

Home and Movement: A Polemic

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[O]ne comes to recognize the existence of an actual immortality, that of movement . . .

Friedrich Nietzsche: *Human, All Too Human*

Consequently anthropology is only a collection of traveller's tales.

A. R. Louch: *Explanation and Human Action*

Introduction

Michel Butor once suggested that anthropology and narratology meet under the rubric of a new overriding discipline of 'iterology': a science of journeys (1972:7). In this chapter, by way of introducing a number of the intentions and contentions of the volume as a whole, we outline the logic, or a logic, for iterology. We take Butor's suggestion to imply that the study of social life and the study of story-telling might be seen to be bound together by a commensurate interest in the relationship between movement and identity.

Movement and Perception

Quite a long time ago now, Gregory Bateson put it like this: the human brain thinks in terms of relationships. Things and events are secondary, epiphenomena: 'all knowledge of external events is derived from the relationship between them': from the relationships that the brain conceives between them (Bateson and Ruesch 1951:173). To conceive relationships (and so create things) is to move or cause to move things relative to the point of perception (the brain) or relative to other things within the field

of perception. Movement is fundamental to the setting up and the changing of relations by which things gain and maintain and continue to accrue thingness. Indeed, since one of the 'things' that thus comes to exist as an identifiable thing is 'oneself' (the perceiving brain as objectified 'out there'), movement is also fundamental to the thingness, the identity, of the self. Subject and object, perceiver and perceived are intrinsically connected.

Another way of saying this is that the mind operates with and upon differences. Relationships are about differences. Indeed, the word 'idea' is synonymous with 'difference'. If the mind 'treats ideas' (is an aggregate of ideas), then the mind is an aggregation of differences: between ego and alter, between objects in the world. If the mind 'gathers information', then this is data about differences that are seen as making a difference at a particular time.

There are a number of corollaries of this thesis. The first is, that the things that thus derive from movement, relations and differences are material and immaterial alike. Ponds, pots and poems, to the extent that each figures in the life of a social milieu, are all the outcome of engineering movement relative to a point of perception. As Bateson phrases it, all phenomena are 'appearances', for in the world of human behaviour 'to be is to be perceived' (1958:96). Constant movement is the essential characteristic of the way an individual mind perceives and so constructs an environment, whether 'natural' or 'cultural' (cf. Bourdieu 1966:233).

A second corollary is precisely that the mind is 'individual' in this regard. The movement that is engineered is relative to the individual perceiver. Bateson recognizes this by describing the individual mind as 'an energy source' (1972:126), responsible for energizing the events in the world, the movements, that underlie the perception of difference; it is not that the mind is merely being impacted upon by environmental triggers (cf. Minh-ha 1994:23). More generally, each human individual is an 'energy source', inasmuch as the energy of his acts and responses derives from his own metabolic processes, not from external stimuli. It is with this energy, through this movement, and by this construction of relations and objects, that individuals create order and impose it on the universe: human individuals are active participants in their own universe.

A third corollary, then, is that what can be understood by 'order' is a certain relationship, a certain difference, between objects that an individual mind comes to see as normal and normative; it is one of an infinite number of possible permutations, and it is dependent on the eye of the individual perceiver; this may not be what others perceive as orderly. What is random or 'entropic' for one perceiver is orderly, informational, negatively entropic

for another. 'Disorder' and 'order' are statements of relations between a purposive perceiving entity and some set of objects and events; they are determined by individuals' states of mind.

What Bateson established (at least: translated into an anthropological environment from an Existential one) was the fundamental relationship between movement and perception, between movement and energy, between movement and order, and between movement and individuality.

Stationariness and Identity

If these ideas have long been known or at least in circulation within anthropology, then the implication usually drawn from them has been, paradoxically, the relationship between identity and fixity: necessarily and universally finding a stationary point in the environment from which to engineer one's moving, perceiving, ordering and constructing. If we may use the concept of 'home' to refer to that environment (cognitive, affective, physical, somatic, or whatever) in which one best knows oneself, where one's self-identity is best grounded – or worst, or most, or most freely, or most presently, as one deems fit – (cf. Douglas 1984:82; Silverstone, *et al.* 1994:19), then the conventional anthropological understanding has been that to be at home was tantamount to being environmentally fixed. In the construction and promulgation of essential cultures, societies, nations and ethnic groups, being at home in an environment meant being, if not stationary, then at least centred.

Hence the environment comes to be anthropologically depicted as fanning out around the perceiver in concentric circles of greater and lesser degrees of consociality and morality. From Sahlins, then, we get a demarcation of the social groupings of an environment mapped out from a perspectival centre as follows: from 'house' to 'lineage' to 'village' to 'tribe' to 'other tribes' (1968:65). Or again, in terms of the language with which the perceiver classified his environment, Leach offers us a continuum of related terms that place ego 'reassuringly' at the centre of a social space and fan out from there: from 'self' to 'sibling' to 'cousin' to 'neighbour' to 'stranger'; also from 'self' to 'pet' to 'livestock' to 'game' to 'wild animal' (1968:36–7). To be at home in an environment, in short, was to situate the world around oneself at the unmoving centre, with 'contour lines of relevance' in the form of symbolic categories emanating from a magisterial point of perception (cf. Schuetz 1944:500–4). To know (oneself, one's society) it was necessary to gain a perspective on an environment from a single, fixed and homogeneous point of view: to know was to see the world as singular, made proportionate and

subjected to the individual eye, sight and site of the beholder. In short, knowledge was validated by making the eye (and hence the 'I') the still centre of a visually observed world (cf. Ong 1969; Strathern 1992: 9–10).

Even if the actors were nomads, their myths were regarded anthropologically as making of the environment through which they passed a known place, an old place, a proper place, not only fixed in memory but to which their belonging was stationary because permanent, cyclical, normative and traditional; cognitively, they never moved. And even if the actors engaged in ritual journeys outside everyday space and time – rites of passage; pilgrimage; vision quests – in search of sacred centres to their lives (Eliade 1954:12–20), these anti-structural events served in fact to fix them even more; as special, extraordinary, aberrant experiences, the rituals merely emphasized and legitimated an everyday identity that derived from fixity in a social environment. Ritual pilgrims used their moments of (imagined) movement to establish routinely fixed orientations to a world around them (cf. Myerhoff 1974; Yamba 1992). Similarly anti-structural and marginal, finally, were the journeys undertaken between status-groups by actors in hierarchically organized societies (between classes, between professions, between age-grades), for here was movement whose experiential purpose, whose successful conclusion, was eventual stasis. In short, as Lévi-Strauss concluded, myths should be understood as machines for the suppression of the sense of passing time and space, giving on to a fixed point from which the world took and takes shape (1975:14–30); a conclusion Leach would then extend to ritual acts in general (1976:44).

Movement was thus mythologized in anthropology as enabling fixity (cf. Strathern 1981). As cultures were things rooted in time and space (embodying genealogies of 'blood, property and frontiers' (Carter 1992:7–8)), so cultures rooted societies and their members: organisms which developed, lived and died in particular places. Travel, as Auge quipped (with Lévi-Strauss in mind), was something 'mistrusted to the point of hatred' (1995:86).

However, of late there has been a conceptual shift in the norms of anthropological commentary – brought about, perhaps, by the communications revolution of the past forty years and the perspective this gives on to (and itself evinces) of the globalization of culture, of multi-culture replacing national culture: world markets, goods and labour, world politics, world music, taste and fashion, and, not least, world movement; or else brought about by the recent communicative revolution within anthropology *per se*, 'the reflexive turn' which, paradoxically, has seen

the discipline look beyond itself, 'globally', to a world of other disciplines (Literature, Psychoanalysis, Biology) in terms of which it can hope to know itself better.

For a complex movement of people, goods, money and information – 'modernization', the growing global economy, the induced, often brutally enforced, migrations of individuals and whole populations from 'peripheries' towards Euro-American metropolises and Third World cities (cf. Chambers 1994a:16); the migration of information, myths, languages, music, imagery, cuisine, décor, costume, furnishing, above all, persons (cf. Geertz 1986:120–1) – brings even the most isolated areas into a cosmopolitan global framework of socio-cultural interaction. Here, with ways of life 'increasingly influencing, dominating, parodying, translating and subverting one another', there are no traditionally fixed, spatially and temporally bounded cultural worlds from which to depart and to which to return: all is situated and all is moving (Clifford 1986:22).

As Keith Hart argues (1990), the world can no longer be divided up into framed units, territorial segments and the like, each of which shares a distinctive, exclusive culture, a definite approach to life; rather, everyone is now caught between local origins and a cosmopolitan society in which 'all humanity participates'. Emberley concludes (1989:741–85) that notions of space as enclosure and time as duration are 'unsettled', and redesigned as a field of infinitely experimental configurations of 'space-time'; here the old order of 'prescriptive and exclusive places' and 'meaning-endowed duration' dissolves (cf. Kearney 1995).

John Berger (1984) therefore suggests that movement around the globe represents our quintessential experience, while for Minh-ha: 'our present age is one of exile' (1994:13–14). Exile, emigration, banishment, labour migrancy, tourism, urbanization and counter-urbanization are the central motifs of modern culture, while being rootless, displaced between worlds, living between a lost past and a fluid present, are perhaps the most fitting metaphors for the journeying, modern consciousness: 'typical symptoms of a modern condition at once local and universal' (Nkosi 1994:5).

Moreover, to bring together current forms of movement in this fashion, as Berger does, is not inevitably to essentialize movement: to claim 'it' is somehow always the same, an effect *sui generis*. Movement remains a polythetic category of experience: diverse, and without common denomination in its particular manifestations. Nor is it to underrate either the forces eventuating in large-scale population movement in the past (famine, plague, crusade, imperial conquest, urbanization, industrialization), or the forces arrayed against movement in the present (restrictive or repressive state or community institutions, state or community borders

per se). To talk about the ubiquitous experience of movement is not to deny power and authority, and the differential motivations and gratifications in that experience that hierarchy might give on to. Rather, what Berger draws our attention to is the part movement plays in our modern imagination, and in our imaging of the modern. Movement is the quintessence of how we – migrants and autochthones, tourists and locals, refugees and citizens, urbanites and ruralites – construct contemporary social experience and have it constructed for us. As Iain Chambers concludes, wandering the globe is not now the expression of a unique tradition or history, for the erstwhile particular chronicles of diasporas – those of the black Atlantic, of metropolitan Jewry, of mass rural displacement – have come to constitute the broad ground swell of modernity; modern culture is practised through, and the work of, wandering (1994a:16). And hence anthropology has had increasing recourse to such concepts as ‘creolization’ and ‘compression’, ‘hybridization’ and ‘synchronicity’, to comprehend the changes that such movement causes to social and cultural environments – and to apprehend relations between movement and identity.

Creolization and Compression

Let us allude explicitly, if briefly, to three of these recent anthropological expositions, those of Lee Drummond, Ulf Hannerz and Robert Paine.

The culmination of four hundred years of massive global migration, voluntary and involuntary, in the recent cultural impetus to modernize, urbanize and capitalize, and in movements of people and traffic in cultural items and information that have become continuous, have transformed most societies. However, the result of these transformations, Lee Drummond suggests (1980:352), is neither new integrations of what were once separate societies and features of societies, now fitting neatly together as one, nor pluralities whereby old separate societies simply retain their cultural distinctivenesses side by side. Rather, what results are socio-cultural continua or combinations: ‘creolizations’. Societies are no longer discrete social spaces with their own discrete sets of people and cultural norms – if they ever were. They are now basically creole in nature: combinations of ways of life, with no invariant properties or uniform rules. A series of bridges or transformations now lead across social fences and cultural divisions between people from one end of the continuum to the other: bridges which are in constant use as people swap artefacts and norms, following multiple and incompatible ways of life. Here is a ‘concatenation of images and ideas’ (1980:363). And here, ultimately, is a world in which

there ‘are now no distinct cultures, only intersystemically connected, creolizing Culture’.

Hence, Hannerz continues, the traditional picture of human cultures as forming a global mosaic – of cultures as plural, bounded, pure, integrated, cohesive, distinctive, place-rooted and mapped in space – must now be complemented by a picture of ‘cultural flows in space’ (1993:68), and by ‘a global ecumene’ (1992:34): a world system, a single field of persistent interaction and exchange, a continuous spectrum of interacting forms, which combines and synthesizes various local cultures and so breaks down cultural plurality. That is, through mass media, objects of mass consumption, and the mass movements of people, culture now flows over vast distances. Indeed, it may be better to conceive of culture *tout court* as a flow. Thus, for Hannerz, the new world system does not result in socio-cultural homogeneity so much as a new diversity of interrelations: many different kaleidoscopes of cultural combinations, amounting to no discrete wholes, only heterogeneous and interpenetrating conglomerations. For people now draw on a wide range of cultural resources in the securing of their social identities, continually turning the erstwhile alien into their own; they select from the rich treasury of behaviours and beliefs that different cultural traditions now hold out to them, ranging between them, electing to have this and not that, to combine this with that, to move from this to this to that: to ‘listen to reggae, watch a western, eat MacDonald’s food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wear Paris perfume in Tokyo and “retro” clothes in Hong Kong’ (Lyotard 1986:76); to make of each ‘local’ point a ‘global’ collage, a ‘Kuwaiti bazaar’ (Geertz 1986:121). In short, people make sense to themselves and others by continually moving amongst a global inventory of ideas and modes of expression.

However, such movement is not smooth, Paine insists (1992), nor is it singular. With individuals making different cultural selections and combinations – different from other individuals and different from themselves in other times and places; different in terms of particular items and their relative weighting, and different in terms of the willingness, loyalty and intensity of the selection – and combinations of elements not just previously separate but still incommensurable, so this movement amongst cultures can be expected to be volatile, and advocates of different selections to be exclusionary if not hostile. At the same time as there is globalization, therefore, and movement across the globe, between societies and amongst cultures, as never before – people treating the whole globe as the cognitive space within which they can or must imagine moving and actually do move, the space that they expect to ‘know’ – there is

also 'cultural compression': an insistence on socio-cultural difference within the 'same' time and space; a piling up of socio-cultural boundaries, political, ritual, residential, economic, which feel experientially vital, and which people seek to defend and maintain. Here is a dialectic (not to say a Batesonian schismogenesis) between global movement and local compression (cf. Featherstone 1990). So that even if travel is ubiquitous, and one is 'at home' on the entire globe, to travel within one's home is to encounter a world of socio-cultural difference; even to stay home is to experience global movement.

Movement and Home

Moving from Drummond to Hannerz to Paine is not to meet perfectly commensurable expositions of the contemporary world, and there is disagreement over the extent to which a globalization of culture results in the continuing boundedness of social groups, as well as disagreement concerning the extent to which this globalization is experienced as colonial or post-colonial – as the imposition of a particular cultural way of being-in-the-world or as the opportunity to constitute and reconstitute the set of cultural forms that go to make up one's life-way (cf. Appadurai 1990). More significantly, there appears to be divergence concerning whether the thesis linking contemporary movement and identity is a historical one or a representational one. In particular, Drummond is happy to talk in terms of four centuries of change, while Paine's central motif is a comparison of could-be representations between E. M. Forster and Salman Rushdie. The historical argument would seem to be the harder one to make, and would also seem prone to the kinds of grand-historical reductionism that characterized conventional anthropology in its old dispensation (from 'fixity to movement' as from 'mechanical solidarity to organic', from 'community to association', from 'concrete thought to abstract', from 'hierarchy to individualism'). Certainly, Bateson's propositions claim universal pertinence, while the history and archaeology of frequent and global movement make generalizations about the uniqueness of the present foolhardy.

Where Drummond, Paine and Hannerz do meet is in a recognition of the contemporary significance of movement around the globe – its universal apperception, its ubiquitous relationship to socio-cultural identities. Whether or not this pertains to a historical shift, whether it is imposed or opportunistic, there is in the contemporary world a sense in which metaphors and motifs of movement are of the quintessence in the conceptualization of identity. In folk commentary as in social-scientific,

there is a recognition of the fundamental relationship between movement and cultural practice and expression (cf. Dawson 1997).

More particularly, there is an implicit recognition in the above anthropological expositions of the changing relations between movement and home. Increasingly, one is seen as moving between homes, erstwhile to current; or as moving between multiple homes (from one compressed socio-cultural environment to another); or as being at home in continuous movement (amongst creolized cultural forms); and so one's home as movement *per se*.

This is certainly the explicit thesis of John Berger. For Berger, in an age that conceptualizes itself in terms of global movement, the idea of 'home' undergoes dramatic change. In place of the conventional conception of home as the stable physical centre of the universe – a safe place to leave and return to – a far more mobile notion comes to be used: a home that can be taken along whenever one decamps. For a world of travellers and journeymen, home comes to be found far more usually in a routine set of practices, in a repetition of habitual social interactions, in the ritual of a regularly used personal name (cf. Rapport 1994b). It might seem, in Heidegger's words, as if 'homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world'; but it is rather that there develops another sense of being-in-the-world. (It is not that in an age of global movement, there cannot be a sense of homelessness – far from it – but that a sense of home or of homelessness is not necessarily related in any simple or direct way with fixity or movement.) One dwells in a mobile habitat and not in a singular or fixed, physical structure. Moreover, as home becomes more mobile, so it comes to be seen as more individuated and privatized; everyone chooses their own, and one's choice might remain invisible (and irrelevant) to others (cf. Dawson 1994; Rapport 1995). Home, in short, is increasingly: 'no longer a dwelling but the untold story of a life being lived' (Berger 1984:64).

To recap: the emphasis on a relationship between identity and fixity has been at least challenged in anthropology of late by representations of the relationship between identity and movement. Now we have 'creolizing' and 'compressing' cultures and 'hybridizing' identities in a 'synchronizing' global society. Part of this reconceptualization pertains significantly to notions of home; part-and-parcel of this conceptual shift is a recognition that not only can one be at home in movement, but that movement can be one's very home. One's identity is 'formed on the move': a 'migrant's tale' of 'stuttering transitions and heterogeneities' (Chambers 1994a:24, 1994b:246–7). And the personal myths and rituals that one carries on one's journey through life (that carry one through a

life-course) need not fix one's perspective on any still centre outside one's (moving) self. As Berger concludes, one is at home not in a thing or a place but 'in a life being lived in movement', and in an 'untold story' (1984:64).

Home and Story

The link Berger would make between home and story we find very provocative; and his claim that the story remains untold we find highly polemical. Because a story, a narrative, can itself be conceived of as a form of movement; and because stories, narratives, can be approached from two very different directions, the one describing the art of narration as the orderly telling of people, objects and events that did not previously exist, the ultimate creative act, and the other claiming, in contradistinction, that it is narratives that do the telling, that pre-exist their particular narrators, speak through the latter's lives unbeknownst to them, and to that extent remain 'untold'. Let us elaborate.

Narrative has been defined as: 'the telling (in whatever medium, though especially language) of a series of temporal events so that a meaningful sequence is portrayed – the story or plot of the narrative' (Kerby 1991:39). Also, narrative is the cultural form that is 'capable of expressing coherence through time' (Crites 1971:294). The content of narratives, then, treats a movement between events so as to give on to meaning and coherence in time. Also, the medium of narratives entails a movement from a start to a finish (if not a 'beginning' to an 'ending'), and is 'everywhere characterized by movement': the passage of words, the slippage of metaphor, the caravan of thought, the flux of the imaginary, the movement of calligraphy (Chambers 1994a:10); the 'consecution' of linguistic signs, the movement of meaning (Arshi *et al.* 1994:226). To recount a narrative, in short, is both to speak of movement and to engage in movement. One tells of people, objects and events as one moves them through time and one moves from the start of one's account to its end. Narrative mediates one's sense of movement through time, so that in the telling one becomes, in Rushdie's (telling) observation (1991:12), an *émigré* from a past home.

But precisely who or what does the telling, and who or what is told? Two answers are suggested. For Kerby, it is the narrative that tells the self of the narrator, that gives that self identity in the movement of the telling. The self arises out of signifying practices, coming to know itself and the world through enculturated narrational acts. In a particular socio-cultural environment, the self is given content, is delineated and embodied, primarily in narrative constructions or stories. It is these that give rise to

the possibilities of subjectivity: 'it is in and through various forms of narrative emplotment that our lives – . . . our very selves – attain meaning' (Kerby 1991:3). And being merely an outcome of discursive practice, the subject or self has no ontological or epistemological priority. Rather, 'persons' are to be understood as the result of ascribing subject status or selfhood to those 'sites of narration and expression' that we call human bodies. And the stories they tell of themselves and others are determined by the grammar of their language, by the genres of their culture, by the fund of stories of their society, and by the stories others tell and have told of them. In Crites's words (1971:295–7), consciousness 'awakes' to a culture's 'sacred story'. It is this story that forms consciousness and in which consciousness lives, rather than being something of which consciousness is directly aware. And it is of culture that this story tells, in the bodies and lives of its members: it is the story that tells, it is not told. In short, we are back with Lévi-Strauss: '[M]yths think in men, unbeknownst to them'; not to mention Heidegger: 'It is language that speaks, not Man. Man begins speaking but Man only speaks to the extent that he responds to, that he corresponds with language, and only insofar as he hears language addressing, concurring with him'; and Lacan: 'Man speaks, then, but it is because the symbol has made him man'; 'man is inhabited by the signifier'.

But there is another answer to the question of narrative, which allows that through narrative, human beings, individual men and women with agency, tell the world, and tell it anew, continuously reorganizing their 'habitation in reality' (Steiner 1975:23). Thus, for George Steiner, language might be conceived of as having a public and collective face; but more significant than this is its individual and private base. At the base of every language-act resides 'a personal lexicon', 'a private thesaurus' constituted by the unique linguistic 'association-net' of personal consciousness: by the fact that each individual's understanding of language and the world is different. Embodied in language, therefore, are the 'minute particulars' of individuals' lives: the singular and specific ensembles of individuals' somatic and psychological identities. All but the most perfunctory of language-acts represent personal narratives in which individual speakers tell of themselves and their world-views. Furthermore, it is the intensity of this personal association that causes individual users continually to make their language anew. Language, and discursive practice in general, is subject to mutation by its speakers at every moment and at bewildering speed; so that the concept of a normal or standard idiom in a community of speakers is a statistical fiction; and so that what is represented in the narratives that speakers and writers

produce is the generation of a personal 'language-world' and a new reality (Steiner 1978:155-6). In sum: 'the language of a community, however uniform its social contour, is an inexhaustibly multiple aggregate of speech-atoms, of finally irreducible personal meanings' (Steiner 1975:46).

In these two approaches to narrative, it seems to us, we also find encapsulated the two notions of home that this essay has considered: home versus movement, and home as movement; and the two conceptualizations of identity that the essay features: identity through fixity, and identity through movement. That is, although both approaches recognize narrative as a form of movement in itself, recognize that movement is a ubiquitous feature of social life, the relationship each would posit between that movement and members of a social environment (the way each would posit individual narrators relative to that movement) is very different. The first approach, above, had the selves of narrators and recipients of a narrative fixed and stationary within a narrative, as it were. The narrative might move through them, but their identity derived from their maintenance of a position within it; if they were to move beyond the ambit of their culture's narrative constructions or their society's narrational acts, leave home as it were, they would no longer be recognizable 'sites of expression' and they would lose their ability to know, to perceive themselves and the world. This is equivalent to the traditional anthropological approach to the relationship between identity and fixity. Meanwhile, the second approach, above, has members of a socio-cultural community continuously moving between different 'habitations of reality' as they tell different stories, remaking their language in the process. They are at home in personal narratives that move away from any notion of fixity within a common idiom, and their identities derive from telling moving stories of themselves and their world-views. And this is equivalent to a contemporary anthropological recognition of the relationship between identity and movement in the world today.

When Berger speaks of notions of home in an age of movement as increasingly to be found in 'untold stories', he seems to be sitting on the fence between two opposed positions. For untold stories leave their narrators stationary as the stories unfold, while the experience of the narrators he is describing is 'quintessentially' to be found in global transience.

Of course we are not being fair to Berger. What he means, it is clear (cf. Berger 1975), is not (the post-structuralist point) that people in transit across the globe today do not tell stories because their condition is overdetermined by the systems of signification that make stories out of their lives and hence 'tell' them, but rather (the social-democrat point)

that people in movement across the globe today do not have the resources (temporal, financial) to sit down and formally record the stories of their lives; and even if they did their stories would remain 'untold' because they would clamour for attention alongside millions of others; while those in a position to make their stories heard are deliberately suppressing them, or at least ensuring that it is their own that are instead broadcast, disseminated and recorded.

The Homeless Mind?

In this conclusion, John Berger comes close to that drawn by Peter Berger and his collaborators in the premonitory text *The Homeless Mind* (P. Berger *et al.* 1973). Modernity, the latter argued, could be characterized by a pluralization of social life-worlds between which individuals are in inexorable migration. Everyday life now consists of constant transition between a variety of divergent, discrepant, even contradictory, social milieux; so that there is no consistency concerning what is experienced as 'right' or 'true' between different contexts and life-stages. Moreover, once uprooted in this way from a first and 'original' social milieu, no succeeding one becomes truly home; in transit between a plurality of life-worlds, individuals come to be at home in none. Hence does the loss, under modernization, of a traditional, absolute and unified reality give rise to a 'spreading condition of homelessness' (1973:138). This condition is at the same time normative, spiritual and cognitive; the anomy of social movement correlates with a metaphysical sense of homelessness in the cosmos, which correlates with personal alienation on the level of consciousness. However, the 'homeless mind' is hard to bear, and there is widespread nostalgia for a condition of being 'at home' in society, with oneself, and with the universe: for homes of the past that were socially homogeneous, communal, peaceful, safe and secure. De-modernization movements of various kinds (Socialism, localisms, religious cults) therefore promise new homes where individual members are reintegrated within all-embracing, meaningful structures of social, psychical and metaphysical solidarity. There are also growing attempts by those with the wherewithal to reconstruct homes in private, closed havens that shut out the present and serve as subjective refuges of the self. Nevertheless, Berger *et al.* conclude, before 'the cold winds of homelessness' nostalgia proves to be fragile defence; de-modernization schemes that are not institutionalized and society-wide are mostly precarious buffers, given the finitude and mortality of the human condition. In short, in a modern world in which 'everything is in constant

motion' and where 'the life of more and more individuals [is] migratory, ever-changing, mobile', homelessness represents the deepening global effect (1973:184).

While *The Homeless Mind* remains a challenging thesis, it is steeped in a communitarian ideology that can decry modern 'ills' (individualism and pluralization, alienation and anomy) only to the extent that it posits an idyllic past of unified tradition, certainty, stasis, and cognitive and behavioural commonality. We would query the existence of that 'original life-world' of traditional absoluteness and fixity, where the individual is said to be first and 'truly' at home (cf. Rapport 1993; Phillips 1993: 149–56).

Not only does the thesis of modern homelessness involve a mythic past, it also remains ethnographically ungrounded in the present. In testing homelessness against the ethnographic record (below), we contend that the evidence points to a successful resilience of 'home', however this may come to be defined, and an inexorability of home-making – even as individuals and groups lead their lives in and through movement (cognitive and physical) and refrain from finally and essentially affixing their identities to places.

Movement and Anthropology

There is one further twist in this tale. When the philosopher A. R. Louch proposed in 1966 that anthropology should be seen as a collection of travellers' tales – and that this was perfectly fine, the tales were 'sufficient unto themselves' (1966:160) – few anthropologists would have been satisfied with his description. This has now changed. Again in conjunction with a description of the ubiquity of movement in the world, with 'our heightened awareness of global interdependence, communication, diffusion, integration, sharing and penetration' and our allowance that anthropologists are no more aware of 'the world cosmopolitan consciousness' and its operation than their transient ethnographic subjects (Marcus and Fischer 1986:viii,38,86), with an appreciation that there is no fixed and stable Archimedean point at which to stand and observe because we are all historico-socio-culturally situated, because all knowledge is in flux (cf. Clifford 1986:22), anthropology now conceives of its enterprise very differently. There is an acceptance that anthropology, in essence, is 'a kind of writing', 'a telling of stories', legitimate to the extent that it convinces its readers of the claim that its author and narrator has 'returned here' after 'being there': journeyed into 'another way of life' so as to inscribe 'what it was like There and Then in the categories and genres of

the Here and Now' (Geertz 1988:1–5,140–5). Also that cultures need to be rethought 'in terms of travel' (Clifford 1992:101), so that 'returning home' is not to find oneself in the same place as before (Weil 1978:196). In short, there is now an acceptance that anthropological knowledge derives from movement and represents itself through movement; the identity of the anthropologist is inextricably bound up with his having undertaken a cultural journey – a journey into reflexivity, a journey alongside other cosmopolitan journeymen; and the proper home of the anthropologist is the narrative account of his journeying.

To the travelling of 'the other', the informant (whether exile, migrant, tourist or counter-urbanite), then, must be added 'the increasing nomadism of modern thought', no longer bolstered by sites and sightings of absolutism (Chambers 1994a:18), no longer persuaded by fixed, totalizing ways of thinking relations (cf. Strathern 1990:38). So that Louch's statement is now doubly true: anthropology as a study of travellers as well as by travellers.

Conclusion

It seems that the world in motion to which anthropology has now awoken (and begun to address conceptually through 'creolization', 'compression' and so on) brings to our attention something basic to the human condition, universal in human life, whatever the socio-cultural milieu, and whatever the conventions of representation; something that, over and against its history of conceptualization, has always been (and will always be) true of human beings; something that Gregory Bateson was fully aware of some forty or fifty years ago, but that has somewhat slumbered in our anthropological consciousness since; something to which our disciplinary theorizing, our will to fixed systems, has continued to blinker us. And that is the basic relationship between identity (knowledge, perception) and movement: the universal way in which human beings conceive of their lives in terms of a moving-between – between identities, relations, people, things, groups, societies, cultures, environments, as a dialectic between movement and fixity. It is in and through the continuity of movement that human beings continue to make themselves at home; seeing themselves continually in stories, and continually telling the stories of their lives, people recount their lives to themselves and others as movement.

Needless to say, this is something of which commentators outside anthropology have claimed manifest (and manifold) awareness:

People are always in stories.

John Berger

We live in a narrative from breakfast to bedtime.

Robertson Davies

We all live out narratives in our lives and (. . .) we understand our own lives in terms of the narrative that we live out.

Alasdair MacIntyre

Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell and hear told, those we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are reworked in that story of our lives that we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, sometimes semi-unconscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue.

Peter Brooks

We dream in narrative, day-dream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative.

Barbara Hardy

Man is a sort of novelist of himself who conceives the fanciful figure of a personage with its unreal occupations and then, for the sake of converting it into reality, does all the things he does.

José Ortega y Gasset

To be human is to be in a story.

Miles Richardson

Reading the narrative that these extra-anthropological commentaries (on narrative) amount to, cushioned and calmed by the repeating syllables, is surely to find oneself at home in the notion that it is in the motion of narrative that people are at home. In Butor's 'iterology', anthropology might find a suitable home in which best to know itself and its subjects in the contemporary world.

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