' pleasures, at their point of greatest perfection, structures the narrative of the Grand Tour so as to exclude any alternative pleasures that might erupt within Italy itself: other late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century travellers, however, identify the region beyond Rome – Naples and its environs – as a region of irresponsible, free-floating enjoyment.

<sup>48</sup> Piozzi, *Observations and Reflections*, vol. I, p. 177.

<sup>49</sup> Burnet, *Some Letters*, p. 180.

<sup>50</sup> For an analysis of the sense of crossing a threshold experienced by travellers (in particular, by artists), on arriving in Rome, see Wrigley, 'Infectious Enthusiasms', pp. 79–87.

### Sights and wonders

The narrative of the Grand Tour is punctuated by ‘sights’. Travellers express an eagerness to visit places that others before them have deemed worth seeing. In de Sade’s *Juliette*, the heroine classifies St Peter’s as noteworthy by making an exception to her usual rules and principles of life in order to visit it: ‘Malgré le serment que j’avais fait de n’entrer dans aucune église, je ne pus tenir en arrivant à Rome, au désir de visiter celle de Saint-Pierre.’<sup>51</sup> Travellers often emphasize the importance of sights in ordering their experience of the foreign by complaining if their visits to such places are obstructed or prevented. Piozzi, for example, recounts an especially cruel rebuff in Venice, when she attempts to see a painting defined as one of the principal sights there: Veronese’s *Marriage at Cana*:

When we arrived, the picture was kept in a refectory belonging to friars..., and no woman could be admitted. My disappointment was so great that I was deprived even of the powers of solicitation by the extreme ill-humour it occasioned; and my few intreaties for admission were completely disregarded by the good old monk, who remained outside with me, while the gentlemen visited the convent without molestation. At my return to Venice I met little comfort, as every body told me it was my own fault, for I might put on men’s clothes and see it whenever I pleased, as nobody then would stop, though perhaps all of them would know me.<sup>52</sup>

Sydney Morgan encounters an equally distressing obstacle when attempting to order mules to visit the cascade at Terni, and discovering ‘that the mules which carried strangers to the waterfall were a monopoly of government’, and that her party would have to wait another day until any of these official mules became available: ‘in place of a natural wonder, so often and so beautifully described, we have here to record one of those petty extortions of despotism, which press upon the every-day enjoyments of humanity.’<sup>53</sup>

While travellers pay deference to an established itinerary by such declarations, however, they also, from at least the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, intermittently chafe against the constraints of the accepted itinerary, and suggest their own revisions of it. In doing so, they

nonetheless reaffirm the assumption that the Grand Tour is structured as a sequence of noteworthy places and objects. One of the most famous of such proposals for revision is Yorick’s declaration, in Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey*, that the main ‘thirst’ that ‘has led me from my own home into France – and from France will lead me through Italy’ is a thirst not for ‘pictures, statues, and churches’, but for knowledge of the female heart.<sup>54</sup> Other travellers, more modestly, simply suggest that particular sights should be removed from the list, or demoted to some inferior position on it. Lady Morgan, inveigled into visiting the Tarpeian Rock by ‘a dirty stable-boy’ who offers to lead her ‘to this great shrine of classic homage’, scornfully repudiates both the rock itself and the ‘affected raptures’ of those who acclaim this scene of ancient brutality (the spot from which prisoners were thrown to their death):

It were vain, under such unfavourable circumstances, to conjure up one classical association, to affect one of those *thrills* which vibrate in the hearts of all true Corinnas, when the very sound of the *Tarpeian Rock* meets their ear; but even had it been seen under the consecrated authority of those arch-mystagogues of all classic lore, Signori Fea and Nebbi, to the heart of an unlearned woman it could bring no throb of pleasure; nor could its view increase the sum of interest or respect which the Capitoline heroes still awaken in the minds of the most erudite.<sup>55</sup>

In response to the need to affirm the drama of the topography, the itinerary of the Grand Tour is often mapped out as a pared-down sequence of those sights sufficiently remarkable to be accorded the status of wonders. (Lady Morgan, unable to acquire the mules to the *Cascata delle Mormore*, is at pains to point out that the ‘petty extortions of despotism’ have prevented her from seeing not merely a sight but a wonder.) Most of the wonders of the Tour – the cascade at Terni, St Peter’s, the cascade at Tivoli and Mount Vesuvius, for example – are invested with greatest drama and imaginative fascination in the seventeenth century, when Italy is defined as a country remarkable, in particular, for its profusion of objects of extreme singularity. Since Naples and its environs are viewed as especially rich in wonders, the emphasis on such objects allows the city to be present, in these early writings, as the place where the pleasures of the Tour reach

<sup>51</sup> Sade, *La Nouvelle Justine*, vol. VIII, p. 100: ‘Despite the vow that I had made never to enter a church, I could not resist the desire to visit St Peter’s when I arrived in Rome.’

<sup>52</sup> Piozzi, *Observations and Reflections*, vol. I, p. 172.

<sup>53</sup> Morgan, *Italy*, vol. II, pp. 164–5.

<sup>54</sup> p. 84.

<sup>55</sup> Morgan, *Italy*, vol. II, pp. 179, 179, 180, 179. Lady Morgan’s references are to the heroine of Germaine de Staél’s novel *Corinne: ou, l’Italie* (1807), and to the various guides to Rome and writings on the city by the archaeologists Carlo Fea and Antonio Nibby.

their climax, in contrast to its later role (discussed in Chapter 4, 'Destabilized Travel') as a place that lures travellers beyond the self-confirmed pleasures of Rome. John Evelyn, in his *Diary*, designates Naples 'the Non ultra of my Travells', and describes himself: 'sufficiently sated with rolling up and downe... since from the report of divers experienc'd and curious persons, I had ben assur'd there was little more to be seene in the rest of the civil World, after Italy, France, Flanders and the Low-Country, but plaine and prodigious Barbarisme'.<sup>56</sup> John Raymond, in his *Itinerary Contayning a Voyage Made through Italy* (1648), comments on Vesuvius: 'This Mountaine was the *Ultima Meta* of our voyage to *Naples*, wherefore having with much content seen these wonderfull things of Antiquity, Nature, and Curiosity; after some few dayes we parted from *Naples* to *Rome*' (Figure 1).<sup>57</sup>

### Relative familiarity: ancient history and literary mediation

The imaginative topography of the Grand Tour can also be defined by reference to the confidence with which the traveller expects it to satisfy one of the demands that all travel writings impose on the foreign, alongside the demand for alterity. This is the demand that the topography should not be so radically different from the topography of the familiar that it resists all attempts at understanding and assimilation. Two of the assumptions incorporated in writing about Italy, throughout the period of the Grand Tour, make it especially easy to define the topography of the Tour as one that satisfies this demand. First, the traveller takes it for granted that the topography bears the traces of an ancient past, which has been rendered familiar either by male classical education or by a more general diffusion of knowledge of classical civilization. Seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century writings present the ancient past as, in one sense, unfalteringly present in the contemporary topography: the 'fame' attached to particular places as a result of their role in myth and history is seen as enduring, however thoroughly the material vestiges of the past have been destroyed. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, on the other hand, travel writings frequently present the ancient past as distressingly remote – a strategy that might seem to place in jeopardy the option of using references to antiquity to invest the topography with relative familiarity. At this period, however, antiquity is often presented as accessible to efforts of



A. The entrance of the Grotto of Posillipo towards Naples. B. The Castello of Saint Elmo. C. Castello nuovo. D. Castello dell'ovo. E. The mountaine Vesuvius.

Figure 1 Engraving of the entrance to the Grotto of Posillipo, and the Bay of Naples, from George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey begun An: Dom: 1610* (London, 1615); engraving (including captions): 11.2 x 12.2 cm.

intuitive understanding, even in the case of ancient sites where classical scholarship offers little elucidation: travellers regularly demonstrate their ability to convert historical time into personal time. Part of my third chapter, 'Spectator and Spectacle', is concerned with the attempt to shift ancient history into a domain of the intuitive and personal, and with the elisions between the antique and versions of the feminine that play a part in it.

The second assumption that permeates writing about Italy, and that plays a major part in determining the imaginative topography of the Grand Tour, is the assumption that the traveller's experience of this topography will be heavily subject to mediation – above all, to literary mediation (including the mediation of the ancient authors). In almost all accounts of the journey from Northern Europe across the Alps to Italy – and even in most guide books concerned with this itinerary – the subject of commentary indicates to the reader that he or she is already familiar with

<sup>56</sup> Vol. II, p. 354.

<sup>57</sup> p. 163.

the places visited from books, or is reading books on the spot that suggest ways of approaching the places and people in question. Anna Jameson defines Germaine de Staël's *Corinne* as intervening especially vigorously in her experience of Florence when, intending to reread the novel in that city (which the heroine visits at an especially unhappy stage of her life), she throws it down, 'resolved not to open it again', and declares, with reference to the unfortunate love affair that has driven Jameson herself to Italy in the hope of recovery: 'I can suffer enough, feel enough, think enough, without this.'<sup>58</sup>

### Pleasure and 'improvements'

Another crucial feature of the imaginative topography of the Grand Tour, as mapped out by travel writing, is the assumption that this topography supplies forms of pleasure that merge easily (if not always seamlessly) with cultural benefit – or 'knowledge and improvements', as Yorick terms the advantages of travel in his 'Preface' to *A Sentimental Journey*. James Howell, recounting his arrival in Naples in *Epistole Ho-Elianæ* (1645), defines his travels through Italy as offering both pleasure and 'improvements', and implies by his smooth transition from 'Delight' to 'usefull and solid Knowledge' that the one is continuous with the other:

And though these frequent removes and tumblings under climes of differing temper were not without som danger, yet the delight which accompanied them was far greater; and it is impossible for any man to conceive the true pleasure of Peregrination, but he who actually enjoys, and puts it in practise: Believe it, Sir, That one yeer well employed abroad by one of mature judgment (which you know I want very much) advantageth more in point of usefull and solid knowledg then three in any of our *Universities*.<sup>59</sup>

Other writings explicitly discuss what the relation between the pleasures of the Grand Tour and its benefits might be. In *The Compleat Gentleman: or, Directions for the Education of Youth as to their Breeding at Home and Travelling Abroad* (1678), Jean Gailhard, defining 'travelling abroad' primarily with reference to the tour of Italy, muses over this question:

Now the two ends of Travelling are profit and pleasure; the last subordinate to the former, arising from the satisfaction one hath about the first, and from

<sup>58</sup> Jameson, *Diary*, p. 110 (see Staël, *Corinne; ou, l'Italie*, vol. II, pp. 232–46; book XVIII, chapters 3–6).

<sup>59</sup> Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, p. 12; Howell, *Epistole Ho-Elianæ*, vol. I, p. 77.

the variety of objects: for that which Frenchmen call *divertissement*, or recreation, comes from diversity, which certainly causes a pleasure, almost every day one seeing different things: but benefit is a thing I mind most of all, 'tis a thing gotten by Travels, as confirmed by the practice of all polished and civilized Nations, ancient and modern.<sup>60</sup>

Gailhard's pious assertion that pleasure must clearly be subordinate to 'profit' does not represent a consensus: travel writings vary widely in the views that they put forward as to the specific relation that the traveller should construct between 'improvements' and delight. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the need to combine the two is, in fact, usually defined negatively: that is, it is asserted not through the precise formulations of seventeenth-century speculations on travel, but, more nebulously, through dismissals of inadequate travellers. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, in a letter to her daughter, offers a generalized view of travellers to Italy as failing in the task of appropriation ('They return no more instructed than they might have been at home by the help of a Map'), and then locates this failure in a tendency to allow either one or the other of the aims of the Tour to assume an ascendancy: 'The Boys only remember where they met with the best Wine or the prettyest Women, and the Governors (I speak of the most learned amongst them) have only remark'd Situations and Distances, or at most Status and Edifices.'<sup>61</sup> One of the inadequate travellers who most resolutely refuses to mingle 'improvements' with his attempt to derive gratification and entertainment from travel in Italy is the comte d'Erfeuil in *Corinne*: a Frenchman who, in Rome, comments on the taste for visiting ancient ruins: 'Un plaisir qu'il faut acheter par tant d'études, ne me paroît pas bien vif en lui-même'.<sup>62</sup> Those resistant to pleasure are dismissed with yet greater scorn. The most famous example of such a dismissal is the account of 'the learned SMELFUNGUS' – or Smollett, in his role as traveller-narrator of his *Travels through France and Italy* (1766) – in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*. 'Smelfungus', Yorick explains, 'set out with the spleen and jaundice, and every object he pass'd by was discoloured or distorted'. Not only does Smelfungus fail to appreciate the great sights of the Grand Tour, such as the Pantheon ('—'tis nothing but a huge cock-pit, said he—I wish you had said nothing worse of the Venus of Medicis, replied I'), but he complains bitterly about his treatment

<sup>60</sup> Part II, pp. 5–6.

<sup>61</sup> Montagu, *Complete Letters*, vol. II, p. 495; letter of 8 December 1751.

<sup>62</sup> Staël, *Corinne; ou, l'Italie*, vol. I, p. 139 (book VI, chapter 1): 'A rapture which one must purchase by study cannot be very vivid in itself' (*Corinne; or, Italy*, p. 88).

at the hand of foreigners: 'He had been flea'd alive, and bedevil'd, and used worse than St. Bartholomew, at every stage he had come at'.<sup>63</sup> Anna Jameson, in her *Diary of an Ennuyée* (1826), also sets up a category of travellers who ignore the need to extract pleasure from the foreign:

I have met persons who think they display a vast deal of common sense, and very uncommon strength of mind, in rising superior to all prejudices of education and illusions of romance – to whom enthusiasm is only another name for affection – who, where the cultivated and the contemplative mind finds ample matter to excite feeling and reflection, give themselves airs of fashionable *nonchalance*, or flippant scorn – to whom the crumbling ruin is so much brick and mortar, no more – to whom the tomb of the Horatii and Curatii is a *stack of chimneys*, the Pantheon *an old oven*, and the Fountain of Egeria a *pig sty*.<sup>64</sup>

A failure to appropriate the topography of the Grand Tour as a source of pleasure or benefit – or both – is very often identified with a failure in writing about the topography. Both Yorick's account of Smelfungus's reaction to the Pantheon and Jameson's description of a string of mis-judged responses characterize the travellers in question through their chosen words, and specify the precise faults that the words display: Smelfungus, Yorick explains, has written an account of his travels, 'but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings', while Jameson's purveyors of 'flippant scorn' are guilty of 'an affectation a thousand times more gross and contemptible, that that affectation... which they design to ridicule'.<sup>65</sup>

One of the most ludicrous attempts to translate the topography of the Grand Tour into forms of language is conjured up in Aphra Behn's play *The Feigned Courtesans* (1679), in which Mr Tickletext, a tutor accompanying a young Englishman to Rome, carries with him 'a small volume... into which I transcribe the most memorable and remarkable transactions of the day'. Tickletext's idea of a 'memorable and remarkable' encounter with the foreign is typified by the entry: 'The twenty-second, nine of our twelve chickens getting loose, flew over-board, the other three miraculously escaping, by being eaten by me, that morning for

<sup>63</sup> Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, pp. 28–9. See Smollett, *Travels*, pp. 258, 227; Sterne's summary of Smelfungus's complaints echoes the reference to 'Bartholomew flæd alive' in Smollett's lament that, in Italy, 'the labours of painting should have been so much employed on the shocking subjects of the martyrology' (p. 257).

<sup>64</sup> pp. 207–8.

<sup>65</sup> Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, p. 29; Jameson, *Diary*, p. 208.

breakfast.'<sup>66</sup> A similar lack of understanding of how to use words to make a convincing gesture of appropriation is charted by Byron, in the context of a slightly more distant destination: the poet mockingly quotes some 'Lines in the Travellers' Book of the Macri Family' which, like the journal entry of Mr Tickletext, unwittingly testify to a complete failure in delight and profit:

Fair Albion, smiling, sees her son depart  
To trace the birth and nursery of art:  
Noble his object, glorious is his aim;  
He comes to Athens, and he writes his name.<sup>67</sup>

Many travel books dismiss other travellers for offering erroneous information, for plagiarism, or for laziness in their enquiries. De Sade, in his notes on Naples, accuses the Abbé Richard of copying from a guide book, and being so careless in his borrowings that he describes a church that has been burnt down nine years before his visit to the city.<sup>68</sup> John Chetwode Eustace, in his *Tour through Italy* (1813), condemns the sloppy research of travellers when assessing the manners and morals of 'females of rank' in Naples. His argument is simple: 'superficial observers' will obviously find it much easier to make the acquaintance of women 'totally lost to all sense of duty and delicacy', since these women are, almost by definition, 'of much easier access': 'they may be seen in every large party and at every public amusement, and are seldom deficient in affability and condescension, particularly to foreigners.' 'Persons of virtue and reputation', on the other hand, 'appear in select societies to which few strangers are admitted, and receive the visits of such only as are introduced by their intimate and habitual friends'.<sup>69</sup>

This preoccupation with ways in which writing about the topography of the foreign is likely to go wrong affirms very strongly the importance of writing itself as an instrument of appropriation, through which the traveller can claim to be extracting pleasure and benefit from the topography. Travellers commenting on Italy implicitly define the task of recording their travels and describing the topography as evidence that they possess the abilites required in order to enjoy the prestige due to full participants

<sup>66</sup> p. 46 (Act III, scene 1).

<sup>67</sup> Byron, *Complete Poetical Works*, vol. I, p. 279. Byron comments, unsparingly: 'But yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse, / His name would bring more credit than his verse' (lines 3–4 of the poet's reply; 1810).

<sup>68</sup> Sade, *Voyage d'Italie*, p. 405.

<sup>69</sup> Vol. II, p. 52.

in the Tour, as a practice of travel determined by the patrician ideal of the cultured, cosmopolitan gentleman.<sup>70</sup>

### Curiosity

One of the ways in which travellers affirm that pleasure is readily elided with the quest for 'improvements' is by deploying concepts of curiosity. Seventeenth-century travel writings are full of accounts of curiosities: that is, of objects which, by virtue of their ability to function as bearers of meaning, arouse responses of wonder, eager enquiry and enthralled speculation. Stephen Bann, defining the curiosity with reference to the collection of the seventeenth-century traveller John Bargrave, and distinguishing the rhetoric of curiosity at this period from the rhetoric of late eighteenth-century sensibility, suggests: 'For Bargrave, desire follows the logic not of a greater whole completed by the imagination but, rather, of an intricate structure revealed by intensive study.'<sup>71</sup>

The concept of curiosity, however, is formed not only within accounts of the objects that draw upon themselves such eager enquiry, but also in analyses of the motivating forces that prompt investigation. Hobbes, in *Leviathan* (1651), charts a quest for the pleasure of 'knowing causes' that, in various transmuted forms, plays a part in the emplotments of desire traced out by travel writings throughout the period of the Grand Tour:

Desire, to know why, and how, CURIOSITY; such as is in no living creature but Man; so that Man is distinguished, not only by his Reason; but also by this singular Passion from other *Animals*; in whom the appetite of food, and other pleasures of Sense, by predominance, take away the care of knowing causes; which is a Lust of the mind, that by a perseverance of delight in the

<sup>70</sup> John Barrell's definition of the way in which a concept of prestige functions in the 'civic discourse on the fine arts' in eighteenth-century Britain, in *The Birth of Pandora*, p. 68, provides a useful point of reference in analysing the various forms of prestige claimed by the speaking subject within the discourse of European travel:

As long as the possibility of appreciating the higher genres of the art was thought of as available only to the aristocracy, it was certainly imagined that an informed concern with painting and sculpture conferred status on the noble or gentle connoisseur; it confirmed his standing as a patrician in the fullest sense of the word, as someone not only born to exercise power, but fit to exercise it. As a result, a form of prestige became attached to the ability to articulate the civic discourse, and that ability could remain to some extent a source of prestige when the discourse came to be spoken by, and addressed to, those with no claim to be regarded as patricians.

<sup>71</sup> Bann, *Under the Sign*, p. 103; see also pp. 9–17, for a useful discussion of the concept of the curiosity. See, too, the chapter 'La Culture de la curiosité', in Pomian, *Collectionneurs*, pp. 61–80.

continual and indefatigable generation of Knowledge, exceedeth the short vehemence of any carnal Pleasure.<sup>72</sup>

Eighteenth-century writings often applaud the power of such a 'Lust of the mind' to create continuities between pleasure and benefit: Lord Kames, in his *Elements of Criticism* (1762), observes:

Men tear themselves from their native country in search of things rare and new; and curiosity converts into a pleasure, the fatigues, and even perils of travelling. To what cause shall we ascribe these singular appearances? The plain account of the matter follows. Curiosity is implanted in human nature, for a purpose extremely beneficial, that of acquiring knowledge. New and strange objects, above all others, excite our curiosity; and its gratification is the emotion... known by the name of wonder.<sup>73</sup>

Edward Gibbon writes in his *Memoirs of my Life and Writings* (1796): 'in a foreign country, curiosity is our business and our pleasure; and the traveller, conscious of his ignorance, and covetous of his time, is diligent in the search and the view of every object that can deserve his attention.'<sup>74</sup> The article on 'Voyage (Education)' in the *Encyclopédie* defines the educational value of the topography of the Grand Tour by specific reference to its ability to excite curiosity: 'Il est en particulier un pays au-delà des Alpes qui mérite la curiosité de tous ceux dont l'éducation a été cultivée par les lettres'.<sup>75</sup> Pierre-Jacques-Onésyme Bergeret de Grancourt claims for Rome a similarly intensified power to prompt efforts of investigation: in this city, 'ceux qui ne sont pas curieux doivent le devenir, car on ne voit que choses rares, même pour les gens du pays'.<sup>76</sup>

At the same time, however, as Nicholas Thomas has noted, 'the nature of curiosity', in the eighteenth century, 'is not fixed but morally slippery': 'the legitimacy of curious inquiry is uncertain'.<sup>77</sup> Concepts of curiosity are formed with reference to two impulses that are defined, in the eighteenth century, as difficult to reconcile with the pursuit of 'improvements': the

<sup>72</sup> p. 124.

<sup>73</sup> Vol. I, pp. 319–20.

<sup>74</sup> In Gibbon, *Autobiography*, p. 125.

<sup>75</sup> In D'Alembert and Diderot (editors), *Encyclopédie*, vol. XVII, p. 477: 'There is in particular a country beyond the Alps which merits the curiosity of all those whose education has been cultivated by reading and study.'

<sup>76</sup> Bergeret and Fragonard, *Journal*, p. 163: 'those who are not curious have to become so, for one only sees rarities, which seem exceptional even to the local inhabitants.'

<sup>77</sup> Thomas, 'Licensed Curiosity', p. 122. For another study of tensions and equivocations within accounts of concepts of curiosity, see Benedict, 'The "Curious Attitude"'.

desire for novelty, and restlessness. Edmund Burke, in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), declares: 'By curiosity, I mean whatever desire we have for, or whatever pleasure we take in novelty.' He observes:

But as those things which engage us merely by their novelty, cannot attach us for any length of time, curiosity is the most superficial of all the affections; it changes its object perpetually; it has an appetite which is very sharp, but very easily satisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddiness, restlessness and anxiety. Curiosity from its nature is a very active principle; it quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects, and soon exhausts the variety which is commonly to be met with in nature; the same things make frequent returns, and they return with less and less of any agreeable effect.<sup>78</sup>

Samuel Evers, in his *Journal Kept on a Journey from Bassora to Bagdad* (1784), also identifies curiosity with 'the love of novelty', and presents it as a motive that, however admirable, needs to be defended:

Man is a creature too imperfect and unsteady to be invariably content: he is ever restless in pursuit, ever wandering with ceaseless avidity from one object to another: This principle it is true is the fruitful cause of many evils, but is also productive of many advantages; without such an impulse, how dull and insipid [sic] would be the state of human life! It would be little better than the contracted existence of a particular species of shell fish, which are stationed as it were on a rock, and never move from the narrow spot assigned them, 'till the moment of their dissolution arrives.<sup>79</sup>

Both these commentaries, in their emphasis on restlessness, align curiosity not only with the pursuit of novelty, but with purposeless movement onwards: in other words, with a form of travel which, where it is mentioned in eighteenth-century writings, is rejected as evidence of complete inadequacy in managing the experience of the foreign. Movement for its own sake provokes severe strictures from Rousseau ('Voyager pour voyager, c'est errer, être vagabond... Je voudrais donner au jeune homme un intérêt sensible à s'instruire') and also from Dr Johnson, whose *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775) presents those who engage in 'capricious and casual' migrations (in the manner of the Scottish highlanders) as

<sup>78</sup> p. 31.

<sup>79</sup> pp. i–ii.

travellers so inadequate that firm authority is needed to keep them under control:

When Caesar was in Gaul, he found the Helvetians preparing to go they knew not whither, and put a stop to their motions. They settled again in their own country, where they were so far from wanting room, that they had accumulated three years provision for their march.<sup>80</sup>

A variant on this strategy of equating curiosity with lack of purpose is to define the curiosity that motivates the traveller as 'idle': John MacCulloch, in *On Malaria* (1827), comments darkly on Paestum: 'dearly have many paid for the idle curiosity which prompted them to seek a reputation for taste in exploring its classical ruins.'<sup>81</sup>

As motives for aimless wandering, then, curiosity and the pursuit of novelty can be seen as conflicting with the need to extract benefit from the topography: their maleficent effect, it is implied, stems from their tendency to displace any ordered programme of observation and enquiry. Love of novelty, in addition, is presented as compromising the traveller's ability to engage in a balanced assessment of the relative merits of the foreign and the familiar. (An ability which, I argue at the very beginning of Chapter 1, is defined in the eighteenth century as crucial to the understanding of the relation between different cultures and places.) Joseph Addison, in his *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* (1705), argues that it is only 'Uncommonness' that makes us 'astonish'd' at Roman ruins, as though the novelty-value of the unfamiliar is a quality that must be discounted if the traveller is to manage the encounter with the foreign in a properly even-handed manner: 'There are indeed many extraordinary Ruins, but I believe a Traveller would not be so much astonish'd at 'em, did he find any Works of the same kind in his own Country.'<sup>82</sup> The same assumption that the foreign and the familiar are in competition for the traveller's attention and admiration, and the same anxiety that the pleasures of novelty might give the foreign an unfair advantage, are inscribed within Lord Kames's account of novelty; despite a relative detachment of tone, a reference to 'foreign luxuries' elides the attractions of the foreign with potentially corrupting pleasures:

<sup>80</sup> Rousseau, *Emile*, p. 596: 'travelling for its own sake is wandering, being a vagabond... I should like to impart to the young man embarking on his travels a lively interest in educating himself'; Johnson, 'A Journey', p. 198.

<sup>81</sup> p. 376.

<sup>82</sup> p. 225.

When two things equally new and singular are presented, the spectator balances betwixt them. But when told that one of them is the product of a distant quarter of the world, he no longer hesitates, but clings to this as the more singular. Hence the preference given to foreign luxuries and to foreign curiosities, which appear rare in proportion to their original distance.<sup>83</sup>

### Guilt

'Opposition and Intensification', the first chapter of this book, begins by examining this assumption that the foreign and the familiar are in a relation of opposition to each other, and that attraction towards one must entail a rejection of the other. I argue here that the eighteenth-century commentary of opposition produces an effect that may be termed *guilt*. The feature of eighteenth-century travel writing that first drew my attention to this effect of language was a very obvious one: the proliferation, between around 1720 and the final decades of the century, of expressions of censure. As I grew more accustomed to reading travel writing of this period, I became more aware of the responses of intense pleasure set alongside condemnatory accounts of Italian culture. I found myself, as a result, viewing expressions of censure as strategies for disavowing a pleasure that was defined as forbidden: strategies which, in fact, end up drawing attention to the effects of language that they attempt to erase.

Concepts of curiosity, then, in eighteenth-century writings, become entangled in this tension between pleasure and guilt. The definitions of curiosity that are formulated in travel writing of this period appear yet more equivocal if they are considered not only in the context of assumptions about how the traveller should assess the pleasures of the foreign, but also in the context of assumptions about the traveller's aims and methods in translating the foreign into discourse. A central aim of travel writing is always assumed to be that of offering pleasures of various kinds to the reader: the pleasure of anticipating a future visit to the places described, for example, or the pleasure of imaginative geography itself: of speculating on a topography of dramatic otherness. Both hyperbole and digression are deployed not only as methods of describing this topography, and rendering it accessible to understanding, but also as strategies for seducing the reader into speculating pleasurable on the foreign. While hyperbole is

presented as a trope that invites the reader to share in a response of wonder, digression promises opportunities for the indulgence of curiosity.

In twentieth-century travel writings, these pleasures are often proclaimed in a tone of cheerful irresponsibility. Aldous Huxley, for example, when elaborating on the uses of his own 'excessive and promiscuous inquisitiveness', declares happily: 'The most uninteresting human being seen at a little distance by a spectator with a lively fancy and a determination to make the most of life takes on a mysterious charm, becomes odd and exciting.' In pursuing an analogy between travelling and reading, he suggests that those few 'morally admirable' people 'who travel... with purpose and a definite system' may not necessarily produce the best results when writing about their experiences:

Some of the most self-indulgent and aimless of travellers and readers have known how to profit by their vices. Desultory reading was Dr. Johnson's besetting sin... And yet his achievement was not small. And there are frivolous travellers, like Beckford, who have gone about the world, indulging their wanton curiosity, to almost as good purpose.<sup>84</sup>

Waugh, in *Labels*, is yet more insouciant in proclaiming the uses of digressiveness in translating the topography into language. In Istanbul, he tells the story of 'a procession of pimps demanding a higher percentage to cover the increased cost of living', as a result of the 'unfair amateur competition' that the emancipation of women has set 'against the regular trade'. He then explains the principle on which he has selected such a snippet of information:

This may or may not be true. It did not seem to me my business to investigate statements of this kind, but simply to scribble them down in my notebook if they seemed to me amusing. But then, I have had three weeks in Fleet Street at one stage in my career. That is what people mean, I expect, when they say that newspaper training is valuable to an author.<sup>85</sup>

Eighteenth-century writings register rather greater anxiety about the possibility that digressiveness might slide into 'self-indulgent and aimless' speculation, directed not at assembling knowledge but at providing an entertaining commentary. Baretti's declaration that 'a writer of travels, who would make himself fashionable in his own country' will seek to gratify his readers' 'love of novelty' at the expense of any fair-minded

<sup>83</sup> Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, vol. 1, p. 331.

<sup>84</sup> Huxley, *Along the Road*, pp. 26–7, 32.

<sup>85</sup> p. 117.

pursuit of accurate information has already been quoted.<sup>86</sup> Even such a determinedly divagatory work as Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* acknowledges the rhetorical dangers of aimlessness, by setting up a category of inquisitiveness next to which Yorick's own digressive curiosity appears positively purposeful. Satirizing the demographic commentaries of contemporaries such as Smollett, Yorick launches into reflections on the question of why the French are so small, and imagines an inquisitive traveller pursuing a series of pedantically pointless enquiries:

A medical traveller might say, 'tis owing to undue bandages – a splenetic one, to want of air – and an inquisitive traveller, to fortify the system, may measure the height of their houses – the narrowness of their streets, and in how few feet square in the sixth and seventh stories such numbers of the *Bourgoisie* [sic] eat and sleep together.<sup>87</sup>

The argument changes slightly, however, as the passage proceeds. Yorick produces a further explanation for the tiny stature of the French that is palpably ludicrous, but which he utters with a triumphant awareness that it is, in its ebullient absurdity, far more entertaining than any information that inquisitive travellers, rhetorically trammelled by their fussy preoccupation with precise measurements, might ever hope to reveal:

But I remember, Mr. Shandy the elder, who accounted for nothing like any body else, in speaking one evening of these matters, averred that children, like other animals, might be increased almost to any size, provided they came right into the world; but the misery was, the citizens of Paris were so coop'd up, that they had not actually room enough to get them – I do not call it getting any thing, said he – 'tis getting nothing – Nay, continued he, rising in his argument, 'tis getting worse than nothing, when all you have got, after twenty or five and twenty years of the tenderest care and most nutritious aliment bestowed upon it, shall not at last be as high as my leg. Now, Mr. Shandy being very short, there could be nothing more said about it.<sup>88</sup>

In the eighteenth century, then, as well as the twentieth, the need to offer the reader an entertaining commentary can serve to endorse 'a lively fancy' and a taste for enquiry and speculation. In branding curiosity as potentially blameworthy, travel writing at the same time defines the pleasures of

<sup>86</sup> Baretti, *An Account*, vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, p. 59.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

curiosity as essential to the process of describing and commenting on foreign places.

It should be evident by now that this book, in examining the eighteenth-century rhetoric of pleasure and guilt, is concerned more with the forms of language that claim the foreign as a source of pleasurable speculation than with the guilt-laden language of disapproval. It is concerned, too, with the transformations that separate this rhetoric of pleasure and guilt both from the rhetorical strategies of seventeenth-century travel writing, in which expressions of pleasure are allowed to proliferate almost unrestrainedly, and from the rhetoric of pleasure, enjoyment and danger that begins to play a part in travel writing from the 1780s onwards. The two final chapters in this book are concerned with the two variants of this later rhetoric that have already been mentioned: destabilizing travel and tourism.

The use of terms such as *pleasure* and *guilt* will, perhaps, raise an expectation in some readers that this book might offer psychological explanations for the rhetorical and theoretical strategies employed in travel writing. It is therefore worth emphasizing at this point that my concern here is with what it was possible to say or write about the foreign over a particular period, and not with what travellers felt or thought, consciously or unconsciously. In attempting to identify preconditions for the formation of particular concepts and the use of particular theoretical and rhetorical strategies, the domain within which I hope to locate these preconditions is the rhetoric of travel writing itself: that is, neither the domain of psychology nor (as already noted) that of social history.<sup>89</sup>

In my penultimate and final chapters, I am primarily concerned with arguments, assumptions, themes and concepts that mark departures from earlier travel writing, and that are in many ways continuous with present-

<sup>89</sup> It seems especially important to make this point because, in the historical narrative of rhetorical transformations that I construct, I end up at a point where a number of the assumptions and arguments about human desire registered within travel writing are continuous with assumptions and arguments still current today – in particular, with emplotments of desire that have been codified in more specialized terms within the discourse of psychoanalytic theory. Some such assumptions operate so forcefully, in guiding late twentieth-century readings of language, that it is difficult to avoid scrutinizing the travel writing of earlier periods for implicit recognition or confirmation of them: reference to psychoanalytic theory produces what Stephen Greenblatt terms 'the curious effect of a discourse that functions as if the psychological categories it invokes were not only simultaneous with but even prior to and themselves causes of the very phenomena of which in actual fact they were the results' ('Psychoanalysis and Renaissance Culture', in *Learning to Curse*, pp. 131–45; p. 142). For an account of travel writing that, in contrast to mine, does in fact examine aspects of the psychology of travel, see Porter, *Haunted Journeys*.

day approaches to travel and pleasure; in other words, I do not set out to chart the discontinuities between early concepts of destabilizing travel and tourism and the corresponding concepts now in use, but concentrate, instead, on disjunctions between, on the one hand, Romantic and touristic approaches to the foreign and, on the other, the approaches that they displace. (References to later writings, which I use throughout the book to emphasize or elucidate particular points, are, as a result, especially frequent in these two chapters.)

The first three chapters, on the other hand, examine ways of describing the foreign, and commenting on the topography of foreignness, that I see as, in large part, discontinuous with the rhetorical options available to the traveller today. At the same time, a number of such options continue to be used even after their importance is diminished by new rhetorical strategies. The eighteenth-century strategy of symmetrical opposition between the foreign and the familiar, for example, never entirely disappears.

#### Masculinity, femininity, manliness and effeminacy

The five chapters of this book, then, are all concerned with changes in the formation of concepts of pleasure in writings about the Grand Tour, and in the desires and demands imposed upon the topography of the Tour in order to extract pleasure from it. Such changes are, of course, dependent upon an array of other transformations in the discourse of European travel. One series of concepts undergoes some especially dramatic changes: the concepts of gender that become entangled with the idea of travelling to Italy in search of pleasure and benefit. The sources of authority to which the speaking subject is able to lay claim, when appropriating the foreign as a source of pleasure, are determined, in part, throughout the period of the Grand Tour, by the versions of masculinity, femininity, manliness and effeminacy that play a part in the positioning of the speaking subject in relation to the objects of commentary. In most travel narratives, the gender identity of the traveller-narrator is fixed as male or female either on the title page or through clues swiftly offered at the outset of the journey, and the subject of individual utterances within the text is consistently positioned as one writing as a man or writing as a woman. However firmly this identity is established, a range of different concepts of gender will nonetheless play a part in the claims to various kinds of authority and expertise that the subject of commentary establishes. The gender identity of the traveller-narrator, moreover, is not always established immediately

and unequivocally: Byron, in a letter to John Murray, retracts a ferocious printed riposte to a traveller who has claimed to have refused to meet him, as he suddenly realizes, with some embarrassment, that the travel book in question is not in fact written by a man:

I open my letter to say – that on reading more of the 4 volumes on Italy – where the Author says '*declined* an introduction' I perceive (horresco referens) that it is written by a WOMAN!!! In that case you must suppress my note and answer – and all I have said about the book and the writer. – I never dreamed of it till now – in extreme wrath at that precious note – I can only say that I am sorry that a Lady should say anything of the kind. – What I would have said to a person with testicles – you know already.<sup>90</sup>

Before the early to middle decades of the eighteenth century, it is difficult to argue that the subject of commentary in an account of the Grand Tour can be defined as female and yet claim the authority of a participant in the Grand Tour. (Because of the absence of published writings that situate the female traveller as a being able to pronounce authoritatively on the foreign, I adopt a convention of using only male personal pronouns and possessive adjectives when referring to writings of this early period.) From the middle of the eighteenth century, however, a number of travel books are published that name a female author on the title page – and, at intervals throughout the text, refer explicitly or obliquely to the female gender of the traveller-narrator. Books naming the author as female become extremely common in the early nineteenth century. One of the transformations in the discourse of European travel that allows women to be invested with the authority to comment on the foreign is the change from a commentary of scholarly compilation to a commentary of viewing, charted in Chapter 2, 'Hyperbole and Observation': during the early decades of the eighteenth century, the authority of the classical scholar is displaced, to a large extent, by the authority of the eye-witness. Since women are readily admitted as beings able to visit particular places, and to describe them and comment on them as eye-witnesses, female travellers are no longer excluded from the position of authoritative subject within the discourse of European travel. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the authority of the eye-witness is supplemented by an authority derived from an ability to respond emotionally to the objects of

<sup>90</sup> Byron, *Letters and Journals*, vol. VIII, p. 183; according to Leslie A. Marchand, the note was to be printed at the end of *Marino Faliero*, and attacks the author of *Sketches Descriptive of Italy*, of which the author was Jane Waldie (see footnotes, vol. VIII, pp. 173, 183).

commentary. In travel writing of this period, as in many other cultural contexts, emotional responsiveness is marked as a feminized attribute, and the female subject is readily admitted as capable of pronouncing on the foreign in a responsive manner. Responsiveness, in the late eighteenth century, is nonetheless defined as compatible with manly simplicity and restraint: by adeptly combining hyperbole with rejections of too immoderate an effusiveness, both male and female travellers are positioned as feminine yet manly.

The concepts of gender that play a part in definitions of the Grand Tour, moreover, and of travel in general, change dramatically over the period considered here. The Tour is explicitly defined in seventeenth-century writings as a confirmation of masculinity. Richard Lassels, for example, in his *Voyage of Italy* (1670), defines travel as a means of achieving manly self-reliance and avoiding effeminate softness:

Traveling preserves my yong nobleman from surfeiting of his parents, and weanes him from the dangerous fondness of his mother. It teacheth him wholesome hardship; to lye in beds that are none of his acquaintance; to speak to men he never saw before; to travel in the morning before day, and in the evening after day; to endure any horse and weather, as well as any meat and drink. Whereas my country gentleman that never traveled, can scarce go to London without making his Will, at least without wetting his handkercher. And what generous mother will not say to her son with that ancient? *Malo tibi malè esse, quam molliter: I had rather thou shouldst be sick, then soft.*<sup>91</sup>

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, various concepts of travel to Italy as feminizing are formed; the rhetoric of emotional responsiveness, with its insistence that some versions of the feminine are compatible with manliness, proves useful in endorsing such concepts. Viewing works of art, for example, and growing accustomed to foreign society and manners, are described as activities that, far from forming part of the ‘wholesome hardship’ of travel, confer on the traveller a certain feminizing polish and sophistication. Excessive identification with a rough-hewn version of masculinity is mocked, in some writings, as evidence of a failure in acquiring such polish. In Lancelot Temple’s *Short*

*Ramble through some Parts of France and Italy* (1771), the traveller, exclaiming at the beauty of the *Apollo Belvedere*, in the Vatican, invokes an imaginary group of spectators who, in objecting to such beauty in a male figure, reveal themselves as crudely resistant to any feminizing preoccupation with aesthetic matters: ‘I have heard sensible people say that a man has nothing to do with beauty – That a man is handsome enough if he does not frighten his Horse, is a coarse kind of Proverb.’<sup>92</sup>

Late eighteenth-century travel writing, then, both incorporates expressions of responsiveness that are defined as feminized and presents some of the feminizing effects of travel as legitimate and desirable. At the same time, writing of this period is consistently censorious about the effeminacy of the inhabitants of the warm South – an effeminacy that is located either in their languor and indolence or in the fervour of their passions. The traveller, it is assumed, is protected from the contaminatory effects of such effeminacy by the ease with which he or she is able to take up the position of a detached spectator, viewing the foreign as a distanced pictorial spectacle.

Such protection is, however, sometimes thrown into uncertainty: even detached, pictorial viewing allows the topography of effeminacy to compromise the traveller to some extent, by inviting him or her to identify with figures within the topography, or to view them in an enthralled, absorptive manner. By the early nineteenth century, the effeminacy of the warm South is defined both as more dangerous to the traveller and as more attractive. One of the forms of destabilization envisaged as a danger that crossing boundaries might entail is that of succumbing to ‘a climate which’, as James Johnson puts it in *Change of Air* (1831) ‘unmanned not only the conquering Romans but the conquerors of Rome’.<sup>93</sup> At the same time, travellers positively welcome the unmooring, and loss of a sense of bounded selfhood, that such an effemination entails: Anna Jameson, in Naples, charts a diminution of her sufferings as all her faculties ‘seemed lost and swallowed up in an indolent delicious reverie, a sort of vague and languid enjoyment’.<sup>94</sup>

The alternative approach to the foreign that travellers begin to adopt around the end of the eighteenth century, moreover, that of the tourist, takes it for granted that travel entails a temporary removal from a domain of duty and responsibility: in other words, from a domain that provides

<sup>91</sup> Part I, unpaginated preface; the quotation is attributed by Lassels to Seneca. The concept of softness is regularly elided with that of effeminacy, with reference to the Latin *mollitia*, which can refer to either quality. For a discussion of the relation between the Grand Tour and British concepts of masculinity, see Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, chapter 4, ‘The Grand Tour of the English Gentleman’, pp. 54–64.

<sup>92</sup> pp. 35–6.

<sup>93</sup> p. 293.

<sup>94</sup> Jameson, *Diary*, p. 262.

crucial confirmation of masculinity and manliness. The touristic identification of travel with an escape from the burden of authoritative but mundane identity survives today, and supplies a central theme of many travel brochures. (Jacket and tie or smart dress are decidedly not required in Kiribati. You only need lightweight casuals and a determination to escape the rat race.)<sup>95</sup>

Nonetheless, an awareness of the view of travel propounded by Lassels – travel as confirmation of patrician masculinity – is registered in travel writings long after it is generally acknowledged that travel to Italy is not the exclusive preserve either of members of the aristocracy and gentry or of men. From time to time, eighteenth-century travel writings register unease about the inclusion of women as participants in the Grand Tour; women are most often classified as inadequate travellers in utterances where the discourse of European travel intersects with discourses in which the authority of the female traveller to describe and comment is less firmly established. John Moore, in his *View of Society and Manners in Italy*, defines as risible anomalies those women travellers who, by virtue of their eye-witness experience of Italy, are able to transmute themselves into participants in the discourse of art criticism: 'Ladies, who have remained some time at Rome and Florence, particularly those who affect a taste for virtù, acquire an intrepidity and a cool minuteness, in examining and criticizing naked figures, which is unknown to those who have never passed the Alps.'<sup>96</sup>

Travellers who proclaim a female identity, moreover, intermittently define the experience of travel as one that invites an identification with various specifically masculine approaches to determining the relation between the self and the world. One of the most obvious examples of the curious effect of writing as a woman identifying with masculine authority is found in Mary Wollstonecraft's remark, in Sweden: 'At supper my host told me bluntly that I was a woman of observation, for I asked him *men's questions*'.<sup>97</sup> Anna Jameson, identifying with a male experience of feminine allurements, remarks: 'One leaves Naples as a man parts with an enchanting mistress, and Rome as we would bid adieu to an old and dear-loved friend'.<sup>98</sup>

The identification of travel with masculine experience of the world, however, does not necessarily guarantee that a claim to experience of

travelling is defined as a source of authoritative manliness. On the contrary: in eighteenth-century writings, such an identification can affirm all the more strongly that the pleasures of travelling are guilty pleasures. An earlier instance of the metaphor of the traveller and topography as a man and his mistress is found at the end of Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections*, in an account of the effects of travel on different personalities. For Piozzi, however, the man is not enchanted, but all too cavalier:

Others there are, who, being accustomed to live a considerable time in places where they have not the smallest intention to fix for ever, but on the contrary firmly resolve to leave *sometime*, learn to treat the world as a man treats his mistress, whom he likes well enough, but has no design to marry, and of course never provides for.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Anon., *The South Pacific*, p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> Vol. II, pp. 424–5.

<sup>97</sup> Wollstonecraft, *Letters*, p. 68.

<sup>98</sup> Jameson, *Diary*, p. 308.

<sup>99</sup> Vol. II, p. 387