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Clifford's *Ethnographica*

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Abstract ■ James Clifford's work is discussed, in the first half of this article, through the prism of Malinowski, travel and the 'trinketization' of culture. In the second half, Clifford's 'ethnography' of the Fort Ross tourist-heritage project, and his sloppy reading of Marx, are brought in to contrast/comparison with Malinowskian perspectives to argue against the well-meaning pessimism of 'post-exoticist' modes of culture commentary. The article is a polemical review of Clifford's *Routes* (Clifford, 1997), demanding greater attention to the political context of anthropological work.

Keywords ■ Clifford ■ Malinowski ■ post-exoticism ■ travel ■ trinketization

Section 1: Clifford and Malinowski

'The institutionalization of fieldwork in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be understood within a larger history of "travel"' (Clifford, 1997: 64). As James Clifford retells the founding narrative, prior to Malinowski's 1915–19 adventures in the South Seas, anthropologists stayed at home. Only with the professionalization of the discipline – and strictly keeping separate science from colonial administration (they liked to think) – did anthropologists begin to move.¹ Where did they go? Famously, much has been said about rhetorical fabulations in Malinowski, and elaborate commentary is given over to photographs of him in the Pacific, his tent on the beach, himself in his tent, and Clifford sees the tent as an icon of 'deep' fieldwork. But he would also have it that Malinowski travels, that he was a 'displaced person' (Clifford, 1988: 95) and 'shipwrecked' (Clifford, 1988: 10). The reference here is to the English language difficulties of a Polish migrant, but by association the nautical tone deposits the 'founding' father-figure of fieldwork in a South Sea Island scene. Big reputations have been made in this potlatch of metaphor – Clifford himself came to fame editing the agenda-setting text *Writing Culture* with George Marcus (Clifford and Marcus, 1986), and much attention to the ways of writing has enriched ethnography and extended the discipline. In the process, however, Malinowski has become a cartoon character. Good to think with, conjured here and there, turned every which way and moved about at will, he struts the Trobriand beach frightening postgraduate students with a year stuck in a tent reading trashy novels. As a rite of passage and ritual incantation, reading Malinowski

has become, via Clifford and others, overdetermined. It is important to note that the circumstances of the paradigmatic deep fieldwork scene are more mobile than is often glossed. Malinowski was back and forth between several Islands, between the Islands and Australia, and between the villages and the huts of traders, missionaries and magistrates. George Marcus has called Malinowski's years in the Trobriand village one of the initial examples of 'multi-site' ethnography (Marcus, 1995: 106), although Michael Young has a different view of Malinowski's predicament, saying that travel 'was simple in theory, difficult in practice' and that boat-bereft as he was, it was easier for him to stay put (Young, 1984: 23). It might also be wondered just how often the other 'travel' aspects of Malinowski's book, the circulation of kula shells, fascination with canoes, are stressed when the iconic text about 'staying put' to do fieldwork is taught to students in anthropology departments everywhere today.² Malinowski travels, but with what degree of attention?

Clifford has praised Marcus's advocacy of 'innovative forms' of multi-locale research in more than one place (Clifford, 1997: 27, 57; Marcus and Fischer, 1986: 94, 186n). Given that multi-site ethnography has become fashionable for advocates of the new experimental moment (which seems to be dragging on and on), it is no surprise that Clifford's latest book celebrates travel as a metaphor for anthropology. In *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Clifford sees 'fieldwork as a travel practice' (Clifford, 1997: 8). *Routes* elaborates moments of his earlier book, *The Predicament of Culture* (1988), which was subtitled *Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*. The shift in the titles is indicative of a larger move, from 20th-century modernism (albeit in postmodernist forms) to the 'late' 20th-century (global and local, dwelling and travelling). From 'predicament' (as in 'stuck?') to 'on the move' in less than a decade. Now the concerns are with translation, post-colonialism and allegedly post-exoticism. It is my argument that the more Clifford discusses travel, the more stuck and stationary he becomes.³ The diary form that dominates the new book does not move beyond Malinowski, it does not offer a renewal of anthropology, it is – in my assessment – inferior to the earlier work, and most disappointing of all, it offers no adequate response to the 'predicament' of our, however late, 20th-century condition. The present commentary is an exploration of these concerns, but one that also seeks to show what can be retained and what is worth reading in this set of texts.

It seems to me that nearly all recent complaints about Clifford mouthed by anthropologists – and there is even more mouthed than written – are often so much sour grapes. It is the case that Clifford's work has shaken the more staid anthropologies, for good or bad it has inspired many, it has raised a host of questions and brought questions raised by others to wider attention. My own problem is largely with the context in which these questions are asked, or rather, with the necessity to seek out a more radical questioning – one that takes place in a context that matters. The Clifford project, as I view it, is not so disruptive of anthropological modalities as the staid types fear, nor is it so revolutionary as the 'inspired' might think. We can learn

much from Clifford, but there is little to it if there is not a programme which will transform the ways we write, read, think and live. The criticisms of Clifford come thick and fast: for collecting (Strathern, 1991); for getting surrealism wrong (Price and Jamin, 1988); for rehashing Geertz (Whitten, 1991); for 'not being an anthropologist' (Nugent, 1991: 130) (really? by what criteria?); for patronizing women (almost everywhere, but most significantly in the 'companion volume' *Women Writing Culture* edited by Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon, 1995; see also Babcock, 1993); and for promoting a reflexive dialogic anthropology that is insufficiently aware, or perhaps not capable, of escaping its own artifice, and in danger of being not much more than another 'elitist, intellectualist and essentially Western paradigm for academic knowledge production' (Gledhill, 1994: 224).⁴ Yet there may be something to thank Clifford for: a generation of readers, who might have ignored anthropology, now find it intellectually, even politically, stimulating. Another kind of travel connection. Even though the critique of anthropology has its own long history (Hymes, Asad and, tangentially, Said), it was Clifford that helped put the debates on a wider curriculum and awoke other disciplines, like history and literature, to matters of theoretical importance. It's good copy, Clifford's stuff, whatever limitations there also must be – 'wrong on any number of things' as Ben Ross might say. Similarly, many new and contemporary anthropological readers might not have found a way to Bataille, Leiris, the College of Sociology as part of the social sciences if he had not been such a good publicist (whatever he makes of that history). Even where he is wrong, simplifies or exaggerates, Clifford has the merit, at least, of bringing me back to the debate to try and distinguish, to differentiate and to supplement and extend. This is a much more preferable response than endlessly arguing that anthropological truth claims are fiction or not, or that authority tropes rule the game, or don't.⁵

But travel as a metaphor for anthropology, culture, translation and the predicament of late (very late) 20th-century life deserves evaluation. Let us check the visa requirements.

Clifford begins with travel as a way of bringing the borderlands of ethnography to attention. Certain aspects of the construction of anthropological texts had consistently slipped out of the frame. He offers a list:

- (1) The means of transport is largely erased – the boat, the land rover, the mission airplane. These technologies suggest systematic prior and ongoing contacts and commerce with exterior places and forces which are not part of the field/object. The discourse of ethnography ('being there') is separated from travel ('getting there').
- (2) The capital city, the national context is erased. This is what George Condominas has called the *préterrain*, all those places you have to go through and be in relation with just to get to your village or to that place you will call your field.
- (3) Also erased: the university home of the researcher. Especially now that one can travel more easily to even the most remote sites and now that all sorts of places in the 'First World' can be fields (churches, labs, offices, schools, shopping malls), movement in and out of the field by both natives and anthropologists may be very frequent.
- (4) The sites and relations of *translation* are minimized . . . (Clifford, 1997: 23)

Admittedly Clifford calls this a partial list. And certainly some of his points might be extended and stressed. The erasure of the university context for anthropological research might especially be noted, as the anthropologist takes the university with him/her in the tent,⁶ and carries also the institutional apparatus, and entire global network of centres, conference circuits, publishers, bookshops, course guides, canonical texts, disciplinary affiliations, careers and tenure etc., etc., along into this 'field'. Clifford's point, however, is sound. The 'field' was never a discrete and bounded scene, however much 'being there' was privileged over 'getting there', or even 'being there on the shelf'.⁷

But can travel be the key word which will open up the various contexts of cultural codification that are hidden in ethnography's realist narratives, and increasingly surrealist-inspired ones if we are to follow Clifford? Already in his first chapter of *Routes* he finds it necessary to point out that certain forms of travel have not counted as 'proper travel' and he singles out the need to 'know a great deal more about how women travel' in various traditions and histories (Clifford, 1997: 32).⁸ As well we need more on cross-cultural travel, travel that avoids the hotel-motel circuits, immigration, servants who accompany travellers, explorers, guides and, later in a footnote, 'another area of specification I am not yet prepared to discuss: diasporic sexualities and/or sexualised diaspora discourses' (Clifford, 1997: 367n [Why not?]). His brief intro comments on domestic workers from South Asia, the Philippines and Malaysia, whose 'displacement and indenture have routinely involved forced sex' (Clifford, 1997: 6) do not succeed as Clifford struggles 'never quite successfully to free the related term "travel" from a history of European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic [and] recreational meanings' (Clifford, 1997: 33). Just considering the absurdity of including the racist violence and atrocity of the slave trade under any revamped notion of 'travel' would be sufficient to show the likely inappropriateness of generalizing extensions of the travel trope in its Euro-American modes. Referring to 'transatlantic enslavement' as one of the harsh conditions of travel, 'to mention only a particularly violent example' (Clifford, 1997: 35), he gathers deportation, uprooting and other terms under the more inclusive 'diaspora' to which he devotes a useful essay (although still wanting to 'sort out the paradigms' [Clifford, 1997: 247]). If it were not for several returns to the governing trope and the ambition to found a 'travelling theory' and a renewed anthropology on the term, perhaps there would be something gained in the association of all those diverse movements under travel: asking if the violence of slavery was travel does at least raise questions about the violences underlying all travel, including that which enables ethnographic projects, such as the colonial power that makes the world safe for ethnographers and tourists.⁹

I think it is worth attempting an evaluation of the general trajectory of this travel trope. Clifford's musings have deservedly come in for some serious scrutiny. Theorizing travel has itself become an industry of sorts. And

Clifford has become something of an avatar for dispersed members of the cultural studies writing corps. Among others, bell hooks is one who most clearly shows this double gift when she praises Clifford's essay 'Notes on Travel and Theory' (Clifford, 1989), for 'his efforts to expand the travel/theoretical frontier so that it might be more inclusive' (hooks, 1995: 43). She is also unsparingly critical, showing that the answers to the questions Clifford poses about travel require a 'theory of the journey that would expose the extent to which holding on to the concept of "travel" as we know it [and as Clifford does] is also a way to hold on to imperialism'. She also makes the stark point that: "Travel" is not a word that can be easily evoked to talk about the Middle Passage, The Trail of Tears, the landing of Chinese immigrants, the forced relocation of Japanese Americans, or the plight of the homeless', and – though it should be noted how far hooks's own examples are 'American' ones – that theorizing disparate journeying is 'crucial to our understanding of any politics of location' (hooks, 1995: 43). This is no game, however, as hooks points out that 'playing' with the notion of travel may not exactly be the best way to narrate experiences of travel that are about encounters with the terrorism of white supremacy (hooks, 1995: 44).

Clifford wants to 'hang on' to the term 'travel' because of its very 'taintedness' – its 'associations with gendered racial bodies, class privilege, specific means of conveyance, beaten paths, agents, frontiers, documents, and the like' (Clifford, 1997: 39). A vocabulary of apparent sin – gender and class as 'tainted' – which redeems travel is akin to what Kaplan calls a 'theoretical tourism [which] constitutes the margin as a linguistic or critical variation, a new poetics of the exotic' (Kaplan, 1996: 93). As Kaplan presents it, this is a 'utopian process of letting go of privileged identities and practices [requiring] emulation of the ways and modes of "modernity's" others' (1996: 88) and this 'repeats the anthropological gesture of erasing the subject position of the theorist and [perpetuating] a kind of colonial discourse in the name of progressive politics' (1996: 88). Perhaps this is also at play in the theoretical advocacy of the travel trope in Clifford, although I would also go further to read a more pervasive 'anthropological gesture' here in the usurping of the 'other's' place of representation as Clifford becomes spokesman (gender intended) for those writers of diaspora and politics of 'travel' he so usefully promotes (this is important in light of Clifford's readings of Paul Gilroy [1993] and Avtar Brah [1996] in his 'diasporas' essay – the institutional and disciplinary overview question is: why is it that Clifford is the one so well placed, resourced and circulated to provide the global survey of best new work in the field?). When it comes to presentation of progressive post-colonial, post-exotic Others, Clifford's text does not fall for any of the old manners of representing difference, his version of anthropological ventriloquy occurs through representing himself, and his predicament, *through* that of the other. That this is done on the basis of explicit self-reflexive post-structural high theory credentials may be all the more troublesome.

I want to put Clifford in the fieldwork scene for a moment (there will be

justification for dress-ups later). Clifford comments often on photographs; he loves instamatic anthropology, especially shots of the photogenic Malinowski. In *Routes* the much-conjured-with scene of Malinowski's tent on the beach in the Trobriands is evoked again (Clifford, 1997: 20, 54, see also Clifford, 1990). The technology of the tent as a marker of presence, in the village, as well as 'its mobility, its thin flaps, providing an "inside" where notebooks, special foods, a typewriter could be kept' (Clifford, 1997: 20), also provokes Clifford to ask who is being observed, natives or anthropologist, hiding away behind the canvas (see Dube, 1998). He is interested too in the shots of Malinowski in the field in *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, dressed in white, surrounded by black bodies, in a posture, attitude and style that reminds Clifford of those colonial Europeans dressing formally for dinner in hot sweaty climes (Clifford, 1997: 74). Malinowski is not 'going native' here. In *Writing Culture* Clifford takes up the photograph of Malinowski inside his tent: 'Malinowski recorded himself writing' (Clifford and Marcus, 1986: 1), but curiously the position of the photographer is not interrogated when Clifford asks 'who speaks? who writes? when and where? with or to whom? under what institutional and historical constraints?' (Clifford and Marcus, 1986: 13). Surely attention to these questions should teach us to read such scenes in a multi-locale way, to see the traces of other travelling Europeans, and of the international extension of the means of representation, at least, in this scene from early 20th-century Trobriana. The photographs in question must have been taken on a day when Billy Hancock or some other European neighbour was visiting Malinowski (most likely it was Hancock as some of his photographs, better than Malinowski's, were used in *Argonauts*).¹⁰ Yet, whoever the photographer was for sure, we have no guarantee that this was everyday attire and that Malinowski is got up in gear for a sweaty colonial dinner. Well, perhaps, but what is served by such questions? (Then again, what did he get up to? After reading the letters [Malinowski and Elsie Masson, in Wayne, 1995] there is perhaps reason to suspect the taboo subject of sexual activity in the field, as signalled, but never confirmed, in the, 1967 publication of his secret Trobriand jottings: *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*. This has become the hidden controversy of Malinowski's stay.)¹¹

Whatever the case, how the Trobriand books have travelled. Annette Weiner, who also did her fieldwork on Kiriwina in the Trobriands, says, 'No other ethnography has had a more lasting impact' (Weiner, 1988: 140), and it has never been out of print. As I have argued in 'Castaway Anthropology', the voyaging of kula structures the book (Hutnyk, 1988: 46). 'Argonauts' is the most obvious clue, and Malinowski's thinking can be discerned from the published correspondence between himself and his first wife, Elsie Masson: Jason/Malinowski imagines he would make 'a nice penny' out of the 'golden fleece' of his text (Wayne, 1995: Bronio to Elsie 21.12.1921, 4.4.1922). The influence of Malinowski's Trobriand text has travelled in many directions and justice could not be done in a single article to the disciplinary ramifications alone, leaving aside political, social, economic and psychological

consequences of the work's itinerary. Malinowski and his protégés came to establish their brand of anthropology worldwide – departmental intrigues there must be – but it very much depended upon the initial success of the *Argonauts*. If he hadn't managed to get *Argonauts* published Malinowski had decided he was going to go into the margarine business (Wayne, 1995: 162: Bronio to Elsie 4.6.1918). So the text had to be a success and was compared from the beginning to almost every other book: Boon quotes Frazer's preface comparison of *Argonauts* with Cervantes and Shakespeare (Boon, 1983: 133), while Conrad, Joyce, Zola, Freud, Kipling and Frazer are recruited in other commentaries (Ardener, 1985; Clifford, 1986; Rapport, 1990; Stocking, 1985; Strathern, 1987; Thornton, 1985). Already in the letters Elsie Masson was filling Malinowski's head with grand ideas. She imagines the two of them together on a sea voyage: 'You know how Robert Louis Stevenson used to cruise around the South Sea Islands in any old ship, and carry out his work all the while, and wring such a lot of romance and interest besides health out of his life' (in Wayne, 1995: 40). Malinowski accepts and appropriates the comparison (Wayne, 1995: Bronio to Elsie 17.1.1918), and also likens his 'writing diary'¹² to the writing of the *Arabian Nights* (Wayne, 1995: 18). The momentum of *Argonauts* (as vehicle for various debates) was recharged with the publication of the *Diary*. The literary complex multiplies. Clifford takes the *Diary*, with its day-to-day minutiae of novels read, anxieties, prejudice against 'the nigs' and fantasies of sex, and the carefully polished and public *Argonauts* together as one text without forgetting that both are constructed and selective works. Despite the 'unintended for publication' tag attached to the *Diary*, and the hostile or cautiously indifferent reception it received from anthropologists at the time of its release, it now has become, seventy years after it was written, another part of the 'complex intersubjective situation' (Clifford, 1986: 145) which also produced *Argonauts*, *The Sexual Life of Savages*, *Coral Gardens* as well as other eruptions of matters Trobriand into anthropological discourse. 'It is I who will describe or create them' (Malinowski, 1967: 140) Malinowski says, and still in 1935, 20 years after his first visit, he was writing up: 'Once again I have to make my appearance as the chronicler and spokesman of the Trobrianders' (Malinowski, 1935: v). It would be impossible to comprehensively track the extent to which these texts have now travelled through the various global circuits of discipline, publishing, libraries and gossip.

Of all Malinowski's travel books though, it is the diary which most appeals to Clifford when he acclaims it as a heteroglot text: 'Malinowski wrote in Polish with frequent use of English, words and phrases in German, French, Greek, Spanish and Latin, and of course [!] terms from the native languages [of which] there were four: Motu, Mailu, Kiriwinian and Pidgin' (Clifford, 1986: 53). Yet celebrations of heteroglossia, especially when found in rehabilitations of previously discarded texts, seem somewhat forced. The current fashion for hybridity and multi-vocal dialogue (Malinowski talking to himself in the jungle) does not exclude the anthropologist, or later the

commentator, from the controlling position of authorship as Clifford so often seems to want. Pluralities and multiplicities do not necessarily subvert established orthodoxies of publication and reception. The diary, in Clifford's hands, becomes a record of a fragmenting dissociated self attached, in a process of functionalist therapy, to the *Argonauts* ethnography written several years later (in the Canary Islands): 'One of the ways Malinowski pulled himself together was by writing ethnography. Here the fashioned wholeness of a self and of a culture seem to be mutually reinforcing allegories of identity' (Clifford, 1986: 152). This, presumably, is to be contrasted to the 'special poignancy' of the last words of the diary: 'Truly I lack real character' (Malinowski, 1967: 53). Clifford adds: 'the arbitrary code of one language, English, is finally given precedence' (1986: 53). Later he calls *Argonauts* a 'lie', or rather a 'saving fiction' (Clifford, 1988: 99) and suggests that 'To unify a messy scene of writing it is necessary to select, combine, rewrite (and thus efface)' (1988: 110).

Much of Clifford's own work takes on the diary form. In a chapter of *Routes* called 'Palenque Log' Clifford offers a travel report of a visit to the site of some Mexican ruins in the state of Chiapas. It is perhaps the influence of Michel Leiris that gives Clifford cause to include weather reports, the news that he has dropped his camera on the bathroom floor, breakfast details and bus itineraries at the beginning of his narrative. Clifford has been reading Leiris for a long time. In *The Predicament of Culture*, the chapter 'Tell Me About Your Trip: Michel Leiris' is devoted to the ethnographic documentation of everything. Leiris's African ethnography from the Mission Dakar-Djibouti tells of both beauty and of the gloriously satisfying morning shit (see Koepping, 1989). But more than 60 years later why is this still 'experimental'? Hasn't the convention of travel writing invaded creative ethnography as well, introducing predictable and pedestrian routine to what once were curious or exotic revelations? Is it too demanding to wonder if both travel writing and ethnography need sometimes to be rendered more seriously? Clifford visits the 'jungle walk' at the 'Temple of Inscriptions' and his text documents, in 15-minute segments, his 'trip'. Why should we care? (And although his dropped camera jams up, he still manages to take a photograph, it is included in his book, how? Later he writes: 'I'm glad I can't take pictures' and 'Everywhere I glance, it seems, someone is pointing a camera . . . hundreds of photos per hour' [Clifford, 1997: 224]. I hope this is only an ironic rehearsal of the photogenic self-loathing particular to tourists today.)

We should care about Clifford's trip, not because he is illustrating that the 'ethnographer' is little different from a tourist on a tourist bus taking snappy happy snaps and buying souvenir t-shirts, but because of the context. Here is Clifford, the producer of books, telling us about his travels in, not insignificantly, Chiapas, in an experimental 'post-exoticist' (Clifford, 1997: 90) ethnographic text offered as illustration of contemporary anthropological writing, and he leaves out all but the most trivial reference to politics. At

the same time that this report is published, the consequences of a military crackdown on the people of Chiapas, initiated just a few months after Clifford's 'Palenque Log' adventure, visits death and destruction upon the indigenous people, farmers and peasants of the region. Clifford's only substantial comment on the Zapatista 'rebellion' is that it interrupted travel to the ruins at Palenque 'temporarily'. No elaboration on what force was needed to ensure this temporary interruption, no report on the military repressions there, or for that matter the more disturbing actions in nearby Guerrero,¹³ nor of the US support for the Mexican regime etc., etc. Surely at some point the political and military force that enables travel narratives and ethnography should be examined by the self-reflexive scholar who has made a career of telling us that anthropology is founded on power and authority? Later Clifford comments on the exchange value of a fax machine for SubComandante Marcos, and how it is 'not surprising' that the Zapatista uprising was timed to coincide with the implementation of the free trade agreement (Clifford, 1997: 322) – this is at least better than some romantic reports on the Zapatistas which suggested that the date was chosen because it coincided with indigenous harvest rituals – but Clifford draws no conclusions beyond noting the 'mysterious' equivalences made between corn in Mexico and corn in Kansas by way of the international market: 'the fact still does not compute' (Clifford, 1997: 323).¹⁴ This is not to say that the 'independent traveller' (Clifford identifies himself this way three times in the chapter) should have noticed at the time – six months before the uprising – that Zapatista organizers were working amongst the people (and had been for some years), but certainly pointing to privileges of position – as independent traveller, or even as critic – and noting incongruities and contradictions, does not yet amount to an adequate politics. It may be bordering on churlishness to wonder at the timing of Clifford's visit to Chiapas and to link this also to the (un)computed facts of power that include NAFTA, research visas, social science, military control and market trickery. We do not know if he has returned to the troubled region, but certainly this resonates with other timely anthropological visitations – there will be reason to consider especially Malinowski in the South Seas during the 1914–17 imperialist world war.

Echoes of other famous monographs on time: Lévi-Strauss is evoked when Clifford wonders when was the best time to visit (Clifford, 1997: 232); the Palenque arrival story could have come from any of dozens of scene-setting ethnographic scenes – Firth arriving at Tikopia, Evans-Pritchard 'on the heels of a punitive expedition', Geertz invisible in Bali (Clifford, 1997: 237; on Malinowski's arrival see Thornton [1985: 13], on Geertz consider how Indonesian politics is invisible in the much taught Cockfight article [Geertz, 1973]).¹⁵ After a day full of minutiae reported as if anyone's day would be available for rendering, only Clifford, professor and author, armed with the resources of the publishing industry, Harvard University Press, past authorizations, the history of anthropology, institutional affiliation

with 'hist-con' (the History of Consciousness Programme at the University of California), in the West, in the 1990s, gets into print.¹⁶

The front cover photograph of *Routes* deserves attention, since photographs are the icons of travel stories. Necessary accoutrements, markers of real presence (more so than postcards of the very same scenes). The 'subject' James Bosu has been cropped for the cover, although remaining curiously 'hybrid' with traditional 'mind-boggling' headdress and necktie. Clifford 'gravitates towards the incongruous detail' (Clifford, 1997: 178), but Bosu's stubbie of beer is kept for the inside enlargement. This doctoring – not necessarily by Clifford, but by design – may well change readings of the image, and it is not without significance that the cover evokes a schoolbook with its background map of the world (or rather, of the West Coast of North America, Clifford's institutional base). In the context of a debate about his Mashpee study in *Predicament*, Clifford has written that the 'invented differences' he values 'are very similar to the products of a transnational capitalism that feeds on impurities, mix and match, unconstrained juxtaposition and import-export' (Clifford, 1991: 146). This important point is not, however, countered by fascination with the very mix and match 'invented differences' so denounced. The review of the 'Paradise' Wahgi (Highland Papua New Guinea) exhibition, curated by Michael O'Hanlon, that constitutes the chapter 'Paradise' in *Routes* also includes a photograph of the woman Kala Wala, though Clifford mistakenly identifies her earrings as beer-can rip-tops when they are in fact clearly not can but stubbie tops (here the incongruities are of the international beer market, which is not everywhere exactly the same – locally significant classificatory distinctions may require more careful 'fieldwork', see O'Hanlon [1993: 81]). The review of 'Paradise' starts as a second-person narrative description of a visit to the Museum of Mankind in London. The addressee 'You', I presume, could be Clifford's 6-year-old son, who accompanies him, or it could also be the reader, for whom the significance of the various incongruous commodities of a PNG pig festival are explained. We are like a child before the critic's explication. The focus is on the 'strangeness of everyday things' (Clifford, 1997: 154). A third photograph in the chapter, of Kulka Kon looking 'authentic', has Clifford on two occasions wondering what he would look like dressed in a Hawaiian shirt, as a taxi driver, a Christian – Clifford likes to play dress-ups with the natives (Clifford, 1997: 183, 187). There is yet another reference to the past of anthro-monography as one of the 'natives' looks covertly at the camera in a staged shot, just as Clifford has already pointed out with regard to Malinowski's photograph of a Kula presentation in *Argonauts* (Clifford, 1988: 21, 1990). Clifford's review of this exhibition explores a wide range of themes: PNG design; art which includes beer advertisements, of a particular PNG style; reports on exhibition catalogue cover controversies (who chose to crop Clifford's cover? who controls the text?); inclusions and exclusions; debt and obligation; echoes of the past and experimental innovations. It was also a relief to get to this Museum of Mankind exhibit after a gruelling visit, with son trailing behind, poor kid, to the *Guinness Book of World Records* Trocadero

show at Piccadilly (we do not get the younger Clifford's views on either show). But we also do not know if there is any sense in which Clifford feels drawn into the obligations and debt alliance with the Wahgi people which he discusses in the context of Michael O'Hanlon's collecting (Clifford, 1997: 170). Although their presence seems to be ever more elided in the abstracting processes of exhibition and then in exhibition review, the Wahgi were the ones who enabled O'Hanlon to put together the exhibition and they consciously involved him in ongoing obligations, which Clifford details. Being able to fill a book – at least a chapter – with images and discussion of the exhibit must, in these terms, indebt Clifford to the Wahgi too, yet we do not find out how such 'relations of collecting', all 'exchanged and appropriated in continued local/global circuits' (Clifford, 1997: 171), obligate him, nor how his routes-review returns anything to the Wahgi themselves. Pointing out one's complicity in these relations of collecting and appropriation does not begin to undo them.

We have long known that what appeals to Clifford is the incongruous and the hybrid. He wants to 'quibble' with the terms used by those who would suggest that souveniring the incongruous and celebrating the syncretic initiates a new round of intellectual imperialism (Clifford, 1997: 180, citing Shaw and Stewart's use of 'hegemony'). He paraphrases Marx, without acknowledgement, when discussing the ways that people from PNG 'make their own history, though not in conditions of their own choosing' (Clifford, 1997: 161, the quote can be found in Marx, 1968: 96) and he celebrates the hybrid in the face of those who would think it 'axiomatic' that culture is diminished 'in direct proportion to the increase of Coke and Christianity' (1997: 161). Though it is not simply these two scourges of humanity that should be marked, surely it is necessary to rethink easy incongruity-hunting since the conditions of making history are now everywhere the context of an international capitalism that, as Clifford notes again, thrives on just such hybridity and cultural differences.¹⁷ For my part, it is not quite enough to suggest that the notion of some sort of 'anthropological hegemony' conjures up 'disempowered intellectuals – privileged no doubt, but hardly in a position to enforce their definitions' (Clifford, 1997: 182). In a review of a definition-setting exhibition in London or in an anthropological text that circulates the world via bookshop, conference and course guide, this is blatant mystification. It is not the case that, since 'the Trobrianders are free to read Malinowski's accounts of their culture as parodies' as Clifford claims in *Predicament*, this somehow unravels any of the authority or privilege of either ethnographer or critic. Neither James Bosu nor the Trobrianders publish their diaries for global circulation via Harvard University Press, nor do they curate exhibitions in the old imperial capital.¹⁸

There is more that could be said on the incongruous bits and pieces Clifford collects, especially so in the context of his museum studies. I would also want to question why trinket collection has taken the place of more systematic analyses? His text is a phantasmogoric, but ultimately limited, cabinet of curiosities, relics and snippets. Indeed, considerations of Clifford's much

favoured collecting tropes, collage and pastiche, often seem to side-step the political. Just as travel, according to hooks and Kaplan, is of use to the well-placed and comfortable, might it also be so that collage has certain ideological effects? Collage everywhere.¹⁹

In a post-Clifford anthropological universe everything is in danger of becoming collage. Even Malinowski was a surrealist in Clifford's estimation. Wrenching details of Trobriand trade behaviour and identifying these with canoe magic and myth, then comparing kula valuables with the English crown jewels, is an example of 'the surrealist moment in ethnography' where the 'possibility of comparison exists in unmediated tension with sheer incongruity' (Clifford, 1988: 146). Surrealist procedures 'are always present in ethnography' for Clifford, although Leiris's *L'Afrique fantôme* is the only pure example (Clifford, 1988: 146). The ethnographic surrealist attitude has other Trobriand avatars however; one Clifford singles out as prime illustration is Leach and Kildea's film *Trobriand Cricket*, where a gentleman's game brought by missionaries at the time of Malinowski – indeed he refers to it in *Coral Gardens* (Malinowski, 1935: 211–13) – is turned into 'ludic warfare' by the Trobrianders with the inventive cultural skill of a Picasso (Clifford, 1988: 148).²⁰

Writing in *Routes of The Predicament of Culture*, Clifford describes the use of collage 'as a way of making space for heterogeneity, for historical and political, not simply aesthetic juxtaposition' (Clifford, 1997: 3). Yet the question is how useful are even 'historical and political' juxtapositions without thinking politically about what to do with them? And what does this mean in anthropology?²¹ Is such collage meant to more adequately represent the world? If so, what distinguishes this from the political and historical, and somewhat random sampling techniques, I can achieve with dextrous use of my remote control while watching the CNN and BBC satellite news feeds? Remote control? Not much control, say some. Another kind of politics awaits.

What we can take from Clifford is his examination of how the polyphonic heteroglossia of Malinowski's experience in the Trobriands was rendered into text as a coherent, worked up, sifted and arranged, coordinated and orchestrated narrative. Whether Elsie had a greater or lesser hand in this,²² whether Conrad was the deity hovering behind the project, and whether the *Diary* and the letters reveal some more primordial truth is not the point. What is revealed is the process of making narrative out of events. Editing, arranging, conjuring. The travel metaphor here does the trick, in large part, for Malinowski. It also does so for Clifford, indeed, organizing not just one text, but increasingly his entire oeuvre. This has implications for understanding travel, and tourism, since travel stories – whether told after the trip, or pre-packaged in the brochure as a promise, or narrated by the guide as a product – are the stuff of contemporary travel economics. So, it is important to ask why travel theory emerges now, why Clifford in the 1990s, etc., and rather than suggesting that Malinowski and Clifford are the same just because both write travel diaries, I think it is useful to point to the structural

conditions of their travelling production. Such a reading would begin with the importance of the 1914–17 imperialist war for the practice of long-term fieldwork and the political conditions that have now forced a rethinking of fieldwork. In between these moments, the emergence of anti-colonial movements and non-aligned states, who, among other things, developed a shared suspicion of anthropologists. The 'fieldwork' discussion may seem to have been interrupted, but it was not displaced by the success, and failure, of the anti-colonial movements, of the Soviet experiment and the ongoing permutations of the Chinese revolution and its subsequent adventures in Naxalites in India, Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, Shining Path and Tupac Amaru in South America, etc.²³ Comrade Malinowski's postmodernism aside,²⁴ the difference between advocates of fieldwork now and then seem not so great when considered in terms of the necessity of 'safe passage' and the 'pax Europaea' (Stagl, 1996: 262). Both Malinowski and Clifford (sensibly) seek out that safe site.²⁵ It cannot be a simple coincidence which aligns the range of interests, concepts, modes of analysis ('ethnographic' audience research for example) and criteria of relevance of travelling theory with processes of transnational restructuring. And though it is not yet clear that Malinowski's analysis of the kula really does line up so conveniently with the co-ordinates of post-First World War social and political dynamics,²⁶ to begin to analyse travel politically with these possibilities in mind might entail an opening for critical anthropology, compared to Clifford's complacent yet grand breadth of vision (when such a vision only looks and tells stories about itself something more is required which can come to grips with the interrelations of meaning and the production and consumption dynamics of travel).

In the end, what is there to carry away from Clifford's travel stories? I would not say I have no problems with travel – as much that it might seem very worldly, and even at times humble, to gloss anthropology as travel, such a characterization does not satisfy. This is not because anthropology should be defended as something better than travel (I recall a certain Melbourne anthropologist at one seminar holding up his passport stamped with an Indonesian 'Research Visa' to prove that he was different to a tourist – to which someone quipped, 'Where did you get it, CIA?'). Can anthropology become something better than it has been? The task of confronting, understanding and intervening in the violence and exploitation that so often (past and present) accompanies human movement requires much more than elaborate brochures. The paradigm offered by the travel guide, with scenic views, staged authenticity (however sustaining) and carved souvenirs is insufficient for a writing which would respond to the troubles and tribulations of the various movements we witness. Human dwelling together has often also meant moving past each other without comprehension, or worse, as Malinowski did also notice (but often failed to discuss), with violent and deadly repercussions. Without a critical perspective grounded in a practical politics dedicated to changing such troubles, and transforming the conditions of inequality, exploitation and oppression from which they arise,

anthropology (multi-site or bounded), travel (alternative or mainstream) and 'the history of ethnography' (orthodox or Cliffordian) remains only so much sight-seeing. How long can we keep on saying, 'Je haïs les voyages et les explorations.'

Section 2: Fort Ross Mystifications

The second half of this paper continues the focus upon Malinowski and Clifford, but attends more closely to Clifford's politics, and specifically his uses of Marx in the context of the essay 'Fort Ross Meditation' which ends his book: *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*.²⁷ The questions to be asked concerning this chapter, which seems to offer a model of reconstructed 'ethnographic', and historical, research, have to do with context, motivation, intentions and uses. How significant is it that Clifford takes up a study of Russian colonial presence in 'America' at this time? How important is the study of Pacific trading empires of the past in today's context? How does this intervention into heritage site memorialism, eco-tourism and cultural history mesh with contemporary agendas and geo-political investments? How significant are the sea-otter pelts he caresses? Does the metaphoric invocation of the fault lines of San Andreas say more about Clifford's Californian view of the world than he intends? And what does the contemporary fascination with the travelling histories of commodities signify when Marxist analysis is trivialized and twisted into misrecognition by West Coast professors rejecting pessimism but applauding uncertainty in the place where analysis might be preferred? It is not my intention to answer all these questions, but to raise them as a framework for critical evaluation of what Clifford is trying to do.

Given a propensity for drawing upon signifying conjunctions and traffic in theory on Clifford's part, I also want to point to certain connections. Not between Leenhardt and Malinowski – though Clifford reports that 'In the same year that Malinowski published *Argonauts* . . . Leenhardt met and impressed Marcel Mauss' (Clifford, 1982: 106) – nor between Malinowski and Marx – though the textual self-fashioning of *Argonauts* and *Capital* might be added to the sad fact that usually only the first chapter of either book is read these days. Instead, I want to conjure a meeting between Malinowski and Clifford (another kind of dress-up). Both recognized that power determines fieldwork location. Malinowski as a Austrian passport holder in Australia during the war was packed off to the South Seas. Not 'interned' as the myth says, notes Young, but nevertheless restricted (Malinowski, 1967: xiii; Young, 1984: 24), he knows he was there by the grace of white Australia policy advocate and deporter of Kanaks, Governor Attlee Hunt, who supported Malinowski's research on the recommendation of Baldwin Spencer because of 'its potential value for native administration' (Mulvaney and Calaby, 1985: 322, 453n). Having made the point that colonial power underwrote anthropological fieldwork in the past, Clifford himself crosses

the Mexican border and goes to Chiapas, before the Zapatista uprising at the time of the signing of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). In the chapter 'Fort Ross Meditation' he extends his research into heritage tourism sites and Pacific trade at the time of the developing US interest in the region via APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation forum). It would be a lesson we have learnt from Clifford that no research is without its institutional contexts.²⁸ In these cases – Malinowski and Clifford – the geo-political circumstances seem overdetermining.

Stocking reports that at the time when Malinowski arrived on Mailu for his first stint of fieldwork 'an Australian expeditionary force was already occupying German New Guinea' (Stocking, 1991: 62). His introductory village visit was with a police escort (Stocking, 1991: 38). The prerequisite of colonial protection for the anthropological mission was recognized well before Clifford set off for Mexico. Stocking quotes Rivers's suggestion that the optimal time for ethnographic work was 10 to 30 years:

... after a people had been brought under the 'mollifying influences of the official and the missionary' – long enough to ensure the 'friendly reception and peaceful surroundings' that were 'essential to such work' but not long enough to have allowed any serious impairment of native culture. (Stocking, 1991: 10)

The Trobriand Islands had been visited by missionaries since the late 1890s at least, and it is possible that still earlier explorers and traders had visited syphilis and other diseases on the island.²⁹ Clifford's close attention to the political underpinnings of anthropological research would have been honed through his studies of Leenhardt, noting that the mining industry, forced labour, wage slavery, conscription and brutal repression were the lot of the New Caledonian 'Canaques' (Clifford, 1982: 34–5, 45–6, 92).³⁰ A similar list may be gleaned from Malinowski's writings. In early articles for the International Africa Institute, Malinowski mentions forced labour, conscription, coercion, enticement and hangings. In one remarkable passage he notes how the ignorance of a European who might (is the example wholly fiction?) unintentionally violate native custom may set in train events which, after retaliation, trial, hanging, blood debt, revenge and then punitive expedition, might bring 'whole native tribes to grief'. Malinowski suggests he could quote numerous cases from the South Seas, but confines himself only to mentioning the history of 'black birding' in Melanesia (Malinowski, 1930: 411). In a language perhaps not preferred today, Malinowski comes remarkably close to certain contemporary concerns when he says 'the functionalist anthropologist . . . studies the white savage side by side with the coloured, the world-wide scheme of European penetration and colonial economics' (Malinowski, 1930: 419). A multi-site ethnography which would have to confront the violence of slavery and exploitation is not far away here ('black birding' was a form of slave trade practised in Australia and the Pacific until the beginning of this century), though it must be noted that at the same time Malinowski was attempting to mobilize

anthropology for 'the task of assisting colonial control' (Malinowski, 1930: 408) and even to address the problem of 'what might be termed black bolshevism' (Malinowski, 1929: 28–32) and to find ways to encourage men of different cultures to be 'satisfied with work' (Malinowski, 1929: 35)

How is it possible to ignore the political implications of the field? Perhaps a part-answer is that anthropologists writing texts 'after the fact' (Geertz, 1995) fashion themselves after literary models and so in the process some of the immediacy of context recedes. As Clifford points out, Malinowski writes wanting to be the Conrad of anthropology but his 'most direct literary model was certainly James Frazer' (Clifford, 1988: 96). Clifford himself is heavily influenced by the ethnographic diary style of Leiris, although we might argue that his 'most direct literary model' is Malinowski's *Diary*, with polyglot exchanged for trinketization. 'Imagine yourself set down . . .': Clifford self-consciously sets down too, not only in *Routes* looking 'out' to the Pacific, but also travelling in *Predicament*, with Leiris's trip and the autobiographical essay 'postcards', in *Person and Myth* tracing Leenhardt's to and fro to the South Seas, and throughout his work with plenty of references to books like *Moby Dick* and *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*. Maybe not too much more of theoretical interest can be made of Malinowski's *Diary*, but there is ample evidence in Clifford's essay 'On Ethnographic Self-Fashioning' that Malinowski's polyglossaria is the key (Clifford, 1988: 97). A close affinity in the narrative devices which render the chaos and flux of the world as text in both Malinowski and Clifford can be discerned. What necessitates rectifications of confusion through ordered writing might be common to all social science, but it has been Clifford who has pointed this out in Malinowski, and practised it most publicly, in his own textual experiments. As I suggested in section 1, further parallels might begin to consider why the work of a certain author catches on at a particular place and time: why Malinowski in the 1920s? Why Clifford in the 1990s? Why travelling theory now? Should a critique of anthropology explore the role of ideology in rebuilding the 'New World Order' after the end of a chaotic conflict by pointing to the vicissitudes of new world ordering, and the textual strategies that might be recruited to facilitate this?

In emphasizing that the travel metaphor organizes Malinowski's anthropology as it does Clifford's work I am not suggesting there are no differences between the two, nor would I want to imply that postmodernists are secret functionalists (but uncertain ones), or that nothing important is contained in the reflexivity and self-questioning Clifford displays. The point is what to do with this? More diary entries would serve little purpose. What matters today is the capacity of scholarship to understand the current complexities of the human (global) condition, and, as Spivak quips, 'tamper with it' (Spivak, 1995: 10 see below). An area where I think the Malinowski–Clifford concurrence becomes important has to do with the politics of multi-site ethnography. For Clifford this takes the contemporary form of diasporic research projects and – I argue – flirtation with

trans/globalization as the ideology of transnational corporate enterprise. Clifford writes, early in the Fort Ross chapter, that 'today these transpacific and hemispheric involvements make renewed sense. They prefigure something . . .' (Clifford, 1997: 303). Here he means that the eastward movement of Russian fur traders towards California, collecting merchandise to exchange for tea in China, makes 'renewed sense'. What does it 'prefigure'? The movement to and fro across the Pacific is diasporic: 'As contemporary California fills with Pacific and Asian immigrants . . . and as the state's southern border becomes ever more porous' (Clifford, 1997: 303). Clifford will return to this scene again and again: discussing the trade in sea-otter pelts he is reminded of the 'overwhelming Chinese demand for exotic goods' in past centuries that returns today and 'Asia feels nearby again. Now Japanese are buying up prime properties along the Sonoma coast.' Why this attention to property? He immediately adds: 'Chinese exports disrupt the US balance of trade. The otter pelt lies limp in my hands' (Clifford, 1997: 321). Again, fewer than ten more pages on:

Fort Ross. The West Coast of the United States . . . is being bought up by investors from Japan and Hong Kong. Is the US American empire in decline? Or perhaps in metamorphosis? It's unclear. We are not yet able to recognize these wavering contradictions as the beginning of an end. . . . Currently the changes look more like realignments, recenterings. 'Transnational capitalism' is the inheritor of Euro-American imperial dynamics. . . . Anglo California is being displaced by the Pacific and Latin America. People, capital, commodities, driven by global political-economic forces, do not stop at national borders. Will 'English Only' movements, immigration restrictions, xenophobic terror attacks, and back to basics initiatives be able to stem the tide? Can a rusting 'American' assimilation/exclusion machine be repaired? (Clifford, 1997: 330)

Three times Clifford notes that Asians are buying real estate in America. Again: 'Asian economic power is an inescapable reality, whether centered in Japan, Korea, Indonesia or – most powerfully perhaps – in diasporic and mainland China' (Clifford, 1997: 331). He, of course, does not intend to sound alarmist, and the irony of his questions at the end of the above quotation shows that he is not on the side of those who would renovate the exclusion machine. His work on Fort Ross is part of an attempt to 'dislodge a dominant' and foster a more inclusive heritage history, 'for a United States with roots and routes in the Asia Pacific' (Clifford, 1997: 303). This would have the site show not only the Russian presence of the middle 1800s, but would also acknowledge the impact of this presence on local peoples (and environment), and would understand the lives of the Aleuts, Siberians and Koniags, who came with the Russians to Fort Ross. This reconfigured heritage would note the creoles and the interrelations between these groups, including their effects – Clifford recognizes the number of local women attached to the Fort and counts the mixed race children (Clifford, 1997: 332), and makes valid criticisms such as pointing to how there is no narrative which tells of forced recruitment or hostage-taking and that 'accounts

of relations at the fort with the local Indians stress intermarriage, but do not mention epidemics' (Clifford, 1997: 339).³¹ Clifford suggests a 'flow of history' approach to the Fort Ross heritage park project, yet wonders who will write the new narratives when [if?] resources become available to replace the outmoded ones. Clifford's own chapter begins the task, but we must ask with what effects? Does focusing on the Chinese desire for sea-otter pelts not tend to obscure these local impacts and excuse the constitutive interests of Western traders in Chinese spice, porcelain and tea?

Discussing a 'Northern Pacific zone of trade and exploration' linking California, Moscow, China and so on (Clifford, 1997: 341) is perhaps only possible in the years after the decline of the Soviet experiment. Today, Clifford says the Soviet Union, which he sees as a continuation of the Russian Empire, 'is in disarray' (Clifford, 1997: 330[!]). Some may find it difficult to accept this continuist history, but the frame for this perspective is based on old fears. As a schoolboy Clifford was fascinated with maps which showed the line of demarcation running through the Aleutians. He admits a memory which appears determining, his family's apartment in New York City held a basement fall-out shelter:

We formed vague images of Russian missiles crossing the Bering Strait . . . then there would be sirens, perhaps some kind of roar. . . . I grew up in the everyday fear of this implosion and the real possibility that I and everyone else I knew might not survive. The fear, a fact of life for more than three decades, has receded. I, my family, and my friends will probably live into the next century. (Clifford, 1997: 344)

It is of course open to debate as to the extent to which some sort of apocalyptic threat has evaporated as the US sets out to become the police force of the entire world, but Clifford is, he says, 'living and thinking inside a triumphant Western history' (Clifford, 1997: 343) and so perhaps we can understand, if not excuse, such pathologies. We all live with this threat, only some are more responsible than others. On the horizon of realignments and recentring of economic relations in the Asia-Pacific zone, the extant inequalities of firepower suggest dangers and anxieties anew.

But the scholarly context of all this is a post-apocalypse anxiety about the future and the role of research and cultural production in the face of a kind of pessimism about the world, and one that is disabling and/or complicit in a (neo)colonial anthropology. Clifford would point out what is wrong – too many Japanese buying up America, heritage sites that do not tell about the extermination of local peoples – but his wistful reflections can offer nothing to change these circumstances. Here is a difference with Malinowski who had the will to grasp the realpolitik nettle and set up the Africa Institute with Rockefeller money so as to fund a practical anthropology.³² Well, something had to be done. But neither feels comfortable with their predicament, and neither can find a path through. Travellers stranded again.

I would like to ask a slightly different set of questions in the context of contemporary anthropological criticism as practised by Clifford. The first

and perhaps most difficult to ask of travel is: what sort of solidarity politics can emerge from this? But also: what sort of politics operates in Clifford's text? Where in the various spectrums of Left and Right (admittedly these can be overly reifying constructions today) does Clifford's work lie? I think it is symptomatic that it takes 180 pages in *The Predicament of Culture* before there is even a hint that Louis Aragon had taken up revolutionary politics. Leiris's politics seems to have been elided by the literary appreciation Clifford provides. Except for a brief reference to *Les Temps Modernes* (Clifford, 1982: 197), and a few other asides, Leiris is more readily rendered as the diarist and documentarist of the everyday mundane. With a nod to towards the influence of Aimé Césaire and anti-colonial struggle in Vietnam and Madagascar,³³ very quickly Clifford has Leiris packed off to study with Mauss after just the one brief outrage: he is reported hanging out of a window denouncing France at a surrealist meeting before he settles down into a 'more concrete application of his subversive literary talents' (Clifford, 1988: 122). Leiris himself has made much more of his own oppositional political interests and his mobilisation against colonialism (in Price and Jamin, 1988). How is it that we get mostly only literary 'subversives' in Clifford's rendering? Reading Clifford on Bataille you might never imagine that large sections of his work were dedicated to a critical engagement with communism.³⁴

What we have in place of a politics of anthropology is fascination with spicy little details and wondrous incongruity in preference to analysis. No solidarity politics can be successfully built on such a basis. It can be contended that this belongs to a sustained (somewhat absent-minded) anti-Marxism on Clifford's part. His understanding of economic production is drawn from a sketchy version of Marxism found not in Marx but in anthropological consumption texts (especially Miller, 1987, 1994, 1995), and admittedly brilliant but quite idiosyncratic forms of Marxist ethnography (Taussig, 1980, 1987). He says he has taken 'a complex sense of local/global commodity systems' (Clifford, 1997: 346) from Miller, but his reference to Marx on commodities, page 72 of a 1961 text, is forgotten in the bibliography of *Routes*, making it difficult to tell what is from where (the quote, discussed below, is actually from *Capital* 1867/1967 – it could be that this symptomatic second omission, added to the unacknowledged paraphrase of Marx on history earlier in the book, is as significant as, say, noticing that one Trobriander is surreptitiously looking at the camera in *Argonauts*). The important point is that Clifford belongs to the group of academics who seem ready to reject systematic theorizing for fear of a 'relapse' into some kind of secret Stalinism, Leninism, homogenization or bounded thinking – allowing a red-baiting scare to equate a legitimate critique of homogenizing categories with rejection of any kind of serious analysis at all. It is too often the case that Marxism is glossed as some sort of orthodox monolithic concrete categorical bogey, and this is especially dubious when the actual references and alleged details are omitted. In pursuit of what I would identify as a secret anti-bolshevism then, in the Preface to *Routes* Clifford presents himself as 'unlike

Marx', favouring 'no revolution or dialectical negation of the negation' but 'democracy and social justice' (Clifford, 1997: 10–11). In this project Clifford claims he also will not aspire to have the final word or present an overview, and his travel is about paths, not maps.³⁵ His 'situated analysis is more contingent, inherently partial' (Clifford, 1997: 11), and this means that 'unlike Marx' there will be 'no cure for the troubles of cultural politics' (Clifford, 1997: 12–13), only travel and translation. Uncertainty, wandering and being lost are elevated as method.³⁶

In *Routes*, the politics of a 'lucid uncertainty' (Clifford, 1997: 13) is the preferred response to the predicament of this world and Clifford maintains a certain consistency with this theme over all his work. In the *Predicament* book, he posits a 'condition of uncertainty' from which he is writing (Clifford, 1988: 95). Within this framework – confidently asserted – the dissolution of 'natural' languages and of those constructs and fictions which contained and domesticated heteroglossia, syncretism, parody and transience makes it 'increasingly difficult to attach human identity and meaning to a coherent 'culture' or 'language' (Clifford, 1988: 95). Some people will get suspicious when citizen-ideologues of the singularly dominant world power tell us there is no culture, and imply that the global extension of Coca-Cola and Christianity (Clifford, 1997: 161) entails no remarkable threat.

All this matters at the point where Clifford offers a political diagnostic (of sorts) for the fate of the planet. In our responses to the politics of travel in a world rife with political and racialist inequalities, for sure we do not need further parochialisms and anachronisms (Clifford, 1982: 197). In the domain of writing about cultural production, the 'ethnographic' motive must be further questioned, far beyond the postmodern epistemic doubts of the *Writing Culture* debate (Clifford and Marcus, 1986) and its prolific progeny. 'Elegiac regret' is not enough. The institutional context of ethnographic description must surely always be considered in political terms. A critique of ethnography would also take up the practices of anthropology teaching and dissemination of its product – through the global apparatus of publishing, conference circuit, book sales, libraries, citations, etc., and within which Clifford is a star product. Similarly, the increasing integration of ethnographic and anthropological expertise – be it fully trained PhDs or degree-holding candidates – into business, consultancy, policy formation, travel and national heritage work, etc., must be evaluated politically.

In his introduction to *Routes*, Clifford announces that he is interested in exploring movement across borders and boundaries inflected by the 'connected global forces' of 'continuing legacies of empire, the effects of unprecedented world wars, and the global consequences of industrial capitalism's disruptive, restructuring activity' (Clifford, 1997: 6–7). It is not clear if he includes the 'Cold War' here as an unprecedented example, but certainly the significance of restructuring in the wake of that long conflict leaves its mark on Clifford's path. His 'Fort Ross Meditation' begins with him looking out to the Pacific from California and realizing that for the

Russians who arrived there in the early 1800s looking 'out' would have been looking 'back'. Significantly, he also realizes that among all the arrivals since then, there are none who 'remember a time on the coast before strangers arrived' (Clifford, 1997: 302). Indigenous populations seem to continually strive to appear from underneath the myriad travellers in Clifford's text, as the focus is instead on the west to east extension of Russia's 'great Asian encounter' and the development of its trading links with China and the luxury goods which 'fuelled' the transformation of the Pacific (Clifford, 1997: 303). The focus of this part of Clifford's work is the exchange requirements of those with a love of 'spices, porcelain and especially tea', who then 'unleashed destructive scrambles' to find sandalwood, sea cucumber and sea-otter pelts to trade in Canton. Was it the Chinese, then, who brought destruction upon the indigenous peoples and animals of West Coast America? He equates this destruction with the crashing together of the planetary plates which meet at San Andreas. Who is at fault?

Clifford offers many juxtapositions, but wants to draw no conclusions and offer no overview. This attitude has been seen before, even in more confident versions. Gayatri Spivak, gently, firmly criticizing Derrida's discussion of Marx makes the 11th thesis point by quoting *Capital* where Marx writes: 'the scientific analysis of the composition [*zersetzung*] of the air left the atmosphere itself unaltered in its physical configuration' (Marx, 1867/1967: 167) and she clarifies for a Derrida who 'goofs a bit' on Marx: 'Knowing the signification changes nothing. One must tamper with the force that establishes it', and again, 'simply to see the relations of production clearly is no big deal' (Spivak, 1995: 10).

Clifford can be seen sometimes goofing off too. What is it, for example, for Clifford to point out that certain persons, usually 'scientists' (Freud for example [Clifford, 1997: 279]) can travel the world collecting culture? At what point does his enthusiasm for museums become something more than the cheap fascination of difference that he elsewhere wants to avoid? Clifford collects (Strathern would rather not, but I think it's a sleight of words [Strathern, 1991]). In the interests of a political evaluation, it is worth considering Clifford's notion of commodities in the light of his collecting practice. The citation of Marx – the one which is dated 1961 but not in the bibliography – is, like so much else in the text, picked up as a bright shiny object and chucked into the nest. A crow's Marxism (nesting Marx). And by abstracting this bauble from the whole, Clifford loses his way:

Marx called the commodity 'a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour' (Marx, 1961: 72). (Clifford, 1997: 322)

So far so good, this much discussed text from *Capital* (Marx, 1867/1967: 72) is a clear opening definition from the first chapter of a book which

works by abstraction, starting with the commodity form (the often read fetishism chapter) but continually working outwards in demonstration of the larger whole.³⁷ *Capital*, though it also is conjured every which way, is a text organized on the principle of explanation with a purpose, and not as if the commodity were the prior moment in the real. I would contend that to focus on commodity fetishism without recognizing or waiting for the contextualization of commodities that happens throughout the rest of the book, and the subsequent volumes, is to risk an error.

No surprise that this happens in the Fort Ross essay. Clifford follows his unsourced citation with a revealing sentence recalling Marx as he strokes 'the luxurious, dead otter skin' (Clifford, 1997: 322) – and with a rather less than Marxist point, he writes of the past:

Seen as commodities, sea-otter skins and bales of tea exist as relations of equivalence independent from the work of Aleut hunters or Chinese coolies. The skins are valuable because they can be exchanged in Canton. Tea is worth producing in quantity because strangers will pay with rare luxury items. Exchange value, as Marx recognized, determines production. (Clifford, 1997: 322)

This is where things go off track. Yes the hunter would not hunt in large quantities 'without the material compulsion of the market and the labour discipline it required' (Clifford, 1997: 322), but this does not mean that the story can be stopped at 'Exchange value determines production.'³⁸ Surely anthropological examples which Clifford must know should warn against hasty evaluation here. For example, Malinowski's discussions of the kula would demand a more careful reading of economic causation in context, or even Malinowski's comments on pearl trade and the difficulty of convincing 'the niggers to swim' (Malinowski in 1915, his testimony to the commission on South Pacific trade [Stocking, 1991: 46, but see also Malinowski, 1935: 19–20]) would have indicated some problems with any too easy formula. Marx himself often pointed out the need, especially at the moment of transition, to coerce the 'workers' to sell their labour, to produce.³⁹ To begin and end with exchange value misses the entire point of the hidden social relations and exploitations that are entailed in the commodity form.⁴⁰ The 'abstract relation' and 'mystery' that Clifford's traders do not see is not exchange value, but the creative capacity of labour which has been appropriated by others. A half paragraph further along in *Capital* we can read of 'a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things' (Marx, 1867/1967: 72), and:

Since the producers do not come into social contact with each other until they exchange their products, the specific social character of each producer's labour does not show itself except in the act of exchange. (Marx, 1867/1967: 73)

In Marx's analysis the products of labour are social things with a dual quality, at once perceptible and imperceptible to the senses (he uses the analogy of light entering the optic nerve – we see something, but not all that is going on in the phenomenon that makes possible sight).⁴¹ The task then, is – and Marx is prescriptive here – to understand how this mysterious, even by

analogy religious, operation works. The trick that conjures relations between things out of the social relations of productive human beings must be confronted. Exchange value is the appearance, what Marx exhorts us to see is the social, that is the 'secret' – that 'the determination of the magnitude of value by labour-time is therefore the secret, hidden under the apparent fluctuations in the relative values of commodities' (Marx, 1867/1967: 75).⁴² And as knowing this does not yet alter how it works, one must tamper . . .

Instead, Clifford will 'struggle to keep commodities mysterious' and not reduce, as he says Marx wished, the fantastic equivalence to 'a true measure of equivalence in social labour' (Clifford, 1997: 323). Here we can appreciate his good intentions as Clifford is concerned that 'capitalist markets expand, virtually unopposed, throughout the planet' and the gap between the rich and poor grows (Clifford, 1997: 322), but as he wants to find an ethical Marx rather than understand the labour theory of value it is obviously necessary to ask what this displacement into ethics can achieve. The problem is that it is not equivalences, but Capital which moves here. Clifford has left the Capital out of Marx! The secret is the creation of surplus value through labour-power as commodity,⁴³ which then allows the appropriation of the creative value of labour by the owner of the means of production, hence accumulation of capital – because of the general equivalent of money, as a kind of facilitating arbiter of exchange value. It is through accumulation that the capitalist can then deal in goods, luxurious furs, tea and the like, so that there will be the extension of this plunder to the most 'remote' reaches of the planet, including Fort Ross: 'Russian America was coastal extractive, not a settler, colony' (Clifford, 1997: 304).

In Marx's discussion of the 'illegal' opium trade there is reason to question Clifford's formula in the vicinity of the very examples he uses in the Fort Ross chapter – trade in Chinese tea. Admittedly here the trade is from India to China, but no matter. After the Chinese suspension of the East India Company's trade in tea in the middle 1800s, and the so-called 'Opium wars' in which the 'civilization-mongering' English found ways to profit from this 'illegal' opium trade they had encouraged themselves (Marx *New York Daily Tribune* 25 Sept. 1858), Marx notes that should the Chinese legalise the opium trade and tolerate cultivation of the poppy in China, the secret monopoly of the English and their Calcutta-based smuggler-partners would be smashed. It is clear that the extent to which 'exchange value . . . determines production' as Clifford would have it is only a small part of the story and some important factors are ignored. If it were not for the might of the British imperial power, and the 'protection' it is able to afford the 'smugglers', as well as its persecution of the opium wars, the Chinese government might well have then begun to produce opium in China, thus destroying the East Indian Company's dubious profiteering, production in India shifting to China and at lower values of exchange. Thus the collapse of the level of profit to be reaped from this trade as it is maintained by the dealings of mercantile and imperial power is envisaged (at the same time that Marx comes out in favour of legalized class A drugs). What is important however is that the

use of power on the part of the English imperialists should not be ignored when making an analysis of exchange or of Pacific trading empires, then or now. By stopping at the level of exchanged commodities, Clifford doesn't follow through with the political project of Marxism. The furs he strokes are definitely soft. Clifford has the block of Chinese tea in his hand as well (alas we do not get his views on legalization).

There are perspectives on this we can adopt from other parts of Clifford's work, however, that assist in reading Marx. This is especially so for his understanding of a text's rhetorical fabrications and authority claims. The importance of Marx's mode of address, the narrative construction put together after his years of research, and the implied readership, should be considered as Clifford strokes the fur and sniffs at the tea. Just as Malinowski, and I guess Clifford, had a certain idea of what the narrativization of the material was meant to achieve, so did Marx. Perhaps his ambitions were a little loftier, but for all the right reasons. The key point, as Gayatri Spivak tells it, is that 'Marx exhorts the worker, his implied reader, to grasp the gap between "experience" and "the social"' (Spivak, 1993: 119).⁴⁴ What Spivak, and before her Marx, wants to keep in mind is that under industrial capitalism, workers do not exchange their labour for its value, or, in what I would call the 'trick' of capitalist play, they [we] work twice as much (and more) as would be needed to reproduce their [our] value. It is this surplus that moneybags appropriates, and which is the basis of accumulation, and also of the possible future abundant society of socialism. If this point is not grasped, the political force of Marx's endeavour is left idle. If it is taken up, it becomes possible to begin to see where interventions against this exploitation might be made, differentiations amongst the various modes of appropriation discerned, and tactical, more or less militant, challenges to the rule of the robber barons, and civilization-mongers, mounted. Marx was, though scholars may tend to forget this, a revolutionary.

This would seem to invoke rather a different scenario for research and writing than that which Clifford constructs in his discussion of otter pelts and Chinese tea. Contexts matter. In a scenario which is one with which anthropologists in particular have perhaps reason to concern themselves, since it is very often the horizon of their work, past and present, the matter of tea exchanged for fur, and the circulation of luxury goods at the time of Fort Ross and the Russian settlement, might better be thought of in terms of super-exploitation, and the operation of absolute surplus labour extraction, as distinct from relative surplus labour (the distinction between two means of extracting more surplus value can be recalled here – lengthening the working day and improving the rate of production). This would require a deeper reading of Clifford's comment that the Russian explorers recruited local Koniag and Aleut hunters by the 'familiar early-colonial combination of carrot and stick: mutually beneficial trade, alternating with naked terror' (Clifford, 1997: 305). It is not without relevance to the Fort Ross scenario that, as Spivak notes, super-exploitation more often than not extends to feminized labour – today to the

sweatshops in every corner of the globe.⁴⁵ Even the historical example of the operation of super-exploitation in the fur trade might usefully occupy anthropologists in a re-evaluation of their notions of exchange (and this could be immense fun for pomo trinket collectors since we could make all sorts of jokes about otters, and other furry critters, like beavers – given the historical significance of the beaver in the anthropology of Louis Henry Morgan and in the work of Charles Darwin).⁴⁶ A distinction between mercantile capitalism and industrial capitalism is also important if one is to talk about Marx and production. As well as ‘acknowledging consumption’ (Miller, 1995), it might be plausible still to consider accumulation, the circulation of capital, competition between different capitals and the processes of restructuring, expansion, crisis and restructuring that all follow from the labour theory of value. Leaving the matter at ‘exchange determines production’ means that analysis is abandoned at the wayside. There are different kinds of capital to be distinguished before leaping from Fort Ross traders to commodities in the late 20th century, and there are similarities to be specified. If the logic of capitalism does not operate in mercantile trade exactly as it does in advanced industrial capital, just as it is not the same in the forced extraction of surplus value in slavery, or in the so-called ‘pre-capitalist formations’, then there is scope for anthropologists to explain why. The key, though, is that trick which separates the owner of the means of production from the producer and the pretence that the exchange of ‘a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay’ is some sort of good deal.

In a book that wants to come to terms with travel today, and where much of this travel occurs across the demarcation line that is the international division of labour, it is important to do more than collect souvenirs, celebrate (new?) narrative modes of writing and champion hybridity and complexity. The processes of capitalist exploitation may be presented abstractly, and it may be less than simple to name, but there is no reason not to make the attempt to understand it. Indeed, for an historian of anthropology, it is all the more important. Fort Ross is one of the sites upon which the history of capitalist trickery is marked. And here it does matter to ask why Clifford would be, at this time, engaged in a project which shows that the US is ‘historically constituted from Asia as well as Europe . . . in the shifting borderlands of the Americas, connected to the Island Pacific, to the Alaska/Siberia crossroads’ (Clifford, 1997: 331). This rewriting of Fort Ross may well ‘offer resources for thinking historically in the present emergency’ (Clifford, 1997: 332), but in a scene where contrasting and non-commensurate perspectives prevail in place of analysis, some will see the ‘present emergency’ as too many ‘Japanese buying real estate’, while some will see it as a chance to make better heritage museums, and all along capital will forge further exploitative trade regimes under APEC, NAFTA and other travelling formations. Sure, when it comes to documenting that history it might be useful to see the narrative reconstruction as a pedagogic one, but can we learn to recognize the trick, and tamper with the tricksters more effectively?

All this only serves to show the trinketization of Marx in Clifford's souveniring travel theory. What remains, however, is the possibility to extend the 'lucid uncertainty' with reasoned theoretical work. Clifford plus Marx, travel plus a political project: this might even begin to work if it was reconfigured under the sign of transition, the dynamics of movement, displacement, transformation and change. Transition could encompass travel, Fort Ross, museum collecting and the transformatory project.⁴⁷ Though he does not have such a plan in mind, at one point Clifford suggests further exploration of the revolutionary, destructive and productive, 'as Marx understood', character of Capitalism in a way that moves towards transition theory:

As Marx understood, capitalism is revolutionary, destructive *and* productive. And it does not usher in a unified, 'bourgeois', or 'Western' sociocultural order as it spreads. It has proved to be flexible, working through as well as against regional differences, partially accommodating to local cultures and political regimes, grafting its symbols and practices onto whatever non-Western forms transculture its logic. (Clifford, 1997: 331)

This could be the subsumption thesis, recognizable in Marx's *Grundrisse* and in the later parts of *Capital*. An interest in 'transculturation' in this register, even if it were to be called 'hybridity', could line up with other useful work that Clifford does at least read carefully (Gilroy and Brah on diaspora, etc.). This could then form the basis for continuing to try and work out just what is going on in the contemporary conjuncture, with its uneven global socio-economic and population flows and the destructive-constructive complex of capitalism. The problem is that even if Clifford was not limited to descriptive trinketization in his collecting practice, it is very difficult to imagine how he might want to respond to the complexity of the world. Reading his varied statements on culture, trade, power and so on it becomes possible to wonder what would be needed to provoke an attempt to intervene? What set of circumstances would be necessary to provoke even a preliminary essay on what is to be done? Meekly anguished fascination at the phantasmagoric vista before him seems all we will ever be offered. Since *Routes* addresses travelling commodities, it matters to get Marx at least a little right.⁴⁸

Would travelling theory reconfigured as transition be useful for thinking through the most 'particularly violent examples' of travel: slavery, exploitation, imperialism, flight capital, etc? It might even be possible to comprehend the ways book writing is co-opted into the service of this formation – how the meanings of a text transit from context to context. However, displaying souvenirs, trinkets, cultural examples wrenched from context, and a mix of celebration and quietism in the face of capitalist restructuring, would suggest that it cannot in Clifford's hands. Is it possible to use 'travel' as a way to unpack the tricks of capitalist exploitation without lapsing into a simplistic orthodox-ization of Marx, a mantra of the new and a celebration of (the anxious, reflective) self? Further work on the notion of transition might be opened here. The work required for another kind of politics of anthropology and travel would not be easy of course. But I believe

it can be found in reconfiguring Clifford's version of diaspora as an agenda for multi-site ethnography.

What multi-site research should be directed towards is a comprehension and political practice within the current conjuncture. Instead, both Clifford and Malinowski offer awe, frustrated travel tales and stalled research projects. Compare their statements about the future, which to me indicate an anxiety and uncertainty that itself needs analysis. Established and comfortable in 1930, Malinowski complained about a science which had 'made us into robots' in 'an enormous mechanism' which 'pushes us with a relentless persistence and terrible acceleration'. The world for Malinowski was changing 'uncannily' and everything was transformed with an 'ever-increasing speed in communication' and 'endless opportunities in cheap and mean forms of enjoyment; leisure to do a thousand irrelevant things' so that we are 'kept down intellectually by journalism; moving and feeling to the rhythm of jazz; united by a world-wide net of broadcasting . . . an infinitely elastic nervous system . . .' (Malinowski, 1930: 405). This pessimistic, anti-progress (anti-jazz?) routine reminiscent of more recent laments for the speeding up of life; the proliferation of travel; the Internet; the 'ever-increasing speed of communications' suggests that today we have not understood very much more than the anti-bolshevik Malinowski.⁴⁹ And with a little irony too, wanting anthropology to be to colonialism what physics was to engineering, Malinowski already noted that in the South Sea Islands he was hard pressed to reconstruct 'stone age' life because he was: 'pursued by the products of the Standard Oil Company, weekly editions, cotton goods, cheap detective stories, and the internal combustion engine in the ubiquitous motor launch' (Malinowski, 1930: 406).

Clifford's pessimism in the face of the world follows a similar trajectory, though he wants to refuse it, to deny the ubiquity of a 'contemporary capitalism' which 'works flexibly, unevenly' through 'flows of immigrants, media, technology, and commodities' (Clifford, 1997: 9). So that in such a context his essays are 'written under the sign of ambivalence, a permanently fraught hope':

It is impossible to think of transnational possibilities without recognizing the violent disruptions that attend 'modernization', with its expanding markets, armies, technologies, and media. Whatever improvements or alternatives may emerge do so against this grim backdrop. Unlike Marx, who saw that the possible good of socialism depended historically on the necessary evil of capitalism, I see no future resolution of the tension – no revolution or dialectical negation of the negation. (Clifford, 1997: 10)

He does, however, derive hope 'from unexpected news' – 'for example, accounts of the pope's visits to New Guinea and Africa. . . . What historical changes have brought John Paul II, of all people, to preach the value of indigenous culture?' (Clifford, 1997: 342). This Pope also came out demanding a nicer version of capitalism, one that wasn't so brutal. Clifford, devotee of the sky-god religion, continues to derive revealingly:

Something like hope. . . . Not prophecy or a revolutionary vision. . . . But is it not blind, even perverse, to speak of hope in the face of so many devastating facts: relentless environmental degradation, neo-colonialism, overpopulation, a growing gap between privileged and desperate people virtually everywhere? The question is inescapable, crushing. Yet pessimism gets one nowhere and frequently lapses into cynicism. It must be possible to reject pessimism along with its opposites – the celebratory, ameliorist visions of progress through development, techno-science, the internet . . . (Clifford, 1997: 342–3)⁵⁰

Claiming Gramsci ‘named a problem, not a solution, with his formula “Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will”’, Clifford asks why is hope ‘always on the side of the nonintellectual “will”?’ (Clifford, 1997: 343). If he wants to shift the formula to accommodate this reversal, he must end up naive and paralysed: (an uncertain) optimist of the intellect, but a pessimist in regard to activity. This amounts to thinking (hoping) the world will be nice, but being too depressed to do anything to achieve this. Against development, technology, advanced communications and . . . this is worse than pessimism, for an abdication from human life, for pastoralism, and the consciousness of sea-otters – a return to the swamp of religion and mystery seems Clifford’s ideal. The extreme passivity of touristic violence. Surely we deserve better than this from California.

With Clifford the horizon seems to offer a grinning paralysis (more conventional than surrealism), and the lack of confidence in any sort of transformative project reflects a more general cultural and political exhaustion. Clifford can ask (or list) ‘urgent’ questions ‘at a time of rampant neoliberalism’ (Clifford, 1997: 322), but cannot answer, able only to revel in his phantasmagoric trinketizations:

What is corn for a Mayan Indian? A fax machine for Subcommandante Marcos? What is a sea-otter skin to an eco-tourist? A VCR and acrylic paint in the hands of Australian Aboriginal artists? A rum bottle in a Santeria altar? A Bob Marley recording in Hawaii? A Rambo T-shirt in Lebanon? A pack of cigarettes and a beer can left at the Vietnam War Memorial? A car used by Californian Indians to return to their reservation for a festival? (Clifford, 1997: 323)

Without capacity to order the (text of) the world, humanity must abandon itself to ‘uncertainty’. This is an abdication that plays into the hands of the right (and fears that the Russians/Japanese are coming), and though at one point Clifford did offer a Nietzschean decolonization project, no longer does analysis even seek to plot the paths, let alone propose a minimal political programme. Uncertainty reigns – at best narrated by a happy consciousness that marvels at the conflagration.

Notes

- 1 Malinowski travels in order to displace travel accounts. Stagl and Pinney write: ‘The ethnographic monograph is commonly regarded as the literary form which most corresponds to Malinowski-style fieldwork. Both are said to have

- been born together and to have replaced the over-ambitious syntheses of travel reports by "armchair anthropologists". This is no doubt a simplification encouraged by Malinowski himself' (Stagl and Pinney, 1996: 122).
- 2 The classic monographs such as *The Nuer* and *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, which 'all anthropologists read in training' become vehicles for 'all manner of detached theoretical debates, autonomous from the ethnography and no longer substantially constrained by it' (Marcus, 1988: 69–70).
 - 3 Of course, Clifford has always been concerned with travel; his first book *Person and Myth: Maurice Leenhardt in the Melanesian World* was a detailed study of a well-travelled figure. Though at pains to show that the missionary Leenhardt was some sort of anti-colonialist, when for example he writes that the formation of the Institut Française d'Océanie was an opportunity to show that 'colonialism is something other than a money-grubbing enterprise' (Leenhardt in Clifford, 1982: 192), Clifford perhaps does better to contrast this with Michel Leiris's anti-colonial position, also discussed in that book (1982: 197). Leenhardt appears more as an apologist for a worthy and civilizational version of colonialism, Leiris offers a much sharper anti-colonial view, but there are at least substantial and sustained analyses and historical detail in *Person and Myth* which make it possible to read against Clifford's maybe too-generous narrative. Such a reading could be usefully informed by his later examinations of the way authority is claimed in ethnographic texts.
 - 4 And so many other criticisms it's not funny: that cut-up experiments are passé; that only tenured professors can experiment (Rabinow already made this criticism in the *Writing Culture* volume itself – and Clifford supposedly set up an experimental ethnography series for graduate students with the University of Wisconsin Press, but he does not refer to many, if any, such texts in his bibliography). Also, that there is no political programme that would be adequate to win; that the project produces a new ideology for hybridizing capitalism, etc., etc.
 - 5 Instead, I am concerned to ask why and how, with what political effects, and in what way can the discussion contribute to action on racism, exploitation, imperialism, etc. Ask: what interests are served by going on with reflexive anxiety and 'suicidal rejoicing' for the end of anthropology (Richardson, 1975: 527 – now a very old quote)? Instead, a drive to analyse, explain, inspire, change the world (naive? but the struggle is grim).
 - 6 See Hutnyk (1987: 60).
 - 7 See Hutnyk (1989: 105).
 - 8 Note the conflation here of travel and travel writing, to which Clifford is blind. I thank Steve Clarke for pointing this out. Peter Phipps and the readers of *Critique of Anthropology* helped improve this text. The usual disclaimers apply, particularly to Clifford's own comments on an earlier draft – all errors which remain are of course my irresponsibility.
 - 9 See Phipps (1998), but as a counterfactual see ethnographies under fire, most interesting in Genet (1986/1989), with commentary by Swedenbourg (1995).
 - 10 Rapport speculates that the photograph of Malinowski with the limepot in his lap, which graces the cover of the reissue of *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*, is very much staged, only the anthropologist wears a kula armshell and 'it appears . . . that he has been adorned with them, sanctifying the scene like some idol: "Posed before the niggers" [27.1.1918]' (Rapport, 1990: 5). Malinowski himself calls his own photography a 'capital blot' on his fieldwork. He admits to having treated photographs as secondary and unimportant, a 'serious mistake' to make. He put photography 'on the same level as the collection of

- curios' and had no 'appetite or bent' for the task. For more on photographs see Kratz (1994) and Hutnyk (1996: ch. 5).
- 11 He "pawed" and perhaps more (the *Diary* was censored by Malinowski's widow before publication)' (Newton, 1993: 7). Of course such exploits could be left out of the written text, even before the widow censors, by the man capable of being simultaneously engaged to two professors' daughters, in Melbourne and Adelaide, and if Baldwin Spencer is to be believed, possibly others (Wayne, 1995: 88, 98). It is thought that Spencer opened Malinowski's letters and reported various indiscretions to the Stirling family (Wayne, 1995: 138). Perhaps a fair deal, since it seems Malinowski may have been going through Spencer's mail from F.J. Gillen (Roswell, 1996), and gleaning the notion of participant observation from the Central Australian postie (and accomplice grave-robber, letter from Gillen to Spencer 13 March 1896) (see Mulvaney et al., 1997: 41, 46–7, 104). The story of 'pillow-talk' ethnographic instruction on the part of concubines in the field remains a hidden one, even as Clifford cites two recent examples (though leaves one out of the bibliography, referencing only Rabinow [1977] – which was rather tame I thought – omitting Cesura [1982]; a more steamy episode might be found in Wade [1993]). Clifford's observation that Leenhardt was scandalized by Malinowski's *Sexual Life of Savages* and saw such work as 'a subversive movement devoted to moral relaxation and based . . . in Moscow' (Clifford, 1982: 147) is highly entertaining. However, Leenhardt's accusation does not, in reality, make a comrade of the Pole. Clifford himself seems a little shocked by the book, promoting it in order of sequence in another comment comparing Leenhardt's rather dull book titles with Malinowski's '*Sexual Life of Savages*, *Argonauts* and *Coral Gardens*'. It is perhaps often the case that Malinowski's sex life gets raised beyond its importance.
 - 12 This formulation anticipates the neologism 'writing culture' by 70 years (Rapport, 1990: 6). We discover from Malinowski's letters (Wayne, 1995) that in his diary Malinowski was rewriting and reviewing his life prior to arrival in the Trobriands.
 - 13 I owe John Gledhill thanks for many discussions on these points.
 - 14 As a hint to how I would think through this, I have learnt, as ever, from Gayatri Spivak, who computes: 'even as circulation time attains the apparent instantaneity of thought (and more), the continuity of production ensured by that attainment of apparent coincidence ['apparent' used twice already] must be broken up by capital: its means of doing so is to keep the labour reserves in the comprador countries outside of this instantaneity, thus to make sure that multinational investment does not realise itself fully there through assimilation of the working class into consumerist-humanism . . . the worst victims of the recent exacerbation of the international division of labour are women' (Spivak, 1987: 166–7).
 - 15 For their sins of self-display, Clifford Geertz calls Rabinow, Crapanzano and Dwyer 'Malinowski's children' (quoted in Clifford, 1988: 113). This, I guess, makes Geertz himself the mother's brother and Clifford the mother's brother's son. Dear diary: See, I did pay some attention in my kinship class. The mother, as Steve Clarke kindly pointed out, is missing. Of course, it's Elsie Masson, confined to her sickbed, the invisible hand in this heritage, rewriting, annotating, correcting, Bronio's books. Though it could also be the Elsie that Clifford briefly extracts from a William Carlos Williams poem, only to have her disappear, in *Predicaments* (see Marcus, 1991: 136).
 - 16 Admittedly, Clifford is only one person who produces books (though his productive activity is also shared amongst research assistants, copy editors, typesetters,

binders, packers, truck drivers, salespersons and promotional corps), and it is also not the case that he is typical of his type. In the current conditions of academia it is clear that many of those who may have been inspired by Clifford's work could not get academic jobs, especially not in anthropology departments. An entire generation, even two, has not entered the academy at a time when in many countries student numbers have expanded exponentially, while funding in real terms has plummeted. The old guard has remained, beset by its own woes of increased teaching load, administrative duties and commercialization (increased fee-paying student offerings, education as export earner, etc.), bunkered down to protect their own patch and trying to stave off the cuts, and to defend – and then attack in a curiously calculated backlash – the postmodern anthropology that Clifford has come to represent.

- 17 Shows are culture. Clifford comments elsewhere on the 'long history of "exotic" displays in the West' (Clifford, 1997: 197), exactly after he reports favourably upon the low-budget sculpture display organized by an anthropology student (Jim Mason) who recruited Melanesian artisans to work on decorating a corner of the corporate Palo Alto Stanford University with a 'New Guinea Sculpture Garden'. Cheap entertainment here may be contrasted as exploitation in one register and a real, politically useful media exposure for artists in another. A similar complex was also offered when rural craftspeople were brought to Washington DC for an 'Indian Mela', using the occasion to raise concerns about begging laws in India (Clifford, 1997: 196), while the Smithsonian Institution no doubt basked in the glow of bargain multicultural arts.
- 18 I am resisting this temptation to diarize myself, but as I am writing this in Heidelberg, what to make of the complete Masewa canoe from Kiriwina (1988 *erworben*) I glimpse through the window of the Völkerkundemuseum, Palais Weimar, closed for the summer? Trobriand canoes indeed travel far. Young notes that contemporary Trobrianders are said to recognize that Malinowski has stolen their heritage (Young, 1979: 17).
- 19 Even the journal *Documents* ends up being of little more significance than as an example of 'an unfinished collage' (Clifford, 1988: 133). Collage itself is not all of what was political about the publication of the journal by Bataille, Leiris et al., and nor can the elevation of this as some sort of 'method' (despite belated denials [Clifford, 1991]) out of any context serve as much more than a gimmick. *Documents* and the College of Sociology could be credited with more seriousness than this. Collage, of course, could be political, though it is not always necessarily so. Whatever the qualms about how badly Clifford has rendered surrealism, it is well known that political debates over collage (Max Ernst, Picasso *Still Life with Chair Caning* [1912], Carrà *Interventionist Demonstration* [1914] and Duchamp's collage cum curio cabinet *The Large Glass* [1915–23]), and the closely related, perhaps more calculated, montage, have a very long 'political' pedigree. For discussion I am indebted to Scott McQuire and Don Miller (see McQuire, 1995, 1997; Miller, 1992).
- 20 In a review of *Trobriand Cricket*, Weiner suggests that: 'For Trobrianders, there is nothing unique about playing to the camera' (Weiner, 1977: 506). Malinowski suggests that to the English cricket is about sportsmanship, to a Kiriwinian it is a cause for quarrelling, passion and gambling and 'to another type of savage, a Pole, it remains pointless – a tedious manner of time-wasting' (Malinowski, 1935: 212). I refrain from noting how many times in a row the English have now lost the Ashes (are they becoming Polish in the face of the Australian attack?). The urn should be despatched forthwith. Of course nationalism requires all manner of intellectual myth-making investments. The struggle over

the nationality of Malinowski, and indeed over the national claim to have discovered the 'fieldwork method', is itself full of contention. Witness the refusal of British publishing houses to print a text (mentioned above, note 11) which was to claim, in part, that Malinowski's investigations in Baldwin Spencer's rooms – Malinowski was a house guest for a time – were formative for his ideas about fieldwork and 'living amongst the natives' (Roswell, 1996: 12–20). The nationality of Malinowski – a Pole with Austrian citizenship, in Australia, engaged and later married to an Australian nurse (whom English commentators continue to call British) and settled in Italy, working in the UK – is of course fraught. Ernest Gellner offers the best response to the question while making a point about Malinowski's cultural rather than political nationalism, telling us that Evans-Pritchard had told him that Malinowski 'firmly turned down the suggestion that he should rename himself McRaspberry' – *malina* being the common slavic name for the fruit (Gellner, 1985: 7).

- 21 For me, the most interesting and concise illustration of what is at stake comes from the relationship between two Soviet filmmakers, Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein. The maker of *Man with a Movie Camera* coined the phrase '*Kino-Glaz*' ('cinema-eye', 1923) for his cinema. Eisenstein, with the Proletkult group, whom Vertov found 'hopeless' (Leyda and Voynow, 1982: 14), was more interested in montage and the possibilities of gaining a political effect from calculated juxtaposition. He responded to Vertov by describing his film technique as '*Kino-Fist*'. You are either with the programme, or a dilettante. Marcus suggests that from a methodological perspective, 'Vertov's work is an excellent inspiration for multi-sited ethnography' (Marcus, 1995: 106). Eisenstein of course is worth more than this one slogan, *Kino-Fist*, but this may suggest another sort of multi-site anthropologizing: in his autobiography he writes: 'In subject and composition, I never try to limit the frame solely by the way things appear on the screen. The subject must be chosen thus, turned this way, and placed in the field of the frame so that, besides mere representation, a knot of associations results that mirrors the mode and sense of the piece. . . . Light, camera angle, the cutting of the shot – everything is subordinated not merely to representing the subject, but revealing it' (Eisenstein, 1995: 30–1).
- 22 Malinowski inscribed the fly leaf of the copy of *Argonauts* he gave to Elsie with the words: 'To my collaborator, who had half the share at least and more than half the merit in writing this book' and he signed this revelation, 'Its nominal author'. The letters reveal that Elsie continually contributed additions to Malinowski's texts (Wayne, 1995: 26, 30.4.1927). The dedication to *Coral Gardens* also acknowledges her.
- 23 I do not want to elevate some list of the revolutionary interruptions to fieldwork beyond this incantation, but I do note that a number of anthropologists have interrupted fieldwork to become revolutionaries. I call decolonization a failure because, in Gayatri Spivak's phrase, it's a bitter joke, so-called post-colonialism is a hoax (see Hutnyk, 1996: 36). I think the career of this new buzz-word is perpetrated by comprador elites and publishing-opportunity-conscious propagandizers for a revisionist colonial history and business as usual.
- 24 Absurdly Thornton suggests that Malinowski's reading of Nietzsche made him a postmodernist before the rush (Internet posting anthro-l, October, 1995), but the letters suggest Nietzsche's influence was not so great, an 'insignificant ingredient' (Wayne, 1995: 63, Bronio to Elsie).
- 25 However, probably today's fieldworkers would be less prepared for trouble should things become unsafe in their chosen site. Look at what happens to unwitting adventure tourists in Kashmir and Cambodia (see Phipps, 1998).

- 26 What is offered here is a suggested way to read ethnographic work in a context. This is quite a different task to thinking about how to write such a text oneself. I cannot imagine Malinowski or Clifford are well placed to anticipate and second guess what their texts might become, what agendas they could serve. These texts may not have been intended as allegories of the political, but by being available to the reading requirements of different times they become so. The second part of this article looks for the symptoms.
- 27 This last essay stands in the structurally important place that was occupied by the much discussed Mashpee chapter in *Predicaments*. See the special issue of *Social Analysis* for debate, especially Marcus (1991) and Strathern (1991).
- 28 Or more pertinent to this particular discussion of Fort Ross, Clifford asks: 'Is it possible that historical reality is not something independent of . . . differently centred perspectives?' (Clifford, 1997: 319), and if not, then it matters that Clifford's perspective for writing a – however complex and uncertain – history (meditation) on Pacific trade is centred in UC, Santa Cruz. He says it has become 'harder and harder to sustain a unified, inclusive historical consciousness capable of sorting and reconciling divergent experiences', complaining that Marx did not decentre Hegel's 'synthetic historical realism' and doing so would be the 'philosophical project of Nietzsche, and the practical task, still unfinished, of decolonization' (Clifford, 1997: 320). I am tempted to wonder if those (Nietzschean cadre?) fighting ongoing US imperialism – in the Philippines, Central America, the Gulf etc. – find decentring Hegel a particularly urgent 'practical' task?
- 29 Sex travels violently – and in the context of Clifford's attention to 'intermarriage' between colonists and locals it is possibly worthwhile to pursue the following digression: noting that Lévi-Strauss was aware that the 'untouched' Nambikwara that he met in the jungles of South America had been decimated by sexually transmitted diseases. In Australia, that early participant observer F.J. Gillen wrote that he had 'always thought . . . that syphilis was common to these people [Aboriginal Australians near Alice Springs] long before they came in contact with the White man' and he ascribed it to rapid spread of the disease from the North or South due to the 'custom of exchanging women' (Gillen to Spencer 23 March 1897, in Mulvaney et al., 1997: 152). In this instance Gillen was agreeing with the German ethnologist Eylmann who had visited him at his post (the editors of the letters suggest in a note that the disease discussed with Eylmann may have been Yaws, which shows similar symptoms). However, the speculations of those involved in this founding fieldwork scene are worth noting: Gillen and Spencer's 'informant and collector' the police constable Cowle reported, after a discussion with Eylmann regarding the lighter-skinned Natives who lived near the Missionary station, that perhaps the water of the area had 'a bleaching effect' (Cowle to Spencer 9 Feb. 1897, in Mulvaney et al., 1997: 160). Later Gillen lampooned the idea that such fair-skinned children resulted from eating Mission flour and he modified his views on syphilis, writing: 'For a long time it has been growing upon me that these people were at one time more numerous – I don't of course believe that they degenerated morally etc. . . . their numbers have been decreased by the introduction of syphilis from outside . . . there is not the ghost of a shadow of doubt and with their peculiar customs the rapid spread of the disease throughout the continent would only be a question of a few years' (Gillen to Spencer 22 Oct. 1897, in Mulvaney et al., 1997: 190–1). He did however report to the South Australian Select Committee of the Legislative Council in 1899 that he thought Aboriginal peoples had acquired the disease from 'contact with the Malay race who traded

on the north coast of Australia many hundreds of years ago' (*SA Parliamentary Paper* No. 77, qn 2191). It seems these speculations may have at first been provoked by a point in the Anthropological Institute's *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* (1892) which was sent to Gillen in 1897 and included the instruction: 'It is of importance to observe whether syphilis exists in any newly explored country where there had been no intercourse with Europeans, direct or indirect, or where the intercourse has been very limited' (*Notes and Queries*, 1892: 81, cited in Mulvaney et al., 1997: 191n). Cowle eventually died from degeneration of the nervous system due to 'tertiary syphilis' (Mulvaney et al., 1997: 441n).

- 30 Especially worthy of a subalternist rereading would be the reference in Clifford's text to the anti-conscription, anti-white rebellion around the Koné police station and nickel mine in 1917. Clifford reports 11 whites killed and an unknown number of Canaques slaughtered in a year-long repression of the rebellion (Clifford, 1982: 94–6). This was not the only rebellion, and earlier severed heads of executed rebels were sent back to the Paris Anthropological Society (Clifford, 1982: 124).
- 31 As elsewhere, these epidemics 'decimated' local populations (Clifford, 1997: 305). No doubt also syphilis played its grim role (see note 28). The obvious question that could be asked here is, where were the men? Dead at the hands of Long-hair Custer and his vicious spawn.
- 32 In a future work on consultancy and practical anthropology I will examine this part of Malinowski's institutional construction.
- 33 When only the code words of ideas are taken up by a parasitic theory-writing project that proliferates everywhere in order to sell product it is important to ask about uses. Where in the reception of these texts from France, where various writers emerge as 1990s postmodern culture heroes, is a serious assessment of the influences on their work of political engagement, struggle, militancy and activism? The occlusion of a radical politics occurs often when theory travels. Clifford does seem to have mellowed since 1982, where comments on two pages of the Leenhardt book suggest a Leiris-style politics was once more pronounced. He writes that, 'a tone of elegiac regret is no longer sufficient' in the face of anthropology's colonial involvement, and 'If anthropological research no longer proceeds as it did in 1878, the general political, moral, and epistemological issues . . . remain. Is it possible to study the other without asserting power over them?' (Clifford, 1997: 125). 'The forms of imperial dominion have not been simple. Naked oppression of other societies has co-existed rather easily with generous aesthetic appreciation of their modes of life; economic exploitation has seldom impeded the development of scientific understanding' (Clifford, 1997: 126). Yet, 'If there are signs that things are changing in the dynamics of ethnography, these changes cannot be conceived as independent of the continuing deployment of neo-imperial power' (Clifford, 1982: 125). My take on this would be to point out that scientific understanding in the form of generous, now self-reflexive, concern is not much more than more of the same, and the formula of a changing ethnography may only indicate the complicit adaptation of theory to contemporary requirements: thus the changing dynamic of anthropology may very well suit the changing dynamic of international capital. Changing how anthropology is done does not necessarily mitigate the exercise of power, however generously difference is marketed.
- 34 His chapters on the Soviet Union in *The Accursed Share* are impressive examples of the political possibility of anthropology. His views on Stalin and the deviations

of the CPSU may be also wrong on any number of counts, but at least he was expressing views and engaging in debate pertinent to the times.

- 35 Does he think maps are somehow too final? Were they not always only partial, like his dream of 'full accountability'? A total map would be equivalent to the terrain, and as in a story by Borges, you could go and live in it (see Hutnyk, 1996: 124–5).
- 36 It might be worth noting here that uncertainty is not 'undecidability' and should not be taken as some sort of malevolent import from post-structuralism. Derrida notes that undecidability demands a decision, a politics (Derrida, 1994/1997: 219). The question has to do with the degree of analysis upon which you decide, and why decisions are taken. To ignore this politics is not abstention, but conservatist status quo.
- 37 The designation 1867 which I use for *Capital* is fiction however, as this passage itself was not in the first edition. It was added to the second, much revised, edition of 1873 (see Marx, 1867/1976: 4). (Ps. to Gayatri Spivak: writing under a time and space restriction, it would be useful to read the '*sinnlich übersinnliche*' passage which follows, if only to recover the elided '*gesellschaftliche*' before '*Dinge*'. See Spivak [1995: 11], Marx [1890/1975: 86]. Also, in the translation of the passage Clifford uses, the metaphor of the mirror appears to have been omitted, and so an opportunity for a reflective pun missed.)
- 38 'The exchange of equivalents occurs (but it is merely) the surface layer of a production which rests on the appropriation of other people's labour *without exchange*, but under the *guise of exchange*. This system of exchange has *capital* as its basis. If we consider it in isolation from capital, as it appears on the surface, as an *independent* system, this is mere illusion, though a necessary illusion. It is therefore no longer surprising to find that the system of exchange-values – the exchange of equivalents measured in labour – turns into the *appropriation of other people's labour without exchange*, the total separation of labour and property, or rather that it reveals this appropriation as its concealed background. For the rule of exchange-values, and of production producing exchange-values, *presupposes* alien labour power as itself an exchange-value, i.e., it presupposes the separation of living labour power from its objective conditions; a relationship to these – or to its own objectivity – as someone else's property; in a word, a relation to them as *capital*. . . . If labour is once again to be related to its objective conditions as to its property, another system must replace that of private exchange, for as we have seen private exchange assumes the exchange of labour transformed into objects against labour-power, and thereby the appropriation of living labour without exchange' (Marx, 1857–8 <<http://csf.Colorado.EDU/psn/marx/Admin>>)
- 39 See Hutnyk (forthcoming) 'Capital Calcutta Coins' article, for discussion of Marx on this. Malinowski notes near the beginning of *Coral Gardens* that the pearl trade 'has produced a revolution in native economics' (Malinowski, 1935: 19), yet Trobrianders did not all flock to become pearlers because this would impinge upon the established rights of one section of the population, and in any case they were little impressed with the inducements offered. He continues: 'The only foreign article which exercises any purchasing power on the natives is tobacco. . . . The Trobriander indeed shows and expresses a ready contempt for the European's childish acquisitiveness in pearls . . . the greatest bribery and economic lures . . . cannot make the native give up his own pursuits for those foisted upon him. When the gardens are in full swing "the god-damn niggers won't swim even if you stuff them with kalomo and tobacco" as it was put to me by one of my trader friends' (Malinowski, 1935: 19–20).

- 40 Spivak quotes Marx to suggest that exchange value is a 'parasite' on use value: 'This character (of exchange) does not yet dominate production as a whole, but concerns only its superfluity and is hence itself more or less superfluous . . . an accidental enlargement of the sphere of satisfactory enjoyments. . . . It therefore takes place only at a few points (originally at the borders of the natural communities, in their contact with strangers) [*Grundrisse* 204]' (Spivak, 1987: 162). Natural? Despite this anachronism, the significance for anthropology is clear.
- 41 Here the often noted metaphors of the camera waits to be exposed (see McQuire, 1997).
- 42 The relation between buyer and seller in industrial capitalism 'has its foundation in the social character of production, not in the mode of exchange. The latter conversely emanates from the former. It is, however, quite in keeping with the bourgeois horizon, everyone being engrossed in the transaction of shady business, not to see in the character of the mode of production the basis of the mode of exchange corresponding to it, but vice versa' (Marx, 1893/1974: 120).
- 43 As has often been the case, Spivak's careful readings of Marx are instructive again here. She makes a similar point re Derrida in 'Ghostwriting' (Spivak, 1995). My own attempt at a commentary on Derrida's 'Marxism' is in 'derrida@marx.archive' (Hutnyk, 1997).
- 44 I would add here the importance of Ludwig Feuerbach's critique of Christianity in this regard, and of the difference between is and ought, the still relevant concerns of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, among other things (see Hanfi, 1972).
- 45 Perhaps such points might mean Clifford would need to be more circumspect in his dismissal of, for example, the comments of Julie Marcus and the claims of some of his feminist critics (Marcus, 1991) and that maybe the introductory comments in *Routes* about Philippina domestic labour could be more systematically investigated.
- 46 In a section that I think is best left discussed in a footnote, Clifford speculates on species-centrism and wonders if otters have a consciousness of historical change (Clifford, 1997: 326). Offering a critique again of Hegel and a certain 'Western' reason which 'is no longer adequate to the heterogeneous experiences of environment, continuity, and change', he feels able to ask about 'non-human temporalities which intersect with but are not reducible to human history. An impossible translation exercise' (Clifford, 1997: 327). And an eminently silly one – and not even half way as eloquent as the model offered by Claude Lévi-Strauss in communication with a cat at the end of *Tristes Tropiques*.
- 47 In a future text I want to attempt a reading of transition that would not fall into orthodox estimations of a strictly eschatological progress in Marx (see Shanin, 1983) and which attended to the possibilities, and likely limits, of utilizing the notion of transition to hold together such an array of contemporary movements – telematic, social, political.
- 48 Or is it the case that Marx is one of those grand theory total system Stalinists that we should loathe and despise? Curious symmetries of revisionism operate here. Stalin rewrites. But so does Malinowski, and presumably Clifford – those diary entries are 'worked up' texts. And Marx revises too. Indeed, Spivak has suggested that it is useful to see *Capital* as the worked up version, suggesting that both a 'continuist' example of Marx's scheme of value, and a discontinuous one, resides in his texts. (Scholarship looks for continuities and glosses over the cracks [Spivak, 1987: 292]): 'intimations of discontinuity [in Marx] are most noticeably covered over in the move from the seven notebooks now collectively called the

Grundrisse to the finished *Capital 1*. It is a secondary revision of this version that yields the standard of measurement' (Spivak, 1987: 155–6). Thus measuring value by means of an orthodox formula is not the only story to come out of Marx's work. This is so for formularists like Clifford and his truncated 'exchange makes production', or even for more sophisticated considerations of labour power as that whose use creates value, even greater than it costs – appropriated by the capitalist – taken to market – exchanged – recouped as profit – reinvested – circulated – crisis – restructuring – crisis, or even ($C=c+v+s$, $M-C-M'$, $P'=s' v/C=s'/c+v$ and so on). The book *Capital* is full of reminders that the presentation is schematic. Just as *Capital* is more complicated than a cursory reading suggests, so too is Malinowski's *Argonauts*. In this light, it is the contrivance of including 'diary' entries as ethnography that pretends to a 'fidelity to the real' and does so in a way that is more duplicitous than that of the functionalist empiricism. Why would anyone today accept such an offering at 'face value'? 'Look, I know texts are constructed, so here, let me offer you one which is not.' It's a trick. Rejecting Marx for continuist grand totals is to abandon the usefulness of his text, and those concepts which seem to still hold considerable explanatory, heuristic and politically contingent qualities for scholarship today (even if it often seems the institutional constraints are too many: the scholar must also tamper).

- 49 Anti-Bolshevik? Elsie too. For example Masson campaigned for and voted in favour of conscription in 1917, saying that the Australian workforce had 'been infected with the idea that the war was being carried on for the benefit of Capital' (Wayne, 1995: 7; Elsie to Bronio). This same orator (she had been speaking at the Yarra Bank soapbox forums) later attends National Socialist rallies in Germany in 1933, though does not profess support, and is clearly critical of Mosley's British black shirts in 1934 (Wayne, 1995: Elsie to Bronio 30.4.1933, 18 6.1934).
- 50 Marx, of course, was never as simplistic. For debate about whether the necessary evil of capitalism was always necessary, see Shanin's book on the late Marx's optimism for the Russian revolution to come (Shanin, 1983).

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