Traveller or Tourist? The Sensible Observations of Roland Barthes and George Sandys[1]

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Abstract
Is it better to be a tourist or a traveller? Tourists are usually denigrated as vulgar and ignorant while travellers are thought to be more sensitive and observant and to be performing more useful cultural work. However, the iconoclastic writings of Roland Barthes might persuade readers to rethink these commonly-held assumptions. Barthes' insights into the nature of travel and tourism provide us with a way of exploring the history of travel writing and the relationship between ideas of travelling and tourism. George Sandys' *Relation of a Journey begun An; Dom: 1610* (1615) can be read as a work that thinks about and values tourism, setting its author apart from his contemporary travel writers Thomas Coryat, William Lithgow and Fynes Moryson. While they concentrate on their own ability to understand and appropriate the value of other cultures for their readers, Sandys writes for a reader who might wish to follow in his footsteps and enjoy the experience of encountering other places. A strong case can be made that Sandys' book is the ancestor of the late nineteenth-century guides that did so much to encourage European tourism, Baedeker and Cook.

Keywords: Travel; Tourism; George Sandys; Roland Barthes; China; The Orient; Jerusalem; religion; crocodiles

Is it better to be a traveller or a tourist? In a certain form of popular culture, there's a consensus that everyone who moves from one country to another for short periods of time wants to be a traveller not a tourist. Tourists are vulgar, interested only in their own pleasure, indifferent to the cultures of the countries they visit, and ignorant. Travellers are more savvy, staying long enough to learn something about the places they visit and the people they encounter, and able to articulate a clear sense of the identities of both in the works they subsequently publish (Francis n.p.).

But can we be so certain that this is a meaningful distinction? Mary Louise Pratt was not convinced that a meaningful distinction could be made between tourists and travellers. She had especially hard words for

[1] This is a revised version of a paper presented at the 12th Nordic Conference for English Studies (NAES), "Places and Non-Places of English," hosted by Prof Robert Applebaum, at Uppsala University, 10-13 October, 2013.

Hadfield, Andrew. 2014. "Traveller or Tourist? The Sensible Observations of Roland Barthes and George Sandys." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 13(4):38-55.

the 'fine writing' of Paul Theroux's account of his travels in Patagonia, its absence of interest for the jaded traveller eager to impose his Western values on the apparently empty landscape. For Pratt, Theroux is the modern equivalent of the imperial travellers to Africa in the nineteenth century, a man with his own implicit confidence in his ability to judge and, in doing so, to dehumanise:

> The white man's lament is also the lament of the Intellectual and the Writer. It may be thought of in part as an attempt to drown out the chatter of another monolithic voice emerging in the same decades: the voice of mass tourism. The depth-creating powers of the travel writer must compete with the ten-day nine-night air-hotel package, tips included, and the glossy, disembodied fantasies of tourist propaganda. In the 1960s and 1970s exoticist visions of plentitude and paradise were appropriated and commodified on an unprecedented scale by the tourist industry. 'Real' writers took up the task of providing 'realist' (degraded, counter-commodified) versions of postcolonial reality. (Pratt 1992: 221)[2]

For Pratt, travel and tourism are two sides of the same coin. If tourism has a problematic history, travelling is far, far worse and the desire to correct misapprehensions only succeeds in creating more. As another cliché has it, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

Even so, there is surely nothing necessarily wrong with wanting to go to other countries to experience new things, even if one does not have a committed interest to finding anything out really. Most medieval and early modern people did not travel a great deal: one needed to be rich enough to afford a horse or stay in an inn to travel more than about seven miles from one's house (McRae 2009). But they loved the numerous holidays that punctuated the routine of a hard working life, were curious about other cultures, and travelled whenever they could (Wilson, 2002). In the fourteenth century there were guidebooks available for those intrepid enough to set off on pilgrimages, works that were as much about where to stay and what to see as they were about the holiness of religious experience (Ohler 1989: 184-9). People would have travelled further and more often had they had the leisure time to do so (Jusserand, 1888). Sometimes when we assume that the past was different we find that the people who inhabited it were more like us than we realise.

The intertwined issues of travelling, tourism, their relative ethical status, and what knowledge we can have of other cultures is dramatically

[2] Paul Theroux's book is *The Old Patagonian Express* (Theroux 1978).

demonstrated by the recent publication in French and English translation of a diary of a notorious visit to China in the mid-1970s. There have been few writers of distinction in the later twentieth century who have made more of a virtue of remaining within their own culture than Roland Barthes. Barthes' reflections on a wide variety of cultural forms are familiar to generations of readers in translation. It is important to recognise that Barthes deliberately restricts his focus to what he knows: French culture and French writing, a conscious and deliberate choice. All his literary references are French: Balzac, Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Proust, and Montesquieu, a roll call of Frenchness. His books are all about French writers and Frenchness: *Writing Degree Zero* is about French literary style; *S/Z* about Balzac's *Sarrazine*; *Sur Racine* speaks for itself. Even when he does turn to non-French writers, such as Edgar Alan Poe, these are Frenchified, part of French literary tradition through the translations of Baudelaire. It was *Mythologies*, which is very specifically French which taught generations of foreign readers that steak and chips was, in fact, a French dish (Barthes 1973: 62-4). There have surely been few writers who have provided more insight into the general understanding of culture through the exploration of their own, a lifelong enterprise that earned Barthes a global reputation as a writer, stylist and theorist of distinction. Even when Barthes talks about racism and national identity it is in terms of France and the colonial war in Algeria; most significantly in his famous discussion of the negro soldier saluting the French tricolour in *Paris Match* (Barthes 1972: 116-27).

However, in the last decade of his life Barthes did start to travel and reflect on other cultures in his own idiosyncratic manner. Barthes was characteristically perverse. Just as he deliberately reflected widely on all cultures by sticking resolutely to his own, so was he ingenious and nonconformist in choosing what he wanted to see and how he recorded his observations. *The Empire of Signs* (1972) records his impressions of Japan, a country that Barthes found fascinating at a time when it was seen as something of a curiosity by the West with its incomprehensible combination of tradition and modernity (1972 was the year of Yukio Mishima's bizarre failed coup d'état). At this time many left-wing writers, in particular the groups with whom Barthes was associated, were turning to emerging nations—Africa, and, in particular, China—more obviously appealing to their sympathies in (Wolin 2012). In contrast, Barthes makes a virtue of his pleasure in experiencing Japan. He admires

its semiotic possibilities and enjoys the fact that he knows that he does not understand its culture. As usual, he is provocative and writes in a manner that will horrify readers not willing to be challenged:

> Orient and Occident cannot be taken [. . .] as "realities" to be compared and contrasted historically, philosophically, culturally, politically. I am not lovingly gazing towards an Oriental essence—to me the Orient is a matter of indifference, merely providing a reserve of features whose manipulation—whose invented interplay—allows me to "entertain" the idea of an unheard-of symbolic system, one altogether detached from our own. What can be addressed, in the consideration of the Orient, are not symbols, another metaphysics, another wisdom (though the latter might appear thoroughly desirable); it is the possibility of a difference, of a mutation, of a revolution in the property of symbolic systems. Someday we must write the history of our own obscurity. (Barthes 1982: 3-4)

What Barthes admires about Japan is the riot of signification, the fact that its systems go beyond his capacity to understand and contain them: "the empire of signifiers is so immense, so in excess of speech, that the exchange of signs remains a fascinating richness, mobility, and subtlety" (Barthes 1982: 9). He confesses that this is exactly what he enjoys about being abroad:

> The murmuring mass of an unknown language constitutes a delicious protection, envelops the foreigner (provided the country is not hostile to him [sic]) in an auditory film which halts at his ears all the alienations of the mother tongue: the regional and social origins of whoever is speaking, his degree of culture, of intelligence, of taste, the image by which he constitutes himself as a person and which he asks you to recognize. Hence, in foreign countries, what a respite! Here I am protected against stupidity, vulgarity, vanity, worldliness, nationality, normality. (Barthes 1982: 9)

Barthes makes an explicit virtue of not understanding a culture, one reason why he likes Japan so much. He does not expect to understand Japanese life and culture and so enjoys himself more than he would in other countries where he is expected to be able to respond in an intelligent way. Losing his sense of identity is one of the pleasures of encountering somewhere new and unfamiliar. Put another way, he is a tourist not a traveller, foregrounding the virtue of ignorance.

We might contrast Barthes' joy at his Japanese encounter with his sardonic and much more negative encounter with China, his description of which has only just been published. Barthes visited China in 1974 as part of a delegation of *Tel Quel* figures, including Julia Kristeva and

Philippe Sollers. Many of the intellectuals associated with *Tel Quel* were enthusiastic Maoists keen to support the Cultural Revolution and to bring back its message of permanent revolution to the West. Barthes was not, and recounts how he had an awful time in China. He was bored by visits to factories and what he saw as endless proselytizing by both the Chinese and their French visitors. He particularly disliked the leading role that Sollers took in openly proclaiming the virtues of proletarian revolution to his hosts (Wood 2009).[3] Barthes' diary, *Travels in China*, deliberately repeats the solipsistic nature of his reflections of his experience of Japan. In China, however, he observes brutish buildings and eats unpleasant meals. He muses on attractive young Chinese men and his irritation with his compatriots, especially Sollers, for his simplistic analysis of China and belief that he has the ability to understand an alien culture without much effort: "Another discussion in which Philippe Sollers [. . .] absolutely has to renounce Buddhism as religion, idealism, political power, etc. Voltaireanism. But the problem, the only one, is Power" (Barthes 2009: 104). In contrast to his happy experiences in Japan, Barthes finds a lack of signification and complains often about the uniformity of Chinese culture: "It's only children who have individualised clothes, with anarchic colours" (Barthes 2009: 122). He hates the art they are taken to see: "A horrible painting, socialist realist: gathering of primitive folk round a fire, a woman with her finger raised, domineering, is speaking, we are told: 'discussion of problem by villagers!'" (Barthes 2009: 121). Barthes takes particular exception to being manipulated. He is especially irritated by the campaign then raging against Lin Biao, the former ally of Mao, who had turned against his leader and had subsequently died in a mysterious plane crash: "Ballet of girl militias: 'Aim at the object': caricature of Lin Biao on a placard (always depicted, alas, in the style of anti-Semitic caricatures)" (Barthes 2009: 83). He comments frequently on how it is forbidden to move freely in China: "Impossible to mingle. The organizers don't want us to. Hands off bodies. Exclusions" (Barthes 2009: 14).

Barthes' reaction to China is in stark contrast to the enthusiasm demonstrated by some of the other travellers. Julia Kristeva's *On Chinese Women* (1974) was a notably successful and widely-reprinted book that also resulted from the same visit. Kristeva is as enthusiastic

[3] I am grateful to Paul Davies for bringing this article to my attention.

about China as Barthes is disparaging. She sees it as the revolutionary way forward for other nations to copy. Kristeva is especially keen on China's attitude to women and the possibilities opened up for them in China, and frequently endorses Mao's pronouncements on women. She even attributes a female quality to Chinese writing alien to the West:

> Not only has Chinese writing maintained the memory of matrilinear pre-history (collective and individual) in its architectonic of image, gesture, and sound: it has been able as well to integrate it into a logico-symbolic code capable of ensuring the most direct 'reasonable' legislating—even the most bureaucratic—communication: all the qualities that the West believes itself unique in honouring, and that it attributes to the Father. (Kristeva 1986: 57)

Kristeva dismisses the achievements of Western linguistics and later makes the claim that Chinese eliminates Western notions of "objective truth," shifting "people to a symbolic situation in literature or in the past, selecting according to the influence it continues to exert in the present" (Kristeva 1986: 58). Kristeva concludes with a statement that might have been written in response to the impressions of Barthes. Addressing her reader directly she states: "For after all you know now about Chinese society, you will well understand that it's not worth the trouble to go to China if you're not interested in women, if you don't like them" (Kristeva 1986: 158). This statement, of course, makes it clear that only a misogynist could criticise China, or fail to be impressed by the actions carried out in the name of the Cultural Revolution.

The question is, who is being more ethnocentric, myopic and deluded here? The tourist Barthes, who clearly had some inkling that terrible events were taking place behind the scenes which the French visitors were not allowed to see? Or the traveller, Kristeva, who has done some homework on China, which she is eager to demonstrate to the reader? In acknowledging that he cannot understand a culture is Barthes not actually respecting cultural difference and establishing a dialogue? And in imagining that she can understand and appropriate another culture for her beliefs and causes is Kristeva not actually guilty of an ethnocentrism that imagines itself as anti-ethnocentric, as Derrida wrote about Levi-Strauss's enthusiasm for the cultural innocence of Brazil's interior? (Derrida 1974: 107-18).

The opposing assumptions and perceptions of Barthes and Kristeva provide a useful way of thinking about early modern English travel

writing. This was the first time when English writers who had travelled abroad were able to disseminate their works in printed form, and so set the terms for subsequent assumptions about the purpose and value of visiting foreign lands: in the early seventeenth century published travel writing as a literary genre was in its infancy as a genre (Hadfield, ed. 2001). Moreover, it was hard to travel in this period: a passport was needed and few were granted because there was an understandable fear that once abroad, many English travellers to Europe would turn Catholic and become traitors (Chaney and Wilks, 2014). Writers had to try and establish their own audience and market. They were acutely concerned with the central issues of travel writing just as Barthes and Kristeva were in the 1970s: whether travel writing's principal aim was to inform the reader or to give pleasure, and whether an understanding of foreign places demonstrated that other cultures were similar or different to one's own culture. In fact, relevant debates occur in Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), before the actual rise of travel writing as a genre, written by someone whose furthers voyage was to The Isle of Wight (Hadfield 2009).

The form and shape of early travel writing demonstrates that this was a genre that generated anxiety about its purpose, authors attempting to establish the nature of their writing and engage with an audience. Few books could be more eccentric than Thomas Coryat's *Coryat's Crudities* (1611), which foregrounds the carefully fashioned identity of its author. Coryat exaggerates and draws attention to himself as a traveler and a writer, with a vast number of dedicatory poems praising the author (the longest in relation to any book yet published), a strange picture of Coryat enthusiastically greeting a Venetian courtesan), and other eccentric features (Coryat 1905; Hadfield, ed. 2001: 52-63). Few could be more obviously bigoted than Fynes Moryson's massive *Itinerary of his Travels* (1617), which established him as the first properly professional travel writer but which he had to struggle so hard to get published (Moryson 1907; Moryson 1903; Hadfield 2003). It might seem strange that someone with Moryson's views about the duplicity and savagery of foreigners bothered to travel at all, but Moryson was covering his back, making sure that his Protestant loyalty could never be in doubt, as well as expressing his prejudices. There was also a bitterness about the hard road he had to follow to see his work into the public domain. Even so, Moryson's travails are easy to understand given the inordinate length of

the *Itinerary* and the often repetitive nature of the narrative which is often little more than a series of lengthy ranting observations about the inferior foreigners one finds throughout Europe, the Levant and North Africa. Moryson was not alone in his forceful opinions. William Lithgow in his *Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures and Painefull Perigrinations* (1632) is, if anything, even more blinkered than Moryson and wears his prejudices more lightly (Lithgow 1906). Like Moryson, Lithgow establishes himself as the authentic Protestant voice of reason as he bulldozes his way from Lanark to Jerusalem, following a similar route through France, Germany, Italy, North Africa and Turkey, albeit with an ill-advised return through Catholic Spain (Bosworth 2006).

There is one exception to these models: in many ways the writer who has been least celebrated but who probably had the most lasting influence on the development of English travel writing: George Sandys (1578-1644), humanist, traveller and later, North American colonist.[4] Sandys, son of the Archbishop of York, Edwin Sandys (1519?-88)—and brother of Sir Edwin Sandys who wrote the influential treatise on toleration, *A Relation of the State of Religion* (1599)—was a scholar whose humanist and ecumenical principles led him to take a serious interest in other cultures so that he could represent them fairly and dispassionately for his English audience (Collinson 2014; Rabb 2014; Dickens 1986: 441). As his contemporaries did, Sandys headed south through Europe to the Levant, the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Lands, his *Relation of a Journey begun An; Dom: 1610* (1615) advertising this route in a prefatory map.

Sandys' book was clearly a success—certainly in comparison to Moryson's *Itinerary*. It sold well throughout the seventeenth century, with four editions appearing in just over twenty years, which is why it has a strong claim to be the work that establishes the dominant mode of later English travel writing. Sandys was a significantly less flamboyant and far more reclusive character than Coryat, Moryson, and Lithgow, and spent most of his last twenty years in obscurity after he had returned from the Virginia Colony, working among his books (Davis 1955: chs. 5-10). He was a thoughtful writer who worked hard at the genres he chose to adopt and adapt, most notably his influential translation of the *Metamorphoses*, as befits a man who took his intellectual lead from

[4] On Sandys' life, see Davis 1955.

Hugo Grotius (Ellison 2002: 234-46). Like his intellectual inspiration, Sandys was nothing if not a proponent for toleration, and he was dismayed when the king, under the influence of Archbishop Laud, started to persecute religious dissent (Ellison 2002: 242-3).

Sandys clearly tried to understand how other religions made sense of the world, even though he had to regard them as inferior to Christianity. Analysing the significance of the pyramids, which are represented in a striking illustration embedded in the text, Sandys comments that the Egyptians "erecting such costly monuments, not onely out of a vaine ostentation, but being of opinion, that after the dissolution of the flesh the soule should survive; and when thirty sixe thousand yeares were expired, againe be ioyed vnto the selfsame body, restored vnto his former conditions gathered in their conceipts from Astrnomicall demonstrations" (Sandys 1615: 130-1). Contemporary readers would surely have noted that this belief sounds exactly like the mortalist heresy, that the soul died and was then reunited with the body to live again on the Day of Judgement, a belief that may have attracted John Milton, a writer who certainly knew Sandys' writing (McDowell 2010). Sandys also provides a principled defence of the Jews against Christian persecution:

> A people scattered throughout the whole world, subject to all wrongs and contumelies, which they support with an inuincible patience. Many often times haue I seene abused; some of them beaten; yet neuer saw I Jew with an angry countenance. They can subiect themselves vnto times, and to whatsoeuer may advance their profit. In general they are worldly wise, and thriue wheresoever they set footing. The Turke imployes them in receipt of customes, which they by their pollicies haue inhanced; and in buying and selling with the Christian: being himselfe in that kind a foole and easily cousened. They are men of indifferent statures, and the best complexions. (Sandys 1615: 146)

Sandys is clearly eager to counter-act prejudice against the Jews and to remind his readers of their duties to allow other faiths and versions of faith to exist, especially as he was well aware that Islam was invariably a far more tolerant religion than Christianity. There follows a learned account of Jewish religious practices and beliefs, one that is indebted to Sandys' wide reading and interest in religions and cultures (Ellison 2002: 76-80).

Sandys is critical of the Ottoman Empire and its religious practices, although he is not writing from a position of ignorance and has read

widely about them both. In the frontispiece, as Nebehat Avcioglu has pointed out, the Ottoman Emperor, Ahmed I, is represented as a tyrant and a usurper, leading an empire whose goal is the self-perpetuation of the ruling class at the expense of its own citizens and those they conquer and enslave (Avcioglu 2001). Sandys is waiting for the empire to start its decline, as much a wish fulfilment as a political observation:

> And surely it is to be hoped that their greatnesse is not onely at the height, but neare an extreme precipitation: the body being growne too monstrous for the head; the Sultans vnwarlike, and neuer accompanying their armies in person; the Souldier corrupted with ease and liberty; drowned in prohibited wine, enfeebled with the continuall converse of women; and generally lapsed from their former austeritie of life, and simplicity of manners [. . .] it hath exceeded the obserued period of a Tyrannie, for such is their Empire. (Sandys 1615: 50)

His substantial analysis of Islam, respectful enough in terms of the standards of the day, is based on the assumption that such religious belief is an inauthentic and deluded offshoot of Christianity. Writing of the Arabs in North Africa, Sandys concludes: "Their religion is Mahometanisme; glorying in that the Imposter was their countryman" (Sandys 1615: 139).

Elsewhere *A Journey* provides extensive information on a number of sects relatively unknown to an English audience, including the Coptic Christians in Egypt, who, he affirms, are "true Aegyptians" as well as authentic Christians "notwithstanding they are circumcised" (Sandys 1615: 110). Sandys supplies his readers with a series of Classical literary references, charting the main episodes in the Odyssey as he travels around the Mediterranean. He confirms that the Cyclops was a native of Sicily using the familiar trope of the eye-witness: "Their bones in sundry places digged vp, and at this day to be seene, do giue a sufficient testimony of their Gyant-like proportions" (Sandys 1615: 236; Ho 1991). Sandys also includes helpful commentary on subjects that his readers might find intriguing, such as the preservation techniques of Egyptian mummies, and the nature and significance of the crocodile, a beast they were unlikely to have encountered. The crocodile is described as a strange exotic creature, very like those recently discovered in the New World:

> In shape not vnlike a Lizard, and some of them of an vncredible greatnesse. So great from so small a beginning is more then wonderfull, some of them being aboue thirtie

> foot long; hatched of eggs no bigger then those that are layd by a Turkie. His taile is equall to his body in length; wherewith he infoldeth his prey, and draws it into the river. His feete are armed with claws, and his back and sides with scales scarce impenetrable; his bellie tender, soft and is easuily pierced his teeth indented within one another; hauing no tongue, and mouing of his vpper jaw oneley; his mouth so wide when extended, as some of them are able to swallow, an entire heifer. (Sandys 1615: 100)[5]

This is an accurate description—crocodiles do have tongues, but they cannot poke them out of their mouths—one that will excite the imagination of the reader to think about the wonders of the Old World.[6]

Sandys' writing is miscellaneous and hybrid, exactly what one might expect in an early piece of travel writing. Therefore, it should not surprise us that he has been thought of in very different ways by different critics. For James Ellison Sandys was, like his brother, a tolerant liberal, a bookish humanist, each demonstrating an "open-mindedness and willingness to learn from their experiences abroad that was not the norm [. . .] their attitudes were quite remarkable for the time" (Ellison 2002: 52). For Jonathan Haynes, Sandys was less an observer than an intellectual and he argues that "A great deal of the Relation could have been written without leaving England" (Haynes 1986: 47). Indeed, the book bears no resemblance to a journal—although Sandys would undoubtedly have kept one on his travels—and many passages "could only have been written in a library" (Haynes 1986: 46). In this reading Sandys resembles the exiled English lord in *The Unfortunate Traveller* who advises Jack Wilton that he will learn more in his warm study than through travel itself, a lesson that Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas certainly understood (Hadfield 2009). Haynes further points out that Sandys' personal opinions are deliberately suppressed in his account of his travels because his book is intended to serve as a guide, primarily for readers eager to learn about the Levant, the Ottoman Empire and southern Europe, but also, to a lesser extent, travellers. For Julia Schleck, Sandys is a "traveller witness" and his reflections on the countries he visits are determined by his understanding of social economics, in particular the ways in which land is used by those who inhabit it. According to Schleck, Sandys is particularly concerned with the category

[5] On the animals of the New World, see Sloan (2007: 182-223, 232-3).

[6] See "AnimalQuestions.org" (http://animalquestions.org/reptiles/crocodiles/do-crocodiles-have-tongues/) (accessed 24.2.14).

of "waste," the fear that land was not being used in a properly productive manner which meant that the natives had sacrificed all moral right to ownership and should cede their possession to people who were able to make better use of what was there (Schleck 2011: ch. 1). It was one of the cornerstones of early colonial discourse—and, perhaps, one can find echoes in Paul Theroux's comments on the barren and dull landscape of Patagonia, a landscape that fails to excite the Western travel writer. "Waste" was a category that was extensively applied by the English in Ireland. To describe land as "waste" meant that it was not being used productively and so could be appropriated by colonisers. The concept would have had a further significance for Sandys, given the leading role he played in the Virginia colony in the 1620s (Hadfield 2001 ed: 262-5). Sandys contrasts the abundance of Greece to the "waste" of the Ottoman Empire. In making his observations he has no interaction with the peoples who inhabit the lands—certainly none are mentioned in Sandys' account of his travels—surveying the territories rather like a landowner charting his estates, a mode of representation that was becoming vital to Europeans as mapping and printing techniques became ever more sophisticated.

Sandys is certainly not a traveller who places any store by his own personal experiences or makes his reactions key points in the narrative. It is worth comparing his account of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the most sacred Christian place, to William Lithgow's description of his approach to the city:

> At last wee beheld the prospect of Jerusalem, which was not onely a contentment to my weary body, but also being ravished with a kinde of unwonted rejoicing, the teares gushed from my eyes for too much joy. In this time the Armenians began to sing in their owne fashion, Psalmes to praise the Lord: and I also sung the 103 Psalme all the way, till we arrived neere the wals of the Citty, where we ceased from our singing, for feare of the Turkes. (Lithgow 1906: 179)

Lithgow tries to give his readers an accurate sense of how he felt as he approached the Holy City so that they can share this vital experience with him without actually being there (although, of course, reading his account might make them want to make the journey themselves). He describes his own involuntary emotional response to reaching his destination; the reactions of other pilgrims, the dangers they faced in a

hostile land and the precautions they were forced to take. Lithgow's sense of himself as witness is key to our understanding of the event.

Sandys also feels obliged to record some sort of personal response but he suppresses the nature of his feelings—perhaps they were not especially vital—and uses the opportunity to write about the need for not drawing attention to the experience of the individual traveller:

> From hence [a small village outside Jerusalem] to *Ierusalem* the way is indifferent euen. On each side are round hils, with ruines on their tops; and vallies such as are figured in the most beautifull land-skips. The soile though stony, not altogether barren, producing both corne and oliues about inhabited places. Approaching the North gate of the Cittie, called in times past the gate of *Ephram*, and now of *Damascus*, we onely of all the rest were not permitted to enter. When compassing the wall vnto that of the West, commanded by the Castle, we were met by two *Francsicean* Friars: who saluted and conueyed vs to their Conuent.
>
> Although diuers both vpon inquisition and view, haue with much labour related the site and state of this Cittie, with the places adioyning; (though not to my knowledge in our language) insomuch as I may seme vnto some, but to write what hath bene written already: yet notwithstanding, as well to continue the course of this discourse, as to deliuer the Reader from many erring reports of the too credulous deuote, and too too vain glorious one
>
> Do toyes diuulge –
>
> The other characterised in the remainder carried in that Disticke:
>
> Still adde to what they heare,
> And of a mole-hill do a mountaine reaere.
>
> I will declare what I haue obserued, vnswayed with either of their vices. (Sandys 1615: 154)

Sandys is not an excitable tourist. While Lithgow records his tears and need to burst into song, Sandys tells his readers that one needs to be careful on the path leading into the city and then warns readers of the vices of inaccurate description before launching into a substantial historical and topographical account of the city. The significance of the moment is acknowledged but deliberately played down. Sandys seems almost embarrassed that this is the first published account of a visit to the Holy City in English, a modest acknowledgement that he is not worthy to have produced such writing. Sandys makes clear to his readers that he is

not providing anything like the last word on the subject but a guide for them to follow.

The ways in which Sandys narrates his journey are as important as what he actually shows and tells. In fact, there is little real difference between Sandys' guide to the chief monuments and sites of the city and that of Lithgow, who is rather good at linking descriptions of sacred places to the Biblical history they contain. But in marked contrast, Sandys has effaced his identity and all-but disappeared from the text, surveying all that he can encompass without revealing himself. Instead, Sandys concentrates on the literary associations and connections of the places he visits, and an array of Latin quotations enables the reader to imagine Sandy's journey around the Mediterranean in terms of a shared cultural history. A case in point is the description of the approach to Naples:

> That night we arriued at a little village some twelue miles beyond: where we lodged, as the night before, in a little Chapell. The next morning betimes we reached the Cape: from,
>
> Whose stormie crowne farre off high Pallas sees (Seneca)
>
> Her Temple there being said to haue bene erected by *Vlysses*; and formerly called the Promontory of *Minerva*. Here also stood a renowned *Atheneum*, flourishing in the seuerall excellencies of learning and eloquence. In so much as from hence grew the fable of the *Sirens* (famed to haue inhabited hereabout) who so inchanted with the sweetnesse of their songs, and deepnesse of their science: of both, thus boasting *Ulysses*
>
> Hither thy ship (of Greekes thou glorie) store:
> That our songs may delight thee, anker here.
> Neuer was man yet in sable barke sail'd by,
> That gaue not eare to our sweete melodie.
> And parted pleasd, his knowledge bettred farre.
> We know what Greeks and Troians in Troys warre
> Sustained by the doome of Gods: and all
> That doth upon the food-full Earth befall [Homer, *Odyssey*]
>
> the same attributes being giuen vnto them which were giuen to the Muses. But after that these students had abused their gifts to the colouring of wrongs, the corruption of manners, and subuersion of good gouernment; the *Sirens* were famed to haue bene transformed into monsters, and with their melody and blandishments, to haue inticed the passenger to his ruine: such as came hither, consuming their patrimonies, and poisoning their vertues with riot and effeminacy. (Sandys 1615: 251)

This is clearly a description from a tourist guide holding out the promise for the reader that they too can follow in the footsteps of Ulysses and see where the sirens lured sailors to their doom, with the frisson of recollected danger rather than the real thing. And is this not just like what we do on holiday today: stand where the ancient Cretans built their palaces, see where Ruskin looked out over Lake Coniston, where Galileo discovered that feathers and lead descended to earth at the same rate, or where Shakespeare's feet might have trodden? In many obvious ways *A Relation of a Journey* is the ancestor of Baedeker and Thomas Cook's guides.

Travel writing will always be a hybrid genre: what the literate and sophisticated George Sandys understood, an insight closely linked to his belief in the need for tolerance, is that what readers would value in his work is a knowledge they could share. *A Relation of a Journey* enables readers to enjoy a benign feeling of cultural superiority, coupled with a curiosity about the world around them and a desire to enjoy new experiences. Sandys gives his readers history and literature lessons: one can find the lives of Christ and Mohamed in *Relation of a Journey*, as well as the course that Ulysses followed home from Troy; information about what to see; and when his personality does intrude, it is so that the reader can share his understanding of what it is like to experience a particular place. Sandys is not always an exciting, or even an engaging, writer and he can be rather dull at times, but he is never obnoxious—unlike Lithgow and Moryson—or eccentric in the studied and mannered style of Coryat. They are travel writers, the ancestors of Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin, Michael Palin, and, arguably, Julia Kristeva. Sandys is a tourist, a scholar and a thinker, whose goal is to share his experiences with his readers, suggesting that he was a writer much more like Roland Barthes. Sandys and Barthes acknowledge that their actual encounters with other lands probably tell them much less about the difference of other cultures and other peoples than extensive reading could have done. Accepting one's level of ignorance is a vital starting point if one is to respect the difference of others and to inform one's readers properly. That is why it is almost always better to be a tourist, open to the enjoyment of new experiences, than a traveler. Tourists like Sandys and Barthes realise that they can know so much more than they do.

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