Pleasure and Guilt in Greece and Italy

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The Grand Tour: pleasure and the appropriation of the foreign

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, large numbers of English and French writings were devoted to the discussion of the objects of commentary presented to view by one particular imaginative topography: the domain of the not-so-distant foreign mapped out by the practice of travel on the Grand Tour. This topography was one which was never assigned exact geographical boundaries; Italy, however, always occupied a central place within it, pushing other European countries into positions of marginality.

One of the tasks which commentary on the topography of the Grand Tour sets itself is that of appropriating the foreign: the traveller uttering the description and commentary invariably makes energetic gestures of appropriation towards the region described, attempting to claim it as one which he or she has successfully utilized for his or her own purposes. The definition of the Grand Tour itself, as a practice which combines entertainment with education, helps to determine the forms which these gestures of appropriation assume. In order to speak with the authority of a full participant in the Grand Tour, the traveller has to show that he or she has managed to extract both enjoyment and cultural benefit from the countries visited. Expressions of pleasure fulfil the first of these functions, and, when directed towards objects such as landscapes and works of art, almost invariably fulfil the second as well. They therefore provide especially powerful gestures of appropriation.

The demonstration that cultural benefit has been extracted from the topography is, occasionally, employed on its own, without any accompanying indication of enjoyment. An account of travel in Italy may, for example, simply make it evident that the traveller is able to exercise the power of comparison between the
foreign and the familiar, or between different areas of the foreign, which travel might be expected to confer. Commentaries which consist of expressions of disapprobation or indifference, unrelieved by any suggestion of delight, nevertheless leave themselves open to the accusation that they are not accomplishing this task of appropriation properly. Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768) makes use of this objection in alleging that the travel writings of Smollett—or 'Smelfungus'—provide an account not of the topography of the Grand Tour itself but of the traveller's own inner propensity to misery: in failing to find pleasure in the countries which he has visited, it is suggested, the traveller has failed to claim the foreign for himself: 'The learned SMELFUN-GUS travelled from Boulogne to Paris—from Paris to Rome—and so on—but he set out with the spleen and jaundice, and every object he passed by was discoloured or distorted—He wrote an account of them, but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings.'

**Pleasure and escape**

Declarations of pleasure, then, occupy an extremely important place within the discourse by which knowledge of the not-so-distant foreign was ordered during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Two of the constraints which operate within this discourse, however, play an especially important role in limiting the range of different forms which expressions of pleasure can assume. The first of these constraints prevents a commentary on the Grand Tour from ever directly suggesting that the foreign is, in any general sense, superior to the familiar. The second constraint precludes any direct expression of a desire to escape the familiar—and, therefore, precludes the identifica-

This second constraint is all the more conspicuous, in literature of the Grand Tour, as a result of its failure to assume a place in the travel writing of other periods: a wish to abandon the miseries of the familiar and seek out the delights of the foreign is often expressed quite vehemently in writings of the early nineteenth century, for example, and in writings of the 1920s and 1930s.
Expressions of a desire to escape the familiar, then, can only be admitted as part of commentaries on the topography of the Grand Tour on condition that they undergo some form of displacement. The displacement which is most commonly adopted is one in which the desire to escape is transmuted, metonymically, into a demand for drama, boldness, and the striking—the qualities which typify the foreign, and mark the greatest possible contrast to the traveller's country of origin—and into a corresponding rejection of tameness and insipidity—the qualities which typify England. (French travel writings, while associating boldness and drama with Italy, do not usually construct the same close connection between the 'tame' and the traveller's country of origin.) An element of drama is constantly demanded by the traveller, as a necessary part of the pleasure and entertainment which the Grand Tour is expected to supply. Insufficient drama is defined as a cause for complaint, on the ground that the topography of the Grand Tour has failed to exhibit the divergence from the familiar which is required of it.

In some demands for drama and repudiations of tameness, the metonymic links between these qualities and the categories of the foreign and the familiar are merely incorporated as assumptions; other commentaries, however, openly proclaim such links. The description of the countryside around Taranto in Henry Swinburne's *Travels in the Two Sicilies* (1783-5), for example, directly associates tameness and insipidity with England at the same time as it registers disappointment in these qualities, and defines the desired quality of 'boldness' as an expected attribute of Italy: 'the banks that inclose the bay are so gently sloped off as to create no very striking effect; there is a tameness in the prospect not unlike the insipidity of the artificial lakes and elegant swells in our fashionable gardens in England, totally different from the bold beauties of Italian landscape.'

Part of the commentary on Ancona in Hester Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany* (1789) accomplishes the same overt identification of insipidity with the traveller's own country, and of more striking qualities with Italy: 'Objects of show are . . . unfrequent in England, and a foreigner who travels through our country in search of positive sights, will, after much money spent, go home
but poorly entertained:—"There is neither quaresima," will he say, "nor carnovale in any sense of the word, among these insipid islanders."."^8

Censure and guilt

Whereas the discourse of European travel, on the one hand, imposes a demand for expressions of pleasure, and even allows that pleasure to be specified as an escape from 'tameness', it also, on the other hand, demands that the traveller's pleasure in the foreign should be constantly interrupted and disrupted, through expressions of censure. Censorious and condemnatory remarks—often of an extremely vehement nature—play a very large part indeed in commentary on Italy throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Such remarks serve to deny that the foreign is in fact being claimed as a source of pleasure, even though the commentary in which they are included may at the same time be engaged in a vigorous attempt to demonstrate that the traveller is successfully extracting pleasure from the foreign.

It is possible to read these expressions of censure not simply as denials of pleasure but also as metalepses for guilt—a guilt which attaches itself to the pleasures of travel, and makes it necessary to deny these pleasures. Such a reading would follow that which Freud adopts in interpreting part of his own response to the foreign in the essay 'A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis' (1936). The essay describes some of Freud's experiences while on holiday with his younger brother. At Trieste, the two travellers meet an acquaintance who suggests that they should go on to Athens (rather than to Corfu, their less distant original destination). They discuss this plan, see 'nothing but difficulties in the way of carrying it out', and find themselves 'in remarkably depressed spirits'. Freud describes these reactions as 'no more than an expression of incredulity': 'We're going to see Athens? Out of the question!—it will be far too difficult!' Despite this sense of overwhelming difficulty, they book passages to Athens as soon as the Lloyd offices open.\(^9\)

The essay then goes on to analyse a further response—a 'doubt of reality' formulated by Freud when they have reached Athens, and are standing on the Acropolis. This 'derealization' is identified as a mechanism of defence, which, by bringing about a
disturbance of memory, serves to ‘disavow’ the distressing boyhood experience of doubt as to whether Freud would ever be able to enjoy the escape from the familiar which he is now accomplishing. In examining his past distress, Freud also examines the specific form of pleasure which would have provided relief from that distress:

It is not true that in my schooldays I ever doubted the real existence of Athens. I only doubted whether I should ever see Athens. It seemed to me beyond the realms of possibility that I should travel so far—that I should ‘go such a long way’. This was linked up with the limitations and poverty of our conditions of life in my youth. My longing to travel was no doubt also the expression of a wish to escape from that pressure, like the force which drives so many adolescent children to run away from home. I had long seen clearly that a great part of the pleasure of travel lies in the fulfilment of these early wishes—that it is rooted, that is, in dissatisfaction with home and family.\(^{10}\)

This analysis of his ‘longing to travel’ leads Freud to solve ‘the little problem of why it was that already at Trieste we interfered with our enjoyment of the voyage to Athens’: ‘It must be that a sense of guilt was attached to the satisfaction in having gone such a long way: there was something about it that was wrong, that from earliest times had been forbidden.’ (The guilt is then defined as ‘something to do with a child’s criticism of his father, with the undervaluation which took the place of the overvaluation of earlier childhood’.)\(^{11}\)

The essay, then, interprets the disruption of pleasure, at Trieste, as an effect which must necessarily bear the imprint of some concealed cause. It is able to identify that cause once it examines the form of pleasure which is disrupted—the pleasure of travel—and discerns a guilt attached to that pleasure.

Travel writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries strongly encourages an analogous interpretation of the disruption of censure which is accomplished by expressions of pleasure. It offers this encouragement by regularly appending to descriptions of the foreign a form of commentary which—like the passage from Freud’s ‘Disturbance of Memory’ quoted above—subjects the pleasures of travel to close scrutiny. Such passages of scrutiny, which are usually found in the prefaces and conclusions of travel books, invariably identify a guilt which attaches itself to these pleasures. While the traveller uttering the commentary
seldom acknowledges a personal burden of culpability, he or she regularly refers in general terms to the blameworthiness of too eager a pursuit of new and unfamiliar objects, and the reprehensible foolishness of an abandonment of the solid advantages of England for the excitement and entertainment of the foreign. The preface to Samuel Evers's *Journal Kept on a Journey from Bassora to Bagdad* (1784), for example, defines the 'love of novelty' which generates a desire to travel as the product of human weakness and faultiness: 'Man is a creature too imperfect and unsteady to be invariably content: he is ever restless in pursuit, ever wandering with ceaseless avidity from one object to another!'¹²

By defining any derivation of pleasure from the foreign as one attended by guilt, such passages inscribe a guilt within the traveller's own attempt, in uttering the commentary, to claim the foreign as a source of pleasure. They therefore provide a 'cause' which attaches itself to any linguistic 'effect'—such as an expression of censure—which jeopardizes this attempt.¹³

The recognition of a guilt which accompanies the pleasures of travel—and produces disruptions of these pleasures—entails, of course, a corresponding recognition of the pleasures themselves. Freud's 'Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis' devotes rather more attention to the pleasures than to the guilt—as might be expected from an interpretation of commentary on the foreign within a piece of travel writing published during the 1930s—when, as noted above, acknowledgements of the pleasures of the foreign were subjected to relatively few constraints.

In all commentaries on the topography of the Grand Tour, therefore, the position of the subject who utters the commentary constantly shifts between that of a traveller eager to find enjoyment in the spectacle which the foreign provides, and that of a traveller vigorously condemning all that he or she encounters—but nonetheless, by means of this very strategy of condemnation, indirectly acknowledging the pleasure which the condemnation serves to disrupt.

*Censure and the forbidden: excess and transgression*

Since expressions of pleasure are extremely common in literature of the Grand Tour, it is clearly necessary that expressions of censure, if they are to have any success at all in disrupting the
traveller’s derivation of pleasure from the foreign, and denying any desertion or rejection of the familiar, should also be allowed to proliferate. Seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century accounts of the countries of the Grand Tour—above all, of Italy—are, in fact, full of extreme condemnation. The imaginative topography of the Grand Tour is mapped out as a fantasmatique *mise-en-scène* of the forbidden. Throughout these two centuries, an element of censoriousness is included in many different areas of commentary: in the criticism of the works of art which the traveller encounters in Italy, for example, and in description of the landscape, as well as in accounts of society and manners. It is in discussion of this last domain of objects, however, that the most unrestrained and unequivocal censure is to be found.

The designation of the topography of the Grand Tour as a *mise-en-scène* of the forbidden fulfills the paradoxical function of defining this topography as the source of a further pleasure, distinct from the pleasure of escape. The censure which affirms the forbidden character of Italy also serves to claim that country for the enjoyment of the traveller—and reader—as a source of intense fascination, and of highly pleasurable speculation.

In order to establish the equation between the foreign and the forbidden, and to elaborate the rhetoric of censure into a structure of argument which allows the traveller to linger over it, commentary on the foreign assigns a dominant role to two themes: the themes of excess and transgression.

Neither of these themes entirely excludes the acknowledgement of entertaining elements in the spectacle of the forbidden which the foreign provides. Recognition of the attractions of the forbidden is not subjected to the same absolute prohibition which is imposed on direct expressions of a desire to escape the familiar. Such a recognition is, nevertheless, always strictly limited: admissions of the entertainment-value of the forbidden are invariably incorporated within passages of commentary in which unequivocal censure predominates.

Excess of some kind is identified by travellers in a number of different features of the topography of the Grand Tour—in Baroque painting and architecture, for example, and in extremes of wealth and poverty. The accounts of excess which confirm most strongly the ‘forbidden’ nature of the foreign, however, are those which concentrate on the passions. A tendency to indulge
all the passions to an immoderate extent is regularly identified as a distinctive feature of the Italian character.\textsuperscript{15} Extremes of sensuality and extremes of religious devotion, are usually defined as the two forms of excessiveness most often encountered by the traveller in Italy: lust and ‘superstition’ are classified as equivalent, interchangeable, and equally culpable outlets for the inclination towards immoderation which travellers observe in the inhabitants of the various Italian cities, or of Italy as a whole. Piozzi’s \textit{Observations and Reflections}, for example, asserts that ‘there are more devotees, perhaps, and more doating mothers at Venice than any where else, for the same reason as there are more females who practise gallantry, only because there are more women who do their own way, and follow unrestrained where passion, appetite or imagination lead them’\textsuperscript{16}

While the theme of excess is concerned with the degree to which a passion is indulged, the theme of transgression—a theme more strictly confined to the domain of society and manners—depends on the definition of that indulgence as an infringement of a prohibition. The use of this theme is made possible by the fact that commentary on the countries of the Grand Tour—unlike commentary on the primitive and exotic—always assumes that the inhabitants of the regions visited possess moral codes which include all the more general rules and principles in operation in the traveller’s native land. The prohibitions which travellers describe Italians failing to observe, therefore, are prohibitions which, it is assumed, are acknowledged as such in Italy, but are nevertheless transgressed.

The Italians, however, are also presented as a people whose moral codes impose on them a number of supplementary prohibitions and constraints, in addition to those which they share with the English or the French. Far from praising these additional restrictions, travel writings present them as one of the most important causes of transgression: transgressive behaviour is regularly classified as an excess of licence which results from an excess of restraint.

The restraint imposed by the vow of chastity taken by Roman Catholic monks and nuns, for example, is presented as one which is obviously supplementary to those governing human sexuality in Protestant countries, and which ineluctably produces an additional area of transgression, absent from Protestant society. The
existence of this area of transgression is affirmed, throughout the period of the Grand Tour, by a proliferation of references to the sexual desires and activities of monks and nuns. In seventeenth-century commentaries, travellers often cite instances of active infringements of the vow of chastity.\textsuperscript{17} Eighteenth-century accounts of monasticism, on the other hand, seldom claim any certain knowledge of specific transgressions, but include much fascinated speculation on the generation of transgressive desires behind convent walls.\textsuperscript{18}

While these later commentaries are less direct and dramatic in their accounts of excessive licence in monasteries, they place an even greater emphasis on the harsh and misplaced character of the prohibition which is identified as the cause of this excess of freedom. Many commentaries draw attention to the degree of imprisonment required to enforce the observance of monastic vows: accounts of nuns, in particular, present these women as victims, forcibly removed from the pleasures of human society. Elaborate descriptions of the physical attractions of nuns, affirming that these attractions are strongly accentuated by the unhappy fate of the women who possess them, serve to dramatize yet more strongly the cruelty of such a removal.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Greece: censure and pleasure}

The proliferation of censure, in writings on Italy, ensures that expressions of pleasure are never allowed to gain an unchallenged predominance. Since travel to Greece and the western coast of Asia Minor has often been seen as an extension of travel on the Grand Tour, it might be expected that the same proliferation of censure—and the same constant disavowal of pleasure—would be found in descriptions of these slightly more distant and exotic regions.\textsuperscript{20} This is not in fact the case, however. While extreme censure is not entirely absent from the commentaries on Greece, it is far less common than in commentaries on Italy: quite often, the traveller’s criticisms of the Greeks and the lands which they inhabit are comparatively mild.\textsuperscript{21} Expressions of pleasure, meanwhile, are subjected to relatively few restrictions, and are regularly allowed to predominate over censure for extended stretches of commentary.

This redistribution of pleasure and censure as travel writing
moves eastwards produces two especially conspicuous points of divergence from commentary on Italy. First, hyperbolic accounts of the delights of the land and landscape are included in writings on Greece throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Secondly, the introduction of an option of indulgence allows mild amusement to resurge even amidst accounts of excess and transgression.

In the seventeenth century, both Italy and Greece are defined as countries possessed of enormous natural fertility. The traveller's delight in this fertility is affirmed directly, through passages of hyperbolic praise of the terrain, and indirectly, through equally hyperbolic praise of the food and wine which this terrain produces. In eighteenth-century accounts of Italy, such praise of natural fruitfulness becomes very much less frequent: travellers regularly present the land as blighted and laid waste by human mismanagement. While they may praise the landscape for its aesthetic qualities, these qualities are more often linked to wild, mountainous, and barren scenery than to scenes of fertility and cultivation. Once again, the quality of the food and drink offered to the traveller is employed as a metonym for the state of the terrain: frequent complaints about unhappy gastronomic experiences reinforce the insistence that the Italians have failed to exploit the natural advantages of their countryside.

Commentaries on Greece, however, undergo no such historical transformation. In the eighteenth century, travellers continue to utter hyperbolic expressions of delight in response to the fertility of the land, and the foods and wines which bear witness to this fertility.

The option of indulgence—an option which is usually adopted within commentary on society and manners—produces a less spectacular proliferation of pleasure than this retention of hyperbole; rather than banishing censure altogether, it accomplishes a partial suspension of censure, which enables the possibility of a response of muted pleasure to be raised even when the traveller is providing an account of foreign excess or transgression. The description of the Greeks of Chios in George Sandys's Relation of a Journey (1615), for example, employs an account of pleasure manifested within the topography itself to raise the expectation of a corresponding pleasure in the traveller's response to it—a device which is often adopted, in writings of the
extended Grand Tour, in order to register indulgence towards Greek excesses of festivity without committing the traveller to an open admission of pleasure or approbation. In the absence of any form of overt censure, the accumulation of details of Chian 'jollitie' allows the Chian Greeks to be defined as a people who possess, at least, the attraction of providing an entertaining spectacle for the traveller:

They are in a manner releast of their thraldome, in that unsensible of it: well meriting the name of Merry Greeks, when their leisure will tollerate. Never Sunday or holyday passes over without some publike meeting or other: where intermixed with women, they dance out the day, and with full crownd cups enlengthen their jollitie: not seldome passing into Asia, and the adjoyning llands, unto such assemblies. The streets do almost all the night long partake of their musicke. And whereas those of Zant do go armed into the field to bring home their vintage; these bring home theirs with songs and rejoycings.25

The description of Greek excesses of 'joyaunce' in Canto II of Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812), employs this same strategy of enumeration of pleasures, in a form which defines the response of the traveller who utters the commentary as one of yet greater indulgence: the expected correspondence between delight within the topography and delight as a reaction to it is confirmed by an enraptured account of the joys of 'young Love', in which the traveller identifies completely with the attitude of the Greeks themselves. The response of pleasure is then classified as one which exceeds the permissible degree of lenity and tolerance, and must therefore be disclaimed, by a sudden shift to censure. By following this plot of sudden reversal, however, the traveller's delight is defined retrospectively as all the more spontaneous and powerful an eruption of feeling, breaking through the restraints of rational reflection:

Glanced many a light caique along the foam,
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
No thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, return'd the pressure still:
Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem Life's years of ill!

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain...

26
One of the instances of Greek transgressions which is regularly described from a position of indulgence is the proclivity for thieving which is attributed to the inhabitants of Cape Matapan, or Mani. Sir George Wheler’s *Journey into Greece* (1682) presents this trait as a source of ‘many diverting stories’, including a narrative in which ‘an old woman’ at whose house some travellers are staying bursts into tears before her guests, and tells them, in answer to their sympathetic inquiries, that ‘her weeping was because her Son was not at home, to rob them of their baggage’.\(^{27}\) In *A Voyage Performed by the Late Earl of Sandwich round the Mediterranean* (1799), the traveller adopts an attitude of yet greater tolerance and detachment towards the Maniotes:

> Their poverty makes them guilty of a vice, which probably, were they in a more flourishing condition, they would abhor. They are extremely given to thieving, though they seldom murder but upon an absolute necessity; abstracting this, they are a very tractable people, and endowed with many good qualities, of which the more refined part of the world is destitute.\(^{28}\)

**Greek slavery and Turkish oppression**

What, then, are the elements in the rhetorical structure of commentary on Greece which allow this relatively unrestricted proliferation of pleasure, both in descriptions of the terrain and in accounts of society and manners? It might be suggested that one precondition for the redistribution of pleasure and censure is the definition of Greece as the victim of Turkish oppression—a definition which would seem to allow censure of the Greeks themselves to be displaced by censure of the oppressors. Such a displacement would constitute an earlier instance of a strategy which comes into use in commentary in Italy in the early nineteenth century, when the blame for various national and regional deficiencies is often deflected onto foreign occupying forces.\(^{29}\)

Accounts of Greece do, in fact, contain a great deal of censure of the Turks, and, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, regularly define Turkish oppression as the source of many of the evils to be discerned by the traveller in Greece.\(^{30}\) A few late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century commentaries maintain, in addition, that the iniquities of the Turks provide a reason for judging the Greeks less harshly, and argue that the Greeks would be capable of regeneration if they were to
be freed from Turkish domination.\textsuperscript{31} Even in these later writings, however, claims of this kind are always defined as contentious ones, in need of especially vigorous defence. In earlier accounts of Greece, the option of arguing that the reprehensible behaviour of the Turks must serve to exonerate the victims of their oppressive rule is entirely excluded. Very often, both in earlier and later discussions of the region, references to Turkish tyranny, far from displacing censure of the Greeks, are employed as a means of emphasizing the need for such censure. Commentaries on Greece regularly condemn the victims of oppression precisely because of their oppressed state: the Greeks are strongly berated either for traits of character which are seen as perpetuating their ‘slavery’ or for qualities which are presented as the unpalatable results of their abject condition. Sandys’s \textit{Relation of a Journey}, adopting the first of these two strategies, complains that the Greeks have allowed their ancient ‘liberty’ to be converted ‘into contented slavery, having lost their minds with their Empire’\textsuperscript{32}. Following the second option, Charles Savary’s \textit{Lettres sur la Grèce} (1788) describes the Greek inhabitants of Rhodes as possessing ‘tous les vices qui naissent de la servitude’: ‘accoutumés à plier sans cesse sous le sceptre qui les écrase, ils deviennent faux, fourbes, menteurs’.\textsuperscript{33}

References to Turkish oppression do, nonetheless, play a part in diminishing the need for censure. It has already been noted that one of the constraints limiting the expression of pleasure in commentary on the Grand Tour was the prohibition on ever investing the foreign with any overall superiority to the familiar. In other words, it is necessary that the commentary should never challenge the assumption that the places visited by the traveller are, in some general, fundamental sense—inferior to his or her own country. In descriptions of Greece—as in early nineteenth-century descriptions of Italy—repeatd allusions to servitude establish the inferiority of the foreign so securely that expressions of pleasure, however effusive, are deprived of their power to undermine this assumption. The restrictions on these expressions of pleasure therefore lose one of their main strategic functions, and can more easily be lifted.\textsuperscript{34}

The weakening of the theme of transgression

References to Turkish oppression not only allow restrictions on the expression of pleasure to be relaxed: they also play a part in a
radical weakening of the theme of transgression. This theme, as already noted, depends on the assumption that the transgressors possess moral codes which include the same general principles as those in operation in the traveller's own country—and also, in addition, possess various supplementary prohibitions of their own. Writings on Greece, however, make very few references to rules of conduct possessed by the Greeks themselves; where prohibitions influencing their behaviour are described by travellers, these prohibitions are usually presented as one of the products of Turkish rule, imposed on unwilling natives. Lord Charlemont's description of the women of Lesbos, for example, concludes from their 'bold manly air', and lack of attention to 'decent modesty', that 'there is every reason to suppose that they could, in spite of their haughtiness, be the kindest ladies upon earth, if they were not strictly watched by the Turks, who . . . would be ready to punish any transgression of their ungalant laws with arbitrary fines'.

Writings on Greece do, in fact, contain fairly numerous accounts of monasticism—an institution which, in writings on Italy, provides one of the main starting-points for an elaboration of foreign transgressions. Far from describing an excess of restraint which produces an excess of licence, however, commentaries on Greek Orthodox monasteries often note the comparative absence of regulation and control—an absence which leaves monks and nuns with relatively few prohibitions to transgress. A description of a convent on the island of Chios in Richard Pococke's *Description of the East* (1743-5), for example, observes that the nuns 'may go out when they please, as they often do, and live some months in the houses of their friends; the gates are open, and all have access, and that without any scandal'.

This lack of any emphasis on prohibitions generated by the Greeks themselves does not, of course, prevent commentaries on Greece from discerning moral lapses on the part of the inhabitants of that country: these lapses are readily identified as such by reference to the rules of behaviour operating in the traveller's own country. In the absence of self-imposed prohibitions and restrictions, however, such lapses are defined as entirely unremarkable: Greek transgressions are regularly deprived of any strong element of drama by an indication that the Greeks themselves do not perceive them as forbidden forms of conduct—or,
alternatively, by the assumption that nothing better could be expected of a people whose moral values are so vestigial and uncertain.

Pierre Guys’s *Voyage littéraire de la Grèce* (1771), for example, quotes a description of an unusual marriage custom on Lesbos, supplied by ‘un voyageur, homme d’esprit’, which places some emphasis on the ease with which local religious scruples are satisfied:

Vous ne savez peut-être pas que dans la même Isle, à trois journées de Métélin, est une petite ville où tout étranger qui arrive est contraint de prendre une femme, ne dût-il y passer qu’une nuit. On lui présente une fille, et si c’est un homme de quelque importance, on lui donne à choisir. Si c’est un homme du peuple, on le force à prendre la fille qu’on lui donne, qui alors est la plus âgée ou la plus délaissée du canton. Il vient un Prêtre qui les marie très sérieusement, on fait le festin de la noce, et les mariés couchent ensemble. Le mari part, s’il veut, dès le lendemain. . . La vérité est que, dans cette ville, une fille ne trouve à se bien marier, au’après qu’elle a couché avec un étranger. . . Tout ce que la religion chrétienne a pu changer dans cet usage, c’est que les Papas one gagné qu’au moins la cohabitation seroit précédée d’un mariage dans les formes; au moyen de quoi le Prêtre, les mariés, et les parens sont tous en sûreté de conscience.37

This absence of any local perception of sinfulness does not prevent Guys from condemning such a custom—and indignantly denying its fascinations—but it does prevent him from defining it as vicious or transgressive; it is presented, instead, as merely ridicule. (‘Je ne serois nullement tenté de vérifier, sur les lieux, cette ridicule coutume, qui ne peut avoir été établie que par un peuple grossier, barbare, ignorant, sans moeurs. . .’)38

The weakening of the theme of transgression is particularly evident in commentaries on women. In accounts of Italy, descriptions of the transgressive behaviour of women occupy a central role within the representation of the foreign as a *mise-en-scène* of the forbidden. Since the prohibitions which are placed on women are stronger and more numerous than those placed on men, female Italians are defined as more obvious candidates for transgression. The assumption that it is entirely natural and appropriate that they should be subjected to this greater force of prohibition, moreover, allows the transgressions of women to be defined as yet more shocking than those of men.39

Female transgression, then, is classified as the most extreme
instance of the forbidden which the topography of the Grand Tour has to offer. As such, it is invested with a fascination far greater than that located in any other aspect of Italian women. The behaviour of these women—in particular, their sexual behaviour—is scrutinized very much more thoroughly than—for example—their physical appearance.

The sexual behaviour of Greek women, however, since it can only be assigned a relatively low degree of transgressiveness, is invested with a correspondingly low degree of fascination. Accounts of female departures from chastity are offered casually and calmly, without any great display of shock—or even of interest. Charles de Sainte Maure's *Nouveau voyage de Grèce* (1724), for example, comments blandly on the small island of 'Argentière [sic]': 'Il est rempli de femmes et de filles, qui s'y donnent, dit-on, à bon marché, et qui travaillent en toile et en bas de Coton qui ne valent rien: je leur en ai acheté pourtant quelques paires, mais c'est tout le Commerce que j'ai voulu faire avec elles.'

The removal of fascination from female sexual lapses allows the sexual conduct of women to be supplanted, as a primary object of attention, by female beauty and costume. As the traveller moves on to each new locality, he or she invariably assesses both the physical appearance of the women and the aesthetic merits of their clothing—but does not necessarily embark on any accompanying assessment of their virtue.

*Local variation, and the discovery of primitive simplicity*

The rhetoric of censure is subjected to yet further restrictions, in commentary on Greece, by the fragmentation of the topography into a multiplicity of quite distinct localities. While travel writings do, from time to time, provide classifications of the Greek people as a whole, they also attribute to the people of different localities forms of behaviour which may be in direct contrast to these overall classifications—and also to each other. (Accounts of Italy, of course, regularly assign specific characteristics to the inhabitants of different cities, but these characteristics are usually very similar in each case, and serve to reinforce the general classification of the Italian people as excessive and transgressive, rather than to contradict this classification.)

This admission of local variation enables commentary on
Greece to make regular appeals to a discourse quite distinct from the discourses employed to order knowledge of specific geographical areas of the foreign: the discourse of primitivism. Since the objects of primitivism are defined by reference to a historical model of the advance of civilization, rather than by reference to geographical divisions of the world, the boundaries of the primitive cut across the boundaries imposed by these 'geographical' discourses—such as the adapted version of the discourse of European travel which serves to organize what can be said or written about Greece. Travel writings regularly chart the discovery of an 'island' of primitive simplicity within the topography of Greece as a whole. Where such a discovery is made, the constraints of the discourse of European travel—in its adapted, extended form—can be entirely lifted.

These 'islands' of the primitive almost always coincide with actual, geographical islands: the fragmentation within the physical geography of Greece provides an endorsement of the fragmentation within its moral geography. Sandys's *Relation of a Journey* identifies the island of Lesbos as the site of a happy, primitive way of life, while Savary's *Lettres sur la Grèce* provides a long and enraptured account of the uncorrupted condition of the Greeks living on the island of Casos. This latter description places an especially strong emphasis on geographical isolation, as a factor essential to the preservation of primitive simplicity: ‘Au milieu des esclaves courbés sous le joug des Ottomans, j'ai trouvé un rocher de trois lieues de circuit, où le Turc n'ose aborder, et où vit une peuplade fortunée.’

When Byron's *Don Juan*, in Canto II (1819), describes the beautiful young Haidée living as 'nature's bride', untainted by any knowledge of the 'unnatural situation' of women in more civilized societies, he sets this description of her state of paradisal innocence on 'one of the wild and smaller Cyclades'—an island which has 'a high and rocky coast', and which is reached by the hero only as the chance result of a shipwreck.

In lifting the constraints usually imposed on writings about the foreign, the appeal to primitivism makes possible a complete suspension of censure—as opposed to the partial suspension achieved by the option of indulgence. The discovery of a region of primitive simplicity is defined as an event which necessarily prompts the traveller to re-examine, question, or criticize the
values of the ‘civilized’—a category which can include the familiar, as well as many portions of the foreign. In order to facilitate the critical scrutiny of the civilized, the discourse of primitivism imposes a demand that the subject of commentary should always recognize virtues within the primitive, without imposing any corresponding demand for the recognition of vice: the primitive is, by definition, that which remains uncorrupted by civilization. Censure and condemnation can therefore be entirely displaced by pleasure.

The two themes by which censure is usually introduced into accounts of the foreign, moreover, are, even in their modified, ‘indulgent’ forms, entirely excluded from the description of the primitive. The discourse of primitivism requires that these two themes should be transferred to the ‘civilized’, and placed in direct opposition to the category of primitive innocence. Although accounts of excess and transgression are occasionally incorporated in descriptions of ‘primitive’ regions, the inclusion of these themes is always accompanied by a temporary abandonment of the appeal to primitivism, so that the topography is re-defined as part of the corrupted, or ‘civilized’ foreign. (In the Haidée episode in Don Juan, the simultaneous adoption and abandonment of the discourse of primitivism produces a paradoxical description of Juan and Haidée as ‘happy in the illicit / indulgence of their innocent desires’.)

In descriptions which appeal to the discourse of primitivism, therefore, sharp oppositions are regularly constructed between the excessiveness or transgressiveness of the civilized and the moderation or innocence of the primitive. Sandys’s Relation of a Journey, for example, describes the people of Lesbos through an extended account of the absence of excess amongst them:

A happie people, that live according to nature; and want not much, in that they covet but little. Their apparell no other than linnen breeches; over that a smocke close girt unto them with a towell; putting on sometimes when they go ashore, long sleevelesse coates of home-spun cotten. Yet their backs need not envie their bellies; Biscot, Olives, Garlicke, and Onions being their principall sustanance. Sometimes for change they will scale the rocks for Sampier, and search the bottome of the lesse deepe seas for a certaine little fish (if I may so call it) shaped like a burre... Their ordinarie drinke being water: yet once a day they will warme their blouds with a draught of wine, contented as well with this, as those that with the rarities of the earth do pamper their voracities... When they wil
they worke, and sleepe when they are wearie: the banke that they row
upon, their couches . . . hardned by use against heat and cold, which day
and night interchangeably inflictheth. So chearfull in povertie, that they
will dance whilst their legs will beare them, and sing till they grow
hoarse: secured from the cares and feares that accompanie riches.48

In Savary’s description of the virtuous simplicity of the people
of Casos, the theme of excess is directly excluded by a reference to
the absence of the extremes imposed by a ‘civilized’ social hierar-
chy: the island, we are told, is populated by citizens ‘qui sont tous
égaux, et qui ne connoissent ne la pauvreté ni la richesse’.49

Haidée’s state of primitive simplicity in Canto II of Don Juan is
defined as one which specifically excludes the possibility of trans-
gression: the awareness of rules which is an essential precondition
of transgression is presented as the product of a knowledge of evil
which Haidée, in her state of ‘pure ignorance’, cannot possible
possess:

Haidee spoke not of scruples, ask’d no vows,
Nor offer’d any; she had never heard
Of plight and promises to be a spouse,
Or perils by a loving maid incurr’d;
She was all which pure ignorance allows,
And flew to her young mate like a young bird;
And, never having dreamt of falsehood, she
Had not one word to say of constancy.50

Deflection to the past

One of the factors which plays an especially important role in
redistributing censure and pleasure is the deflection to the past
which is found in writings on Greece—a deflection which takes
place much more frequently than in writings on Italy, and which
accomplishes a much more complete elision of the present.

In the seventeenth century, the deflection to the past is usually
immediate: one of the rhetorical options available to the traveller,
during this period, is simply to name a place visited, and then,
without further explanation or preamble, to embark on an ac-
count of the mythological and historical events for which it is
‘famous’. Sandys’s description of the Hellespont, for example,
characterizes Sestos and Abydos as ‘formerely famous for the
unfortunate loves of Hero and Leander, drowned in the uncom-
passionate surges, and sung by Musaeus.’51
Allusions to the present state of the place described are frequently incorporated into such passages of deflection, but these allusions never call into question the assumption that it is the past, above all else, which serves to define this location, and to endow it with its characteristic drama and 'fame'. The ability of the past to imprint itself on the topography does not depend in any way on the presence of material vestiges of previous epochs: the description of the Dardanelles and Cape Sigaeum in Sir Henry Blount's *Voyage into the Levant* (1636) notes the complete absence of any such vestiges on the site of Troy, but strongly affirms the power of the mythological 'fictions' attached to the 'famed Towne' to 'uphold themselves' despite this absence:

About some fortie miles Sayle forth of that streight, on the Asian side, we reacht Cape lanizar, anciently Promontorium Sigaeum, where Troy stood, of which nothing remains to be seene, but a piece of an old stone wall some fortie or fiftie paces long, hard by the Sea, and therefore said by Virgil to have beene built by Neptune: So hath that famed Towne now put on immortalitie, having no existence, but in Poetry: whose fictions by complying with the fancy of man, uphold themselves beyond the Realitie of their Subject.52

The strategy of immediate deflection is still occasionally employed in the eighteenth century—usually in a modified form, in which some explanation, excuse, or apology is offered for the choice of the past as the preferred object of commentary.53 More often, however, this strategy is replaced by the assessment of the topography for evidence of continuity with the past. Eighteenth-century travel writings register an extremely insistent desire to discover a continuity of this kind: almost every spot on the topography, and almost every social custom, is scrutinized to see whether it bears the traces of classical civilization. In commentary on Greek society and manners, the pleasure attached to the discovery of continuity is invested with a powerful ability to displace censure: such a discovery regularly serves to situate the traveller in a position of indulgence within accounts of excess and transgression. Travel writings proclaim with cheerful equanimity, for example, the realization that the modern Greeks drink just as excessively as their classical predecessors, while the indulgence accorded to the Mainotes, in accounts of their proclivity for robbery, is sometimes justified by the argument that, in this trait as in others, they resemble their ancestors, the ancient Spartans.54
The pleasure of discerning continuity, therefore, is defined as a far stronger one than in writings in Italy, in which the topography is only intermittently scrutinized for traces of the past, and in which the discovery of points of resemblance between the modern Italians and the ancient Romans does not in any way facilitate the exclusion of censure and condemnation from the commentary.55

The desire to be able to view the topography as continuous with that of classical Greece is not, however, one which is uninterruptedly satisfied in eighteenth-century writings. Commentary on Greece, during this period, constantly alternates between acclamation of the presence of the past and disappointment at its absence—an alternation which is often found even within the description of a single spot. In a passage in Thomas Watkins’s Travels (1792), for example, the traveller progresses from a rapturous identification of part of the Greek coastline with the same locality many centuries earlier to a regretful realization that the contemporary and ancient topographies do not in fact coincide:

When I got upon the morning of our arrival, I beheld the object I most desired to see, I beheld, oh let me write it in Italicks, The main Land of Greece, the Peloponnesus; and never did the appearance of any country give more delight. As I gazed upon the coast of Elis, not many miles from that sacred place in which the Olympic games, the nurse of Grecian virtue and enterprise, were celebrated, the melancholy reflection of its departed glory succeeded the joy I at first felt. I looked stedfastly upon it, my remembrance made my sorrow insupportable, and I burst into tears.56

Where continuity is succeeded by discontinuity, the topography is still, of course, defined as one which acquires its identity through its relation to the past: the traveller still registers a desire for rediscovery of the ancient world which, even when such a rediscovery is presented as impossible, precludes any strong interest in alternative, non-historical objects of commentary.

One of the commonest strategies by which the discontinuity with the past is proclaimed is the expression of melancholy. (An element of censure is sometimes incorporated in accounts of discontinuity, especially in commentary on society and manners, but this censure is necessarily muted: too strong an expression of condemnation would invest the topography with the drama and excitement of the forbidden, and destroy its classification as a domain of emptiness and absence.) Melancholy reflections on the
failure of the past to resurge within the present are regularly incorporated in descriptions of ruins, as well as in other accounts of departed splendour, animation, virtue, or heroism. Savary’s account of the city of Patara, in Asia Minor, for example, defines this city almost entirely by reference to the elements of ancient life which have been removed from it: ‘Tel est, Madame, l’état déplorable de cette antique cité autrefois florissante. Son port dépourvu de vaisseaux, ce magnifique amphithéâtre sans spectateurs, ces ruines amoncelées, ces tombeaux mêmes dépouillés des corps qu’ils conservoient, inspirent de tristes réflexions aux curieux qui les contemplent.’

Writings on Italy are, of course, also full of descriptions of classical ruins, and of melancholy comparisons between past and present. Ruins in Italy, however, are usually defined as objects which are of interest not only because of their associations with classical civilization but also because of the aesthetic qualities which they display in their contemporary, ruined state—qualities such as vastness or irregularity, which allow them to be defined as instances of the sublime or the picturesque. Classical ruins in Greece, on the other hand, are rarely scrutinized for their aesthetic attributes: where the traveller does in fact embark on such a scrutiny, it is almost always presented as a secondary method of assessment, subordinate to the examination of the ruins for traces of the past.

Descriptions of Greek ruins, moreover, also make use of a second option, which is entirely absent from commentary on Italy, and which establishes a more absolute division between past and present. While the expression of melancholy necessarily entails some form of imaginative reconstruction of the past, in order to establish its distance from the present, this second option—the baffled dismissal—defines classical ruins as objects which utterly resist the traveller’s attempts to imagine them in their former condition, or to gain any information about the past from them. In at least two travel books, for example, the traveller describes the remains of a classical building as ‘a confused heap of rubbish’—an epithet which provides a particularly uncompromising gesture of dismissal.

Whether the past is defined as absent or present within contemporary Greece, the traveller’s constant use of ancient Greece as a point of reference makes it impossible for the topography
which the traveller encounters to be defined unequivocally as a topography of the foreign. The ancient world is constantly classified, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as a domain which, while it retains an element of distant exoticism, has nonetheless been rendered familiar by a tradition of classical scholarship and classical education. In Alexander Drummond’s Travels (1754), the traveller claims that, as he lands on Delos, his heart is ‘pierced with real concern, to see the devastations which have been made among such glorious edifices, and which I considered as the ruins of some friend’s habitation’.\(^{60}\) Watkins’s account of Eleusis presents an allusion to the ancient history of the locality in the form of a reminder of something of which the reader can hardly be ignorant: ‘You will recollect that the Eleusinian mysteries, which in their secrecy appear to have been similar to our modern free masonry, were performed there’ (italics added).\(^{61}\)

The topography of Greece is defined, then, as a topography of the foreign within which elements of the familiar constantly promise to resurge. Deflection to the past makes it unnecessary for the traveller to employ frequent and vehement censure as a means of denying the desire to escape the familiar. This desire is denied, instead, by the seeking-out of places which are defined as offering either the certainty or the hope that the traveller will be able to glimpse the reassuring familiarity of the past.

Wherever the topography is described by reference to the past, moreover, any expression of delight is necessarily directed, at least in part, towards the familiar. Pleasure, therefore, is divested of some or all of its burden of guilt, and is, in consequence, freed from many of the restraints which are placed on it in writings on Italy.

London, England

NOTES

Dates given in the text are, in the case of published works, those of the first edition; these dates may, therefore, differ from those of the editions cited in the footnotes.

1. For the purposes of the present analysis, the material under discussion is limited to English and French travel writings. There are, however,
many travel writings of this period in which the traveller's country of origin is defined as a country other than England or France.

The term *imaginative topography* is employed here with reference to Edward Said's use of the term *imaginative geography* to describe the classification of a particular region of the world through the adoption of a 'universe of representative discourse' specific to that region; see Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1978), 49-73. Imaginative geography produces an 'imaginative topography' of the Grand Tour by defining it, on the grounds of real or imagined points of difference, as a region distinct from other regions of the world, such as the domain of the familiar—or, of course, the domain of the more distant and exotic foreign which is mapped out within the discourse of Orientalism.

2. In the seventeenth century, there were few, if any, works of travel literature published which acknowledged female authorship on the title page. Most travel writings of this period make it clear that the subject uttering the commentary is male, and implicitly define travel as a form of education and entertainment enjoyed by men. By the later part of the eighteenth century, however, a great number of travel books proclaim their authors as women, and the subject uttering a description of the foreign can be defined as either male or female.

3. Rousseau's account of the uses of travel in *Emile* (1762) is concerned almost entirely with the acquisition of such a power of comparison. *Emile* lists, for example, 'deux règles faciles et simples pour juger de la bonté relative des gouvernements'. (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile; ou, de l'éducation*, introduced by Michel Launay (Paris, 1966), p. 613.)


5. This discourse, referred to from now on as the 'discourse of European travel', is defined here, with reference to Michel Foucault's *L'archéologie du savoir* (Paris, 1969; see, in particular, 44-101), as a unity recognizable by certain regularities, or 'rules of formation', which determine the range and limits of what it is possible to say about the not-so-distant foreign over a particular historical period.

6. Mary Shelley's journal for 1823, for example, written in London, asks the question:

   Why am I not in Italy—Italian sun & airs & flowers & earth & hopes—they are akin to love enjoyment freedom—exquisite delight—if they are not them they are masked like unto them—but here all wears the hue of grimmest reality—a reality to make me shriek upn the ear of midnight—but I must not—


   In Evelyn Waugh's *Labels: A Mediterranean Journey* (Harmondsworth, 1985; first published in 1930), the traveller reflects on the fact that 'all one finds sympathetic and praiseworthy in one's own age seems barely represented at all in one's own country' (p. 167), and describes the noise of the ship's horn, on the return to England, as 'a very dismal sound, premoni-
tory, perhaps, of coming trouble, for Fortune is the least capricious of deities, and arranges things on the just and rigid system that no one shall be very happy for very long' (p. 168).

Paul Fussell, in *Abroad: British Literary Traveling between the Wars* (New York and Oxford, 1980), 15-23, emphasizes very strongly the desire to escape from England, and the unequivocal rejection of that country, which are expressed in English writings of the twenties and thirties.


8. 2 vols (London, 1789), II, 169. In this passage, the expression of a desire to escape is not only displaced onto a demand for drama and a rejection of the tame, but is then subjected to a further displacement: by attributing the demand and the rejection to a notional 'foreigner' visiting England, the traveller uttering the commentary places herself in sympathy with these responses without fully endorsing them.


12. *A Journal Kept on a Journey from Bassora to Bagdad; over the Little Desert to Aleppo, Cyprus, Rhodes, Zante, Corfu; and Otranto, in Italy; in the Year 1779* (Horsham, 1784), i-ii. See also, for example, John Moore, *A View of Society and Manners in Italy, with Anecdotes relating to some Eminent Characters*, second edition, 2 vols, (London, 1781; first published in 1781), II, 501-2; on II, 402, the traveller expresses regret that 'such numbers of British subjects' are to be found 'roaming discontented through the lands of despotism, in search of that happiness which, if satiety and the wanton restlessness of wealth would permit, they have a much better prospect of enjoying in their own country'.

13. The form of commentary which is found in the passage from Evers's *Journal* is never, of course, extended into the variety of metacommentary offered in Freud's 'Disturbance of Memory', in which the responses to the foreign formulated by the traveller who utters the commentary are themselves adopted as an object of analysis. Whereas Freud identifies his own 'expression of incredulity' as a disruption of pleasure, and links it to a structure of pleasure and guilt, the traveller who utters a commentary on the foreign during the seventeenth or eighteenth century hardly ever makes a direct acknowledgement of a similar disruption of pleasure within his or her own responses of censure, and never links this censure to any further structure of desire.

What travel writings of this period do provide, however, is a direct acknowledgement of the structure of pleasure and guilt itself—an acknowledgement which allows this structuer to be linked to expressions of censure, once these expressions are identified by the reader as disruptions of pleasure.

14. For accounts of excess in Baroque church architecture, see, for example, Anne, Lady Miller, *Letters from Italy, Describing the Manners*,...
Customs, Antiquities, Paintings, &c. of that Country, first edition, 2 vols (London, 1776), I, 98, and Swinburne, Travels in the Two Sicilies, III, 91-2. For a description of the extremes of wealth and poverty, of darkness and light, of 'mirth' and 'penitence' and of rain and sunshine to be found in Italy, see Piozzi, Observations and Reflections, II, 202.

15. The representation of an extremity of vice as characteristic of the Italians is often authenticated by the establishment of a claim to fair-mindedness, in acknowledging an equivalent extremity in more admirable qualities. James Howell's Instructions and Directions for Forren Travell (London, 1650; first published 1642), 54-5, for example, says of the traveller in Italy: 'Here he shall find vertue and vice, Love and hatred, Atheisme and Religion in their extremes; being a witty contemplative people; and Corruptio optimi est pessima. Of the best wines you make the tartest vinegar.' Piozzi's Observations and Reflections, I, 128, formulates the same analogy between excess in the good and excess in the bad: 'In all hot countries ... flowers and weeds shoot up to enormous growths: in colder climes, where poisons can scarce be feared, perfumes can seldom be boasted.'

16. I, 181-2. See also, for example, Moore, View of Society and Manners in Italy, II, 163, in which the traveller describes the influence of the monks on the people of Naples by observing that 'the seeds of superstition thus zealously sown on such a warm and fertile, though uncultivated, soil, sometimes produce the most extraordinary crops of sensuality and devotion that ever were seen in any country'.

17. See, for example, the story appended to the account of Brescia in G[ilbert] Burnet, Some Letters. Containing an Account of what Seemed most Remarkable in Switzerland, Italy, &c. (Amsterdam, 1686 [1687]; first published in Rotterdam, 1686), 119-20:

I was shewed a Nunery [sic] there, which is now under a great disgrace, some years ago a new Bishop coming thither, began with the Visitation of that Nunnery: he discovered two Vaults, by one, men came ordinarily into it: and by another the Nuns that were big went and lay in of Childbed: when he was examining the Nuns severely concerning those Vaults, some of them told him, that his own Priests did much worse.

18. John Moore's View of Society and Manners in Italy (1781), II, 315, for example, comments on Naples:

There are not wanting those who affirm, that the influence of this seducing climate is evident now in as strong a degree as it is described to have been anciently; that it pervades people of all ranks and conditions, and that in the convents themselves:

Even there where frozen chastity retires
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.

(The quotation is taken, in a slightly altered form, from Pope's Eloisa to Abelard, lines 181-2.)
19. An account of a visit to a convent in Patrick Brydone's *Travels through Sicily and Malta*, second edition, 2 vols (London, 1774; first published in 1773), I, 62, claims that 'there is no artificial ornament, or studied embellishment whatever, that can produce half so strong an effect, as the modest and simple attire of a pretty young nun, placed behind a double iron grate' (italics added). In Moore's *View of Society and Manners in Italy*, II, 313, the traveller proclaims: 'The interest you take in a beautiful young woman is heightened on seeing her in the dress of a nun. . . You are moved to pity, which you know is a-kin to love, on seeing a young blooming creature doomed to retirement and self-denial, who was formed by nature for society and enjoyment.'

20. The view that travel to Greece and other countries bordering the Eastern Mediterranean represented—among other things—an extended form of the Grand Tour is put forward, for example, in Barbara Maria Stafford, *Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984), p. 28.

21. The passages of extreme condemnation which are in fact included in writings on Greece, notwithstanding this shift in the balance of pleasure and censure, include George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun An: Dom: 1610. Foure Bookes Containing a Description of the Turkish Empire, of Egypt, of the Holy Land, of the Remote Parts of Italy, and Islands adjoyning thereon, 1615*), p. 77: 'So base they are, as thought it is that they had or remaine as they are, then endure a temporary trouble by prevailing saccours; but would with the Israelites repine at their deliverers. Long after the losse of their other vertues they retained their industry. . . But now they delight in ease, in shades, in dancing and drinking; and no further for the most part endevour their profit, then their bellies compell them. They are generally taxed by the stranger Christians of perfidiousness, insomuch as it is growne into a proverbe, *Chi fida in Grego, sara intriga*.'

See also Thomas Watkins, *Travels through Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, the Greek Islands to Constantinople*, second edition, 2 vols (London, 1794; first published in 1792), II, 327-8: 'Such are the effects of education and government upon national character, that the Greeks are from having been the best of people, now become the worst: for generally speaking, they are the most proud, mean, mercenary, artful, treacherous, and vindictive beings that disgrace humanity.'

22. In Richard Lassels, *The Voyage of Italy; or, a Compleat Journey through Italy*, 2 parts (Paris, 1670), I, 1-2, for example, the traveller describes Italy as 'receiving such gracious lookes from the Sun and Heaven, that if there be any fault in Italy, it is that Mother Nature hath cockered her too much, even to make her become Wanton'.

For an example of hyperbolic praise directed specifically towards the products of fertility, see the description of the 'delicate wines' and 'oranges and lymons, which at once do delight three senses' produced on the 'gratefull . . . soile' of Posilippo, in Sandys, *Relation of a Journey*, p. 262.

includes the comment: 'It grieves one to behold so find a country as the Campania might be made, by a plentiful population, now almost a waste and barren desart' (49-50).

Expressions of pleasure in the wild landscape proliferate in almost all eighteenth-century travel books on Italy: see, for example, Piozzi, Observations and Reflections, II, 154-5 and Brydone, Tour through Sicily and Malta, I, 202-3. By the ruse of constantly presenting wild and barren natural scenery as a source of delight—the delight associated with the sublime—commentary on Italy allows 'savage' nature to be defined as the category of landscape most representative of that country.

For extended eighteenth-century complaints about food, see Sharp, p. 46 and Miller, Letters from Italy, II, 89-90 and 186-7.

24. Evers, Journal, 123-4, for example, comments on Rhodes: 'the country is exceedingly pleasant, cloathed with trees and herbage almost continually green... It is remarkable for the fertility of its soil, producing the best wines, and all sorts of delicious fruits.' In Lord Charlemont's description of Naxos, the part played by human effort in cultivating the terrain—the factor most strongly emphasized in censorious accounts of wasted fertility in Italy—is dismissed as a consideration of little importance in countryside of such superabundant natural fruitfulness:

For though from being deprived of an extensive trade... this island be not so well cultivated as many others, nature has been so profusely lavish in her bounty that there are few regions upon earth which abound more in those inimitable beauties that immediately depend upon her. The country, as in almost all the islands, is very hilly, and the centre of the island is wholly occupied by great mountains finely wooded, from whence descend numberless torrents, which, forming themselves into rivulets, water the whole country, and encourage the luxuriant growth of orange, lemon, and citron trees, olives, pomegranates, mulberries, and figs, with which the delivities are covered, and the valleys, richly and beautifully interspersed and shaded.


For praise of Greek food and wine, see, for example, Charles de Sainte Maure, Nouveau voyage de Grèce, d'Egypte, de Palestine, d'Italie, de Suisse, d'Alsace, et des Pais-Bas (The Hague, 1724), 175-6: 'Chipre seroit un séjour délicieux; les Vins les plus exquis, et le gibier le plus délicat s'y trouvent en abondance'. (In Chios (p. 44), the traveller is given 'plusieurs sortes de Vins qui me font oublier ceux de France'.) [Charles] Savary, Lettres sur le Grèce, faisant suite de celles sur l'Egypte (Paris, 1788), p. 190, notes that the vineyards outside the city of Candia (Iraklion), in Crete, 'donnent la Malvoisie du Mont-Ida, digne d'ornier la table des gourmets': 'Ce vin, peu connu en France, est parfumé, d'un goût très-agréable, et fort estimé dans le pays.'

26. Stanzas 81-2. In *The Works of Lord Byron*, 6 vols (London, 1829), I, 78. Before embarking on the enumeration of details of the festivities, the description of ‘joyaunce’ equivocates between pleasure and censure, anticipating the final adoption of a stance of disapprobation by a melancholy reference to the days when ‘All felt the common joy they now must feign’.


29. In Madame de Stael’s novel *Corinne, ou l’Italie* (1807), for example, the eponymous Italian heroine declares of her native land: ‘Les étrangers de tout temps ont conquis, déchiré ce beau pays, l’objet de leur ambition perpétuelle; et les étrangers reprochent avec amertume à cette nation les torts des nations vaincues et déchirées!’ (edited by Claudine Herrmann, 2 vols (Paris, 1979), I, 151).

30. For accounts of Turkish despotism and the evils which result from it, see, for example, Savary, 33-4 and Watkins, II, 181-2.


32. p. 77. See also, for example, Byron, *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, Canto II (1812), Stanza 76, lines 1-2; Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not / Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?’, in *The Works of Lord Byron*, 6 vols (London, 1829), I, 76.


34. Restrictions on the expression of pleasure are, of course, still required, in order to satisfy the prohibition on too direct or emphatic an expression of the desire to escape.


36. *A Description of the East, and Some Other Countries*, 2 vols (London, 1743-5), II, Part II, Book I, 4-5. Pococke also notes that these nuns ‘cannot profess before they are twenty-five years old . . . some live in the convent without ever taking the vow, or at least not till such time as there is little danger of being induced to break it.’


38. I, 404.

39. Accounts of Italian monasticism almost invariably assume that the transgressive exploits or desires of nuns are, by virtue of their greater shock-value, more interesting than those of monks: travel writings contain many more speculations about life in convents than about life in monasteries.


41. For accounts of the beauty of Greek women, see, for example, Wheler, p. 49 and Watkins, II, 287. For descriptions of their clothing, see de Sainte-Maure, p. 41, Alexander Drummond, *Travels through Different
Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece and Several Parts of Asia, as far as the Banks of the Euphrates, edited by Tobias Smollett (London, 1754), p. 104, and Elizabeth, Lady Craven, A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople (London, 1789), p. 245.

Byron’s Don Juan places the same emphasis on appearance and clothing in its descriptions of the half-Greek, half-Moorish Haidee (see Canto II (1819), stanzas 116-121, Canto III (1821), stanzas 70-76; the second of these descriptions is further elaborated in footnotes). These references—and further quotations and references—are taken from the text of Don Juan in Lord Byron, The Complete Poetical Works, edited by Jerome J. McGann, 5 vols (Oxford, 1980-86), Volume V.

42. For a sharp opposition between the classification of two different regions, see, for example, the comparison between the merriment of Chios and the bellicosity of Zante, in Sandys’s description of the first of these two islands (p. 14).

43. In Moore’s View of Society and Manners in Italy, for example, the traveller emphasizes, in Rome, the sexual transgressiveness which stems from the custom by which a married woman invariably forms a relationship with a cavaliere servente, who escorts her to social occasions, and is allowed ‘to be connected with her in any way but one—he must not be her husband’ (I, 384). In Naples, the traveller’s attention is directed, instead, towards monasticism: ‘It is most likely that the inhabitants of the convents, like the inhabitants in general, indulge in certain pleasures with less scruple or restraint than is usual in some other places’ (II, 162).

Although the specific instances of transgression vary, therefore, the insistence on the sexual transgressiveness of the Italians remains the same.

44. p. 123.

45. Canto II, stanzas 202, 127, 100.

46. An individual commentary may, of course, select a particular region of the civilized as the primary target of attack; nonetheless, the appeal to primitivism always—whether directly or indirectly—emphasizes the disadvantages of the civilized in general.

Isolated regions of primitivism can, of course, be located within a topography which is classified as familiar (for example, within the more remote parts of the British Isles), but these regions are themselves, by virtue of their primitive character, necessarily deprived of familiarity.

47. Canto III (1821), stanza 13.

48. p. 18.

49. 123-4.

50. Canto II, stanza 190. (In the edition cited, Haidee remains unaccented in Canto II, on the ground that ‘the name was not given its customary accent until the first edition of Canto III (V. 690).)

51. p. 25. Sandys also, for example, describes Mount Ida as ‘famous for the judgement of Paris’ (p. 21), and Lemnos as ‘famous for the fabulous fall of Vulcan’ (p. 25). See, too, Wheeler’s account of Cerigo, or Cithaera, as ‘famous for being the Native Country of Venus and Helena’ (p. 47).

53. See, for example, the explanation offered in one of Savary’s letters, describing Rhodes (p. 48): ‘permettez, Madame, que je remonte dans l’antiquité, et que j’expose brièvement à vos regards les principaux traits de son histoire. Ces temps reculés, où l’homme imitateur gravoit des images pour se rappeler des faits, sont le règne de la fable; mais souvenez-vous qu’elle cache presque toujours la vérité sous la voile des allégories.’

54. Indulgent accounts of Greek excess in drinking are found, for example, in Sandys, 78-80, Pococke, II, Part II, Book I, p. 21, and Guys, I, 116, 120, 122. Watkins, II, 177-8 comments on the ‘Magnotti’: ‘They are as free and independent as the ancient Spartans . . . as fond of arms, still wearing on their heads iron helmets, in which they occasionally boil their black broth. They are as addicted to robbery too as their ancestors, and like them think it an honourable act, provided it be done without detection.’

55. See the traveller’s comment on the inhabitants of Rome in Tobias Smollett, Travels through France and Italy, edited by Frank Felsenstein (Oxford, 1981; first published in 1766), p. 243: ‘The corridores, arcades, and even stair-cases of their most elegant palaces, are depositories of nastiness. . . I have a great notion that their ancestors were not much more cleanly.’

56. II, 172-3.


58. See, for example, the description of Rome in Joseph Addison, ‘A Letter from Italy to the Right Honourable Charles Lord Halifax’, lines 73-4, in which the vastness of the ruin cited is indirectly classified as a source of the aesthetic pleasures of grandeur, or sublimity:

An amphitheatre’s amazing height
Here fills my eye with terror and delight.

59. See, for example, Drummond, p. 108 (describing the Temple of Apollo on the island of Delos), and the Earl of Sandwich, p. 43 (describing ruins on Aegina).

60. p. 107.

61. II, 330.