

# WOMAN TRAVELLER/COLONIAL TOURIST

## Deconstructing the Great Divide in Beatrice Grimshaw's Travel Writing

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I promised to show you a map but you say this is a mural  
Then yes let it be these are small distinctions  
Where do we see it from is the question<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In the opening, autobiographical chapter of her fourth travelogue *Isles of Adventure* (1930) Irish novelist, journalist and travel writer Beatrice Grimshaw<sup>2</sup> posits a very definite starting point for her journey to the Pacific in 1904:

It was the dining-room of a set of rooms in Number 6, Fitzgibbon Street, Dublin. It was the 'nineties and a summer day. From the back window you could see (perhaps you still can) a bit of high white wall, outlined against a sky that occasionally was blue. On that summer day a dream, from the white wall and the blue sky, took birth; a dream of things longed for never seen. One could almost see those things. One could almost fancy, behind that un-European-looking scrap of shining wall, against the blue that might have been Mediterranean, or Pacific, the trembling of tall palms ... (*Isles of Adventure*, 11)<sup>3</sup>

Travel begins with an imaginative act; it requires 'daydreaming and anticipation of new or different experiences from those normally encountered' in the here and now.<sup>4</sup> Grimshaw's 'scrap of shining wall' is a screen, and, like all screens, it engenders curiosity, a desire to see behind and beyond. Enclosure, barricade, fortification, and obstacle; protection and containment—walls have various functions, all of which signal the presence of a boundary. And as a point of separation and connection<sup>5</sup> boundaries transcend the visible. Grimshaw's wall represents the start of a physical, psychological and imaginative journey—white and bare, it is her blank canvas.

A relation of lines, angles and solid properties, walls are geometrical constructions. The starting point of Grimshaw's journey is less easy to define. Eschewing clear limits, her 'scrap of shining wall' is a fragment. It lies within, but also transcends, official boundaries. It is in the public domain but also intensely personal. And it is 'un-European looking'; the fragmentary possibilities that it invokes are predicated on a non-European setting. Chimerical starting point/chimerical destination, it is the Pacific world reduced to a blank page upon which Grimshaw will create glissades of colour and imperial landscapes. As a metaphor for travel it operates in a way that recognises the simultaneity of enclosure and desire for the great beyond, while also incorporating the liberating possibilities of the blank canvas and, that proverbial and wholly illusory break with the past, a clean slate.

The desire for a clean slate is one of many possible factors precipitating tourism. In this paper I examine those interacting variables which may have informed Grimshaw's desire to travel. Particular consideration will be given to the concept of travel as status. This requires an engagement with the numerous polarities—traveller/tourist, tourist/stay-at-home, host/guest, colonial/racialised Other—around which Grimshaw organises her Pacific tourism. As the title of this paper suggests, the duality with which I am most concerned is that of travel/tourist. Calling to mind Virginia Woolf's description of Renaissance women writers as 'solitary great ladies',<sup>6</sup> there has been an evident readiness amongst feminist critics to present Victorian and Edwardian women travellers as though entirely divorced from late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century touristic discourses. Creating an elitist polarity between the traveller and the crowd, this need to reduce traveller and tourist to binary opposites helps to obfuscate the role played by tourism in various colonial projects, and also the influence of touristic discourse in shaping women's travel throughout these periods. But, of course, it was not only critics who helped to create this polarity. Seemingly unaware of the deeply contradictory nature of her position, Grimshaw produced two tourist brochures while denigrating tourists in her travelogues.<sup>7</sup> Her attitude to tourists, which is discussed in detail later in this paper, appears to revolve around the need to foreground individuality, to eschew that which she conceptualises as the herd. In her travel writing she depicts tourists as conventional and their journeys as superficial. On the other hand, she is keen to present her own travels as unconventional, while also being acutely conscious of the fact that a lack of convention could have disastrous consequences for a single woman travelling alone at this time. Grimshaw is constantly negotiating a thin line between difference and respectability, unconventionality and an erosion of social standing. As a professional journalist, social standing for Grimshaw is closely involved with her work. By juxtaposing her own journeys, usually depicted as off-the-beaten-track excursions through the 'real' Pacific, with the travels of tourists which were frequently posited as a mere engagement with the surface, Grimshaw is attempting to underline the validity of much of her literary output. She is asserting her right to comment on specific regions, to construct imaginative geographies and ethnologies of certain people and places.<sup>8</sup> Occasionally Grimshaw is dismissive of her own work, and at times it displays a type of backtracking hesitancy, but more often it exudes a sense of confidence. The moments of self-deprecation and uncertainty could be brief glimmers of self-doubt; however, I feel that they are more likely to be indicative of an awareness of the gender politics of Empire:

In the colonial context, British women were only allowed to figure as symbols of home and purity; women as active participants can barely be conceived of. This is because of social conventions for conceptualising imperialism, which seem to be as much about constructing *masculine* British identity as constructing a national identity *per se*.<sup>9</sup>

As a result, empire building and the knowledge that it has produced have been represented in overtly masculine terms.

### Colonial Tourism

Despite the fact that it was the existence of the British Empire that enabled 'many hundreds' of women to travel during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, criticism, as Sara Mills recognises, has tended to position them outside the imperial sphere.<sup>10</sup> While it would be difficult to situate Grimshaw—a woman who wrote a

prodigious number of pamphlets advertising colonial prospects in the Pacific, and who ruminated at length on imperial politics in her travel writing—outside a colonial framework, this is also true of many other travelling women from the period who were not only perceived as colonial culture-carriers but who also invoked Empire as the reason behind their journeys: ‘The expressions by women travellers of private family loyalty, mission duty, a public responsibility toward the imperial effort, and the desire to add to scientific knowledge, covered their journeys with a veil of respectability.’<sup>11</sup> However, regardless of her enthusiasm for British colonialism, Empire is not posited by Grimshaw as a motivating factor behind her original decision to travel to the Pacific; it only becomes a justification for travel once she is already in Oceania. This is evident in Grimshaw’s description of her travels through Fiji. Shortly after her arrival in the island group she decides that:

there were tens and thousands of acres all over the islands unused and unoccupied; white settlers and planters seldom or never try their luck, and the resources of this, the richest of all the rich Pacific archipelagos, were not one-hundredth part developed. (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 31)<sup>12</sup>

And, Grimshaw, wanting to find out why, makes inquiries with government representatives. Finding imperial knowledge on the region wanting, Grimshaw states that she will provide it: ‘So it came about that I made a resolve, and kept to it [ . . . ] to go through the interior of the islands myself and see just what the native and his life were like, and of what value the country still might be to possible settlers’ (p. 31). And Grimshaw does provide such information. In one of the numerous addresses to potential colonists in *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* she states ‘The climate was splendidly healthy; the occasional forests only covered a small part of the country, and were valuable in themselves for their timber; there was abundance of water, and the bridle-tracks were everywhere good enough for driving stock down to the coast’ (p. 56).

Containing a frontispiece of J. H. P. Murray, the then Acting Lieutenant-Governor of Papua, and a map of ‘British New Guinea’, Grimshaw’s third travelogue, *The New New Guinea* (1910),<sup>13</sup> has an even stronger colonial flavour than *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*. Providing more substantial, hard-core information for planters, in this text Grimshaw’s rationale for undertaking difficult journeys into the interior is now uncompromisingly explained in terms of imperial ‘duty’: ‘The Purari delta is expected by all who know the country to be one of the most important, if not the most important, sources of supply [of labour] in the future. It therefore became my clear duty to “go and see the Medway”—so I went’ (p. 120). In contrast, when describing her departures from England in *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and in *In the Strange South Seas*, duty, imperial or otherwise, is not mentioned as a possible precipitating factor. The reason for this change could be due to the nature of Grimshaw’s commissions. As Susan Gardner points out, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* was sponsored by the Planters’ Association of Fiji while *The New New Guinea* was commissioned by J. H. P. Murray.<sup>14</sup> *The New New Guinea* is Grimshaw’s most propagandistic travelogue, and while Murray’s commission is reason enough to account for the fact; there is also another: Grimshaw’s change in status. By the time that she wrote her third travelogue she was a resident in Papua. Rather than merely visiting settlers and government representatives, she was living among them.<sup>15</sup> Beatrice Grimshaw was an exponent of British imperialism. I am not suggesting here that prior to visiting the Pacific Grimshaw’s response to Empire was cool; nevertheless, her enthusiasm for it certainly appears to have gained momentum after she decided to settle in the region. As stated,

imperial duty is not mentioned in Grimshaw's descriptions of those initial departures from England. In the preface to her second travelogue, *In the Strange South Seas* (1907), Grimshaw's desire for movement is depicted as a calling, something clearly designed to underscore the individual, thereby setting the colonial tourist off from the crowd:

Love is not stronger than that call—let sweetheartless girls left alone, and the man of cities who has loved the woman of the wandering foot, give bitter witness. Death is not stronger—those who follow the call must defy him over and over again. Pride of country, love of home, delight in the well-known faces and kindly hearts that understand, the ease of the old and well-tried ways, the prick of ordinary ambitions hungering for the showy prizes that everyone may see—these are but dead leaves blown before the wind, when the far-off countries cry across the seas. Not one in a hundred may answer the call. (p. 10)<sup>16</sup>



**FIGURE 1**  
Beatrice Grimshaw

Grimshaw is explaining her urge to travel to the Pacific as a force informed primarily by pull rather than push factors. Yet it is evident from her travel writing that Oceania, enabling her to escape what she appears to have been experiencing as an increasingly restrictive patriarchy, provided Grimshaw with a much sought after sense of freedom.

It must, however, be emphasised that this escape was far from complete. Home is always present in *the away*; social mores travel well. As a single woman travelling alone in the early years of the twentieth century it hardly comes as a surprise that Grimshaw was keen to demonstrate to a readership, perhaps not entirely in sympathy with her wanderlust, that her femininity was untarnished and her sense of propriety was intact. This is certainly suggested by the frontispiece (see below) in *Fiji and its Possibilities* (1907) (the American edition of *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*).<sup>17</sup> Here we see Grimshaw swathed in lace with a large rose at her breast, a necklace in situ and her hair in an extremely formal Edwardian coiffure. Indeed, it is difficult to find a photograph of Grimshaw in which she is any less elaborately attired. In the photographs which I have managed to see of her it is evident that she was quick to show the public that her sense of propriety and decorum were undiminished by colonial travels. And indeed it may well have been the need to maintain an impeccable reputation that, among other variables, encouraged Grimshaw to imbue her off-the-road travels with a sense of imperial duty. To meet with approval from a readership at home, Grimshaw's horseback journey through the centre of Fiji with three Fijian guides may have required what were deemed to be more serious underpinnings than a love of the open road. And what could have been more serious to a large percentage of Grimshaw's British readership in 1907 than imperial duty?<sup>18</sup> In Grimshaw's travel writing it appears that the more arduous the journeys undertaken the more rigorously they had to be justified to her readership at home. Any excursion which could be perceived as an assault on femininity necessitated a rationale structured around ideas of sacrifice, responsibility and duty. On the other hand, leaving Liverpool safely ensconced in a first-class cabin on a Cunard liner could be explained by wanderlust, a gypsy heart, a calling, a desire for a movement inward.

### Travel and the Sublime

Writing in her first travelogue, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, Grimshaw offers the following vindication of her desire to travel:

Below the equator is the world of the South, and here anything may happen, for here the new and the wild and the untried countries lie, and here, moreover, you shall come upon unknown tracts and places in yourself, on which, if you had stayed within sound of the roaring throat of Piccadilly, no sun had ever shone. (p. 10)

Anticipating a movement inward, Grimshaw describes her journey to the Pacific as an exploration of interior terrain. She refers to these heretofore unexcavated regions as 'unknown tracts', an interesting word choice which fuses physiological, geographical and literary discourse. Grimshaw's world of the South, a specific geographical region that can be reached only by crossing that well-marked boundary, 'the equator', is a topography of possibility. Depicted, as we shall see, as if trapped in a relentlessly present tense, the South Seas Islands are described by Grimshaw as a cultural and historic void. 'New', 'wild', 'untried', these decontextualised spaces, waiting to be inscribed with colonial discourses, simultaneously function as a metaphor for the romantic traveller who, supposedly freed from the past and the 'roaring throat of Piccadilly', will unearth a new, untried self.

Postulating travel as a process of self-discovery, Grimshaw is exploiting a pervasive and tenacious touristic discourse that, due in no small measure to the influence of Romanticism, gained widespread appeal in the nineteenth century. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as Romantic enthrallment with, in particular, Alpine scenery developed, travel was increasingly conceptualised as a process of self-realisation, an inward journey frequently initiated by a sudden encounter with the sublime terror.

Nature at its most dangerously compelling was a powerful force in travel discourse throughout the Romantic period. Having occupied a lowly position in eighteenth-century guidebooks, nature was now propelled to centre stage.<sup>19</sup> Firmly established on the sightseeing itinerary, Romantic involvement with the sublime paradoxically called for a transcendence of ocularcentric knowledge.<sup>20</sup> The Romantic sensibility, valuing 'intensity of emotion and sensation, poetic mystery above intellectual clarity, individual expression above social cohesion',<sup>21</sup> was concerned with *experiencing*, rather than a factual analysis of, nature, something that Grimshaw is trying to achieve in the following description:

Only a range of mountains, covered with reeds and forest here and there, rough and uninteresting no doubt, when one reached it with ups and downs and gullies and thickets just like the ground about my feet, and yet . . . And yet, if I could write all that those distant summits said to me, as they lay sleeping in the still yellow light of the waning afternoon—all that the eternal hills, far away and blue and utterly out of reach, have said to countless souls since the beginning of time—I should speak with the tongues of men and angels, and tell what human lips have never told and never will. (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 82)

Claiming that she is merely romanticising distance, Grimshaw begins with a rational and prosaic analysis of her response to the faraway peaks. She then moves towards a transcendental engagement with this landscape, attempting to reject the rational and embrace the inexplicable; this silent movement inward is, however, problematic. For although she is now in possession of secret knowledge, knowledge that is beyond representation, she has also debunked, at least partially, the source of this knowledge—undermining the unknowable by projecting an imaginative geography on to it. The desire for transcendent awakenings is curtailed by the ocularcentric power-knowledge-demands of imperial cartography, demands consistently suffused with fear of interior immensity. Evident in other discourses (for example, religious mysticism and the psychoanalytic process), this need for revelation embodies a recognition of the difficulty of un-revealing; once conceived, new dangerous subject positions could prove ungovernable. Attempts therefore to domesticate the sublime come as no surprise:

There are peaks three and four thousand feet high, the colour of a purple thundercloud, jagged and pinked like broken saws; peaks like side-saddles, peaks like solitary, mysterious altars raised to some unknown god, and in the heart of the glowing violet distance, one single summit fashioned like a giant finger, pointing darkly to the sky. (p. 11)

Striking a discordant note amid a sea of relentless and somewhat ominous verticality Grimshaw's description of 'peaks like side-saddles' immediately softens the serrated imagery of this passage. By including a symbol of Victorian female propriety and modesty, Grimshaw appears to be trying to tame, just a little, the enormity of the scene which confronts her. This domesticating gesture is repeated on her first excursion into a



Vanuatuan rainforest where the leaves of the wild taro are compared with a 'tea-table' (p. 145), an incongruous image in a landscape described thus:

Great banyans, their out-running branches supported by companies of close-ranked pillars, made strange imitations of shrines and temples in the shadowy depths of the wood. Enormous trees, whose names I never knew, shot up dark colossal trunks, with plank-partition roots buttressed as high as our heads. Leaves of the wild taro plant, sappy and juicy, lifted giant hands of green, as large as a tea table on nine-foot stalks. Strange reddish figs, odd pink and yellow berries, showed in the undergrowth, some poisonous, some good for food; and wild nuts and almonds of many kind, without a recognised name. (p. 145)

Despite reference to small fruits like berries, detail is not a primary feature of this forest landscape. There is rather, once again, a sense of menacing verticality, a general largeness that is lightly dusted with military imagery: 'Great banyans, their outrunning branches supported by *companies* of close-ranked pillars' (p. 145, my emphasis).<sup>22</sup> Grimshaw's forest landscape appears to have taken on what she considers to be a national characteristic of the islanders: 'Every native has a gun, and almost every one carries it—loaded, cocked, and slung about at every conceivable angle' (p. 140). Complaining that these 'islands belong to nobody', Grimshaw goes on to state that 'the native is free to follow his own uncivilised will' (p. 14). The Vanuatuan decide the pace at which they will move. Similarly, the forest also advances under its own volition, and Grimshaw is conscious of the fact: 'Enormous trees, whose names I never knew, *shot* up dark colossal trunks, with plank-partition roots buttressed as high as our heads' (p. 145, my emphasis). There is an impression here that these trees are suddenly materialising in front of Grimshaw in a way that suggests cognition rather than nature. Grimshaw's representation of the forest connotes a space that is not only foreign but also one that is capable of suddenly producing the unexpected, a place where subjectivity could be ambushed. As stated, the exploration of interior topographies was both an alluring and terrifying prospect; travel could prove to be the realisation and/or annihilation of that which we recognise as an 'I'.

For Grimshaw the Vanuatuan forest is alien. In what is an uncharacteristic turn for this travel writer she does not know the names of the giant trees. Moreover, the berries are 'strange' and 'odd', while the wild nuts are also without 'a recognised name'. Grimshaw tries to introduce something of the familiar into this essentially unfamiliar space, stating that the taro plant was 'as large as a tea table on nine-foot stalks'. But this attempt to bring the drawing room to the rain forest is not successful. There is something profoundly unstable about this tea table, a quality that is emphasised by its position amid a sea of colossal trunks. These '[e]normous trees' embody a power that eschews the domestic. Creating 'strange imitations of shrines and temples in the shadowy depths of the wood', this coming together of 'out-running branches' and 'plank-partition roots' produces a distorted and alien version of that traditional piece of European arboreal architecture, 'the cathedral grove'.<sup>23</sup> In this description and in the aforementioned one of the peaks surrounding Suva, nature, imbued with a dark impenetrable spirituality, is a compellingly foreboding power.

Grimshaw's fullest appreciation of this force takes place when visiting a volcano on the island of Tanna; she states: 'It was impossible not to feel that there was something alive—alive and powerful and infinitely wicked down—down there' (p. 234). She goes on to add: 'I never longed for anything so much as I longed for that invisible and unattainable gorge of flame' (p. 235). Then once again she moves beyond rational explanation,

commenting that '[b]ut through the iron bars of human speech, the human soul can look forth but a very little way' (p. 235). What she can, and does, articulate about this vertiginous collision with the sublime is a sense of awe fomented by scale: 'I, deprived of my lawful inches and comfortable self-importance, stand like a wretched insect, a speck that does not count, on the verge of utter immensity . . .' (p. 233). Grimshaw's sense of self-importance is also challenged by what she considers an inappropriate response to a particularly loud episode of volcanic activity:

I found myself running down the side of the cone hand-in-hand with two extremely frightened niggers, without an idea of how I got there, or where I was going. It was not courage for I had none left, but pride of race, that stopped me half a dozen yards from the crater's lip. White people must not be frightened before blacks. (p. 233)

The realisation that a point in space has been reached 'without an idea of how [she] got there, or where [she] was going' stops Grimshaw abruptly in her tracks. She can contemplate the geographical, but not the historical sublime.<sup>24</sup> Disconcerted by her physical and emotional connection with the two Tannese guides, Grimshaw takes refuge in crass racist language and mythologies of evolutionary progress. The sense of fragile communality that had been established between the men and Grimshaw during their ascent of the volcanic cone is lost as soon as they reach the summit. The 'we' repeated seven times in two short paragraphs is rejected in favour of an 'I' who stands seemingly alone.

But, of course, this 'I' does not stand alone; the mobility of Romantic subjectivities was frequently predicated on a belief in the stasis of others, something which Grimshaw tries but does not quite succeed in conveying:

When the two Tannese guides had finished running away (which they did at every explosion, until they were tired out), and, clinging close together, had ventured to look down into the crater, I listened with considerable interest to hear what form the untutored savages' expression would take at the sight of this most colossal of Nature's wonders. One untutored savage looked down at the fiery valley below, and then drew back, remarking calmly 'All same calico!' [. . .] The other rose more fully to the occasion. He looked over likewise, drew back, and remarked very gravely: 'All same hell!' (p. 236)<sup>25</sup>

Offering emphatic definitions, the men's remarks are probably meant to provide a distinct contrast to Grimshaw's Romantic acceptance of the inexplicable; she murmurs '[i]f one could write the thoughts that come in such hours and places' (p. 235). That (or part of that) which Grimshaw designates inexpressible may simply indicate her reluctance to articulate communion with the second guide vis-à-vis interaction with the sublime. After fleeing down the ashy slope Grimshaw returns to the mouth of the volcano: 'For more than an hour I stayed on the summit, watching the crater with a fascinated fear that seemed to expunge both time and fatigue' (p. 234). Following an unsolicited encounter with historical sublimity, contemplation of the Earth's centre removes all traces of time, all traces of the history that has recently proved so unsettling. Writing in an essay entitled 'Discovering New Worlds: Politics of Travel and Metaphors of Space', Jacques Rancière has stated:

Frightening as it might seem, it was still reassuring to envisage society as threatened by a power lying beneath it, in the under ground. Because the main threat would lie in the discovery that society had no underground: no underground because it had no ground at all.<sup>26</sup>



With racial certainties disrupted, Grimshaw seeks metaphysical order, a move which finds her sharing a locus of enunciation with the Tanna islander.<sup>27</sup> For despite refusing to make an emphatic statement, like him, she conceptualises the volcano as hell. This hell, while immense, has clear spatial limitations 'Eight hundred feet is the drop from where I am standing [ . . . ] half a mile at least is the distance from lip to lip of the great black cup' (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 233). And as one would expect, hell, underground and to a certain extent contained, is located under the luminous infinitude of a 'dark blue heaven' (p. 235).

Grimshaw's geological sublime, studded with anthropomorphic characteristics—standing on the '*lip* [my italics] of that great black cup' (p. 233), 'the throat' (p. 234), 'the wolf-mouth' (p. 235)—clearly has a predatory capacity. As Anne McClintock has observed, the terror invoked by the sublime infinitude of vast interiors, whether arboreal or volcanic, confesses 'a dread that the unknown might literally rise up and devour the intruder'.<sup>28</sup> This fear of interiors is not simply physical; as has been stated, it underpins anxieties concerning disruptions in subjectivities. An excavation of these 'unknown tracts' could reveal extreme difference, but perhaps more disturbing is the possibility that zones of geological/physiological density could betray tracts of terrifying sameness. If, as hypothesised by exponents of Social Darwinism, Others represented 'civilised man' at an earlier stage of development then, given the right circumstances, atavistic traits could emerge; it was not so much a question of going native as of already being native. These natives within were not constituted in exclusively racial or ethnic terms; the British class system was also implicated. Commenting on imbrications of Victorian discourses of race and class, Anthony Fothergill has remarked 'One can almost hear the class anxieties about having come from lowly stock.'<sup>29</sup> As mentioned, 'the roaring throat of Piccadilly' had to be rejected in order for the journey toward self-realisation to begin; if Grimshaw had stayed within its range she may simply have discovered a dangerous sameness. And one well-established means of attempting to reject the possibility of such devouring sameness was travel.

### Travel and Urbanisation

Whilst not the predominantly aristocratic affair that it had been during the Early Modern period, travel in the age of high Romanticism was nevertheless a practice generally restricted to those with substantial wealth at their disposal. This situation was to alter dramatically during the second half of the nineteenth century, when the availability of cheap rail travel in conjunction with regularised factory holidays enabled greater numbers of working-class people to take short breaks away from the industrial heartlands.<sup>30</sup> Discourses of travel as improvement,<sup>31</sup> during the Victorian period, advanced the belief that the moral fibre and physical integrity of industrial workers could be enhanced by a period of respite from urban existence; in a suitably scenic spot nature would release its sympathetic and civilising energy.<sup>32</sup> These discursive practices simultaneously embodied a resilient conviction that the working class, that is, the urban working class, were not wholly capable of a heightened engagement with nature, a position undoubtedly informed by Romanticism. The work of both first- and second-generation Romantic poets embodied a vein of solid anti-urbanism. The rural poor—not usually their urban counterparts—were suitable subjects for verse. On occasion they could even be seen to merge with the sublime terror, thus establishing tenuous links between speaker and subject.<sup>33</sup> With the exception

of Blake, rarely are similar connections made with workers from urban industrial centres. These sentiments remained robust and influential in Victorian discourses of the city.

While industrialisation intensified the burgeoning cities of nineteenth-century England they steadily came to be conceptualised as spaces from which one must try to escape, lest identity and individuality be consumed by the crowd. As Raymond Williams has observed:

For the sense of the great city was now, in many minds, so overwhelming, that its people were often seen in a single way: as a crowd, as 'masses' or as a 'workforce'. The image could be coloured either way, for sympathy or for contempt, but its undifferentiating character was persistent and powerful [...] The individual was the person who must escape, or try to escape, from this repulsive and degrading mass.<sup>34</sup>

This desire to escape clearly informed Grimshaw's description of her departure from the 'streets and shops and drab-coloured, huddled houses of Liverpool'. Summarising the scene in her second travel book, *In the Strange South Seas* (1907), she states:

There were thousands of people on the quay, come to see the famous boat away, for it was Saturday afternoon, and the town took holiday. They had a few hours of freedom before them—then, the airless office room, the stuffy shop, the ledger and the copying press, and the clattering type writer, the grim window giving on the dark wet street, for six long days again. Next year, and the year after, just the office, the frowsy lodging, the tram car, the pen in the strong young fingers, the desk to stoop the broad young shoulders, the life foreseen, eventless, grey for ever and for ever. And I was going round the world. (*In the Strange South Seas*, 13)

Devoid of landmarks, planning, any sense of vision or community, Grimshaw's pallid Liverpool can only offer its populace a claustrophobic, steadfastly unchanging portion of life. The 'huddled houses' suggest a tremulous mass, quietly seeking protection in each other's close proximity. In this commercial centre there are no roaring furnaces, nor heavy machinery to suddenly assault the workforce with brilliant brutality. Instead, endless repetition insidiously moulds the workers' physiologies (and presumably their minds) until they correspond with the institutional drabness of their surroundings. Grimshaw creates a sense of collective uniformity—the 'thousands of people on the quay', the 'grey' lives of a seemingly automated workforce—thereby effectively underscoring the radical individualism of the 'I' who was 'going around the world'. As urbanisation accelerated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, travel as time out from routinised, if not mechanised, lives, as escape from the herd, as custodian of subjectivity, was increasingly used to abate feelings of alienation and anxieties about disruptions in relatedness. Perceived as a means of reifying the individual, travel, despite its increasing availability, could be a very serious status bearer.

Grimshaw is aware of this. She uses her peregrinations not only to distance herself from urban commercial workers but also from her prosperous neighbours. Attributing her forthcoming journey to providence, she describes the occasion when fate bestowed her gift: 'Count the goods, please—one journey round the world, two-and-a-half years of mixed adventures, a hundred South Sea Islands, threescore new friends, first quality, one large package luck' (p. 13). This is a capacious world both temporally and physically; it is imbued with a sense of excitement and abundance, unlike those occupied by Grimshaw's neighbours to whom fate will deliver 'seven attacks of appendicitis, a foreclosed mortgage,

two lawsuits, and a divorce' (p. 13). What her neighbours actually wanted were 'a seat in Parliament, and a winter in Monte-Carlo, with anything good that might come in way of new-laid motor-cars' (p. 12). Even the parliamentary seat when included in this particular wish list seems quite trivial and superficial; these desires compared with Grimshaw's longstanding urge to traverse the globe have a glitzy, society feel. And 'society' holds no charms for Grimshaw: 'One dipped into society and, lest it should stick to one's skirts and hold one fast, fled quickly' (*Isles of Adventure*, 14). These social concerns and what she considers trivial preoccupations have to be avoided; something Grimshaw suggests can only really be achieved by crossing lines on a map, especially lines of latitude.

Measuring angular distance of a place north or south of the equator, 'latitude' is derived from the Latin *latus* meaning broad, but whether this word is also conceptualised as laxity, indulgence, liberty, tolerance, licence, in short, if it incorporates a behavioural dimension, is, according to Grimshaw, a question of space: 'Happenings are largely a matter of latitude. About the fiftieth parallel, nothing interesting happens but policemen, bankruptcies, and Lord Mayors' shows' (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 9–10). What Grimshaw first associates with this space contained by the fiftieth parallel is surveillance, law and order—the police,<sup>35</sup> and moreover a type of social surveillance indicated by bankruptcies and the need to be seen at the right gathering. Therefore, in addition to psychological awakenings, border crossings open up the possibility of behavioural transgressions. 'Walking the line' is a metaphor for appropriate behaviour, crossing it means something else entirely. Grimshaw goes on to add:

Down towards the thirties, colour begins to glow upon the grey outlines of Northern life, and in the twenties, strange scenes and astonishing peoples paint it over and over. Cross the Line, and now you may take the brush, and indulge your vagrant fancy to the full, for nothing that you can paint will be too bright or too strange. (p. 10)

Each crossing is a revelation but only when 'the Line' (the equator) is traversed do the various meanings of latitude merge for it is here that one's 'vagrant' (wayward) fancies can be indulged.

Depicted in painterly terms, Grimshaw's Pacific worlds are, at this point in her writing, implacably visual. Her map, a gallery of spaces framed by lines of latitude and longitude, indicates a scopic economy. Heidegger states that 'the fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture' because 'man contends for the position in which he can be that particular being who gives the measure and draws up the guidelines for everything that is'.<sup>36</sup> Following Heidegger, Derek Gregory, in a chapter entitled 'Geography and World-as-exhibition', advances 'the possibility that, by the closing decades of the nineteenth century, it was a characteristic of European ways of knowing to render things as objects to be viewed'.<sup>37</sup> Intrinsic to various colonial projects, this process of naming, positioning, framing<sup>38</sup> and observing, whilst presupposing a belief in the possibility/desirability of stasis, betrays an awareness of mobility/ungovernability. For even as modernity constructed a system of rigid dualities—self–other, 'an inside and an outside, a centre and a margin'<sup>39</sup>—the edges of these binarisms were being eroded. Frames rarely ever contain the view. 'Cross the Line and now you may take up the brush': Grimshaw creates a framed space, an inside, then she enters it; the artist at work is both inside and outside the frame. She is both observer and observed.<sup>40</sup>

### Tourism as Acquisition

For Beatrice Grimshaw, the observer and observed, the borderlands surrounding the lines of latitude are spaces of anticipation leading to worlds of authentic otherness where 'nothing that you can paint will be too bright or too strange'. An attempt to secure the margins, this world is approached through a series of framing devices. This suggests not only a desire to see but moreover a desire to see an *all*, an easily digestible *all*, an *all* that is manageable and contained. This imperialist urge to observe/consume a site/sight in its entirety could offer one reason for the attraction of islands. These small areas, appearing to be decisively framed, present the tourist with what seems to be an opportunity for absolute visual consumption. Within the dominant Western mindset<sup>41</sup> islands are bounded spaces:

[A]s Bougainville and Shakespeare both understood, islands seem to be natural colonies. This is not just because of the desire to possess what is paradisaic or utopian, but because islands, unlike continents, look like property [...] The defining idea of an island is boundedness. When a landmass surrounded by water becomes as large as Australia it loses this characteristic and must be thought of instead as a continent.<sup>42</sup>

A continent is not easily amenable to visual consumption; islands complement the desiring and devouring eye. As James Hamilton-Paterson states, 'This unit of land which fits within the retina of the approaching eye is a token of desire.'<sup>43</sup> It is evident in the following quotation that islands represented an object of desire for Grimshaw: 'But the islets! If Raratonga was the realisation of a childish dream, this was the embodiment of a vision of fairyland. There can surely be nothing on earth more lovely than the islet constellation enclosed by Aitutaki reef' (*In the Strange South Seas*, 137). Grimshaw is staying on Aitutaki when she decides to visit the 'lesser islands of the lagoon' (p. 134). In Grimshaw's travel writing visiting islands appears to engender the desire to visit more, usually smaller, increasingly remote places.

And indeed Walter Benjamin in his examination of the compulsive desire of some individuals to collect objects writes that when the collector acquires a new addition: 'He loses himself, assuredly. But he has the strength to pull himself up again by nothing more than a straw; and from out of the sea of fog that envelops his senses rises the newly acquired piece, like an island.'<sup>44</sup> Islands facilitate a discourse of travel as accumulation; they enable the tourist to collect, to make lists of places—small contained kingdoms—where they have been and seen. And they also enable others to bestow status, organising tourist destinations into something akin to a collector's cabinet, as is evident in the following extract from Grimshaw's obituary in the *New York Times* (July 1953, 29):

She travelled alone in many parts of the world, including the South Seas, the Fiji, New Hebrides and Solomon Islands, the unknown cannibal country of Papua, New Guinea: Celebes and Borneo; the Straits Settlements, New Caledonia, Java and Dutch New Guinea.<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, Marian Broderick, commenting on Grimshaw in a volume entitled *Wild Irish Women*, states: 'Over the next three decades, Beatrice travelled all over the Eastern and Western Pacific Islands, including the Torres Straits, Fiji, the Moluccas, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, New Zealand, the New Hebrides, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.'<sup>46</sup> As Barthes says, 'every exploration is an appropriation'.<sup>47</sup> Facilitating travel as a process of accumulative status, islands can translate traveller into collector. And, perhaps,

at some level, this was what Grimshaw was doing in the Pacific—collecting a rosary of high volcanic and low coral islands strung together with a stream of Pacific blue. Disconnected from main land masses, these potential collector's items are also, within a Western mindset, borderlands, ones which invariably involve a very definite border crossing. Ina-Maria Greverus, in her study of the Scandinavian islands Rügen and Usedom, posits these and other islands as the borderlands of Continental Europe.<sup>48</sup> Gravid with potential border crossings in the aftermath of colonial cartography, the island world of the Pacific which she repeatedly refers to as 'the ends of the earth' is, for Grimshaw, not so much the borderlands of a continent but rather of the world.

### Freud on Travel

In journeying to the 'ends of the earth' Grimshaw is fulfilling that basic touristic drive to move beyond others. And, moreover, by travelling to what she perceives as the ultimate borderlands, she is making it impossible for others to move beyond her. Travel, as we have seen, can confer status; during various historical periods the degree of status accrued was, to a considerable extent, determined by the number of miles covered. Grimshaw takes great pains to emphasise distance in the opening chapter of *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*: 'and still we are travelling on . . . Sydney, bright and eager and curiously young . . . and still, in another vessel, for ever and ever, as it seems, we are going on . . . Seven weeks now since we sailed from Tilbury . . .' (p. 10). For Grimshaw this trip was the realisation of a long-held dream, something bound to provoke anxiety: 'All that afternoon, like "Tommy" in Barrie's *Thrums*, I kept saying to myself: "I'm here, I'm here!"' (*In the Strange South Seas*, 17). Exceeding limits and traversing boundaries can 'entail hidden complications';<sup>49</sup> Grimshaw's wish fulfilment induces feelings of derealisation (a perception that things and events outside oneself are alien and unreal). This mental defence mechanism was identified by Freud in his 1936 essay 'A Disturbance of Memory'. Reminiscing on his first visit to Athens, Freud states: 'When, finally . . . I stood on the Acropolis and cast my eyes around upon the landscape, a surprising thought suddenly entered my mind: "So all this really *does* exist, just as we learned at school!"'<sup>50</sup> Freud connects his inability to accept the reality of the situation 'What I see is not real'<sup>51</sup> with 'the limitations and poverty' that he had experienced as a child.<sup>52</sup> Dennis Porter has observed that 'the important element of disbelief concerns not the reality itself but his right to enjoy the sight of it'.<sup>53</sup> This right to enjoy is tied up with Freud's sense of guilt at travelling beyond his father and also the guilt embedded in his desire to extricate himself from that place called 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.'<sup>54</sup> Porter's analysis of Freud's response to the Acropolis brings together two closely connected defence mechanisms: derealisation and depersonalisation (a feeling of unreality and alienation from oneself). It is not only the tourist site that seems unreal to Freud, but also the viewing 'I'; the guilty 'I' who should not be there. Likewise, Grimshaw's reaction to the South Seas fuses these two defences: 'I'm here, I'm here' (*In the Strange South Seas*, 17); it is both the 'here' and the 'I's position in it that cause disorientation. I am not suggesting that Grimshaw experiences these defence mechanisms in what can be their clinical magnitude, but for a brief moment travel has clearly destabilised her conception of 'I'.

It is possible that Grimshaw, like Freud, may have been experiencing guilt. We know that her family fell on hard times; due to Nicholas Grimshaw's dissipation they had to leave

Cloona House, their country home, and move to 19 College Gardens, Belfast. In the autobiographical chapter of *Isles of Adventure* Grimshaw states that she 'was in the plight of a good many others, whose people were just discovering in that nineteenth-century end, that the "top drawers" would not, and did not, hold them any longer' (p. 18). Grimshaw's feelings of derealisation may have been the manifestation of guilt engendered by leaving a family who had descended the social ladder quite rapidly and with whom, when she had visited that place called home, she felt dissatisfied, even irritated: 'the manners and the food were better than one found anywhere else, but life was infested by the givers and takers of loathsome parties, and nobody was really serious' (p. 12). She goes on to state that her life in Dublin was 'punctuated, for the good of one's manners and soul, by excursions back into the ordered world one had left' (p. 18). A system of behavioural and spiritual checks and balances, this stultifying social scene appears to gravitate toward what Grimshaw deems a lightweight *society* agenda. Exuding a sense of quiet inertia, it is not so far removed from the aforementioned depiction of life and labour in the modern urban setting. Grimshaw depicts the workers of Liverpool as being in the throes of a type of labour-induced institutionalisation; essentially their lives are characterised by lack. This is also true of the commercial workers addressed in Grimshaw's travel brochure *The Islands of the Blest* (date of publication uncertain)<sup>55</sup> who, we are told, are 'starved in adolescence on the diet of the work-a-day world's common exigencies, and buried at last with a counting house stool for headstone' (p. 4).<sup>56</sup> Writing of her own career as a Dublin journalist, Grimshaw expresses pride over those periods when she edited two publications simultaneously, but she also describes journalism in the capital as a 'gay scramble, with little of the seriousness that informed the papers across the Irish Sea' (p. 14). Whether describing family life in her native Belfast, her own work or the work of others, meaning for Grimshaw appears to reside in an elsewhere, sentiments which Dean MacCannell posits as characteristic of modern tourists.

### MacCannell and the Tourist/Traveller Polarity

In his seminal text *The Tourist*, MacCannell states that 'the empirical and ideological expansion of modern society [is] intimately linked in diverse ways to modern mass leisure, especially to international tourism and sightseeing'.<sup>57</sup> MacCannell asserts that 'The progress of modernity ("modernisation") depends on its very sense of instability and inauthenticity. For moderns, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere: in other historical periods and other cultures, in purer, simpler life-styles.'<sup>58</sup> Explaining his use of the term 'authenticity', MacCannell makes clear that he is not postulating notions of a true original or a locatable point of origin; he has stated that he always 'meant for it to be enclosed in quotes'.<sup>59</sup> The site/sight or experience does not embody an inherent quality: 'The work becomes "authentic" only after the first copy of it is produced.'<sup>60</sup> According to MacCannell, it is this socially constructed 'authenticity', a product of what he designates the modern mind, that has fuelled mass tourism. Whilst recognising the pivotal role played by tourism within modernity's colonial course, MacCannell's concept of *the* tourist (which has been rigorously and repeatedly critiqued)<sup>61</sup> is undoubtedly problematic. Clearly not all tourists are questing for authenticity. And yet, despite this universalising approach to touristic experience and a deeply structuralist agenda, *The Tourist* remains 'a significant text for the study of discourses of displacement, querying high culture's fascination with singular, elite figures of travel'.<sup>62</sup> MacCannell has unquestionably done much to deconstruct the tourist/traveller dichotomy, a polarity which feminist critics of nineteenth- and early



twentieth-century women's travel writing have tended to reinforce. As stated, not only has there been a readiness to position these travelling women outside the colonial sphere; they have also been frequently represented as solitary figures strangely disconnected from the touristic discourses that were gaining considerable ground throughout the period.

In *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* Beatrice Grimshaw repeatedly describes herself as a 'wanderer', 'a gypsy wanderer' and on one occasion as an 'English Lady Traveller' (p. 28). As such she performs various roles which are for the most part decisively contrasted with the univocal subject position she attributes to tourists:

There is a steamer in today; the pavement is dotted with tourists—British, American, Colonial—armed with guides books and cameras and the totally unnecessary puggaree that the travelling Briton loves to deck himself withal. The tourists look at the convicts and their knives apprehensively. Reubeni is a mountain lad, and his hair is very wild and long, and his teeth are big and sharp, and he looks cannibal every inch, though in reality he is as mild as milk, and the light of local Sunday school . . . (p. 25)

Undifferentiated and uniformed, weighted with the superfluities of comfortable living, these tourists, pinioned to the well-trodden path, engage with the surface only. The solitary traveller, believing herself to be in possession of island knowledge, imagines that she can move behind Reubeni's (and the other convicts') exteriors in contrast to the tourist who is excluded from these 'authentic' regions and thus misinterprets the situation:

'James! James!' remonstrates a lady tourist, fat and elderly and nervous. 'Why did you not bring your revolver on shore with you, as I told you? I am sure these savages are most dangerous—and the road is literally full of convict murderers and thieves, all armed with daggers! Do let us go back to the steamer!' (p. 25)

Physically and psychologically, these tourists have much more in common with the aforementioned commercial workers of Liverpool than they do with their fellow traveller. Presented en masse, both groups appear to embody a strong herd instinct; slaves to routine, both are missing out on something, and, projected into a stoop-shouldered future, the clerical workers of Liverpool are also old. This is true, moreover, of Grimshaw's addressee: 'So to The Man Who Could Not Go, I address this book—to the elderly, white-waistcoated city magnate, grave autocrat of his clerky kingdom' (*In the Strange South Seas*, 10). In fact most of the inhabitants of Europe seem to be past their prime: 'Sydney, bright and eager and curiously young (where have all the grey breads hidden themselves? or are they all at home in the old grey lands that suit their wearied souls?)' (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 10). Everyone with the exception of the traveller appears to be slipping into bodily decline, but perhaps the tourist—referred to twice as 'fat'—more than most. Retreating to the safety of the steamer, the 'lady tourist', 'fat, elderly and nervous' is depicted as the antithesis of Grimshaw, who, responding to the call of the road, is preparing to explore the Fijian interior. Unlike MacCannell, Grimshaw believes that the 'authentic' is there, waiting, somewhere off the beaten track for those who have the stamina to find it.

This predilection for the unknown ways is a vital aspect of Grimshaw's travel practice:

All the really 'good times' I have had, in the course of many thousands of miles' wanderings about odd corners of the globe, have been obtained by the simple plan of avoiding the places which every person should make a point of seeing, and seeking those

from which one is most carefully and earnestly warned away. (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 125–26)

Grimshaw offers the following rationale for her aversion to the well-seen sights: 'The truth is that in the places where 'every one' goes, almost no man sees with his own eyes' (p. 126). When one considers the centrality of seeing to various discourses of travel, it is perhaps unsurprising that this type of ocular neurosis should emerge. Increasingly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sightseers express anxiety about their ability to really see those sights already viewed by so many.<sup>63</sup> Accordingly, the thing to do was seek out virgin sights where one's ability to see would not be so rigorously tested. In these places where one did not have to penetrate the visual deposits left by those who had seen there before, the 'unexamined' would bring forth a storehouse of 'original' observations. Grimshaw describes such a place as being 'fenced off from *deseccrating* [my italics] tourist feet by the barriers, whatever they may be, that have made of the place a land where nobody goes' (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 126). Whilst Grimshaw perceives her journey as sacred,<sup>64</sup> travels undertaken by other tourists are not only secular<sup>65</sup> but profane.

### Pseudo Events and Authenticity

Despite writing two travel brochures, the attitude that Grimshaw expressed toward tourists in her travelogues changed very little over the years. While reminiscing in *Isles of Adventure*, published twenty three years after *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, she is still clinging tenaciously to the elitist traveller/tourist polarity:

Once or twice, from the summit, I saw Dutch tourists, fat and cheerful, coming along in cars, walking lazily about the base of the first gallery, looking up to the towering terraces above, and hurrying back, with a shake of the head, to drink beer in the inn until it was time to go. (p. 244)

Having climbed to the top of 'the city of silent Buddhas' Grimshaw, monarch-of-all-she-surveys, looks down on pleasure-loving Dutch tourists who, corpulent of mind, body and spirit, prefer to skim the surface of the sight and retire to the shade. In contrast to the traveller who is intent upon exploration, knowledge, adventure, in short a muscular type of mental and physical mobility, Grimshaw's tourists are lethargic, hedonistic and superficial, a description which shares many similarities to one made much later by Daniel J. Boorstin in his influential work *The Image*.

In a frequently cited chapter entitled 'From Traveller to Tourist: The Lost Art of Travel', Boorstin bemoans what he considers the transformation of the travel experience, asserting that in its present form it is 'diluted, contrived, prefabricated', ultimately a 'pseudo-event'.<sup>66</sup> Boorstin was not the first to attack tourists. In the latter half of the nineteenth century when the newly emergent middle classes, under the auspices of Thomas Cook, began to enjoy Continental travel for the first time they were subject to a substantial amount of ridicule. Sir Leslie Stephen compared Cook's package tourists to a 'swarm of intrusive insects'<sup>67</sup> while Charles Lever described them as 'elderly, dreary, sad-looking'.<sup>68</sup> In reply to such elitist posturing Cook iterated:

But it is too late in this day of progress to talk such exclusive nonsense . . . railways and steamboats are the results of the common light of science, and are for the people . . . the

best of men, and the noblest of minds, rejoice to see the people follow in their foretrodden routes of pleasure.<sup>69</sup>

Responding to Boorstin, in an attempt to undermine the ersatz traveller/tourist duality, MacCannell observes 'that people who are actually in accord are struggling to distance themselves from themselves via this moral stereotype of the tourist'.<sup>70</sup>

In clear opposition to Boorstin's concept of the 'pseudo event', MacCannell claims that tourists are searching for structure, 'authenticity', 'social solidarity', a connection with social institutions believed to be eroded by modernity. This explains the desire to engage with the whole, that is to consume the sight in its totality. To illustrate his argument MacCannell draws on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sightseers in Paris who readily availed themselves of organised 'tours of the sewers, the morgue, a slaughterhouse, a tobacco factory, the government printing office, a tapestry works, the mint, the stock exchange, and the supreme court in session'.<sup>71</sup> This urge to locate social cohesion, to travel 'thoroughly', to inspect the underbelly of the sight, appears to have been a powerful motivating force behind many of Grimshaw's journeys: 'We are bound for the Sogeri country, some thirty-six miles away, and we intend to make a three days' journey of it, so as to add on some small detours and see everything thoroughly' (*The New New Guinea*, 56). And yet this same desire, when connected with members of a package tour, is a source of amusement and derision; they try so hard to see everything that in the end they do not see anything at all:

We called at nineteen hundred and seven ports on this island (I speak from memory only; it may have been one or two under- or over), looked in on Ambrym and Paama for a few minutes, and then began doing Malekula with the thoroughness of a Cook's tour. (*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 156)

The improving tourist also comes in for criticism:

Although I certainly did not use the few days of my stay in Tahiti to the best advantage—although I saw none of the public buildings of Papeëte, never set eyes on any of the officials of the place, and did not collect any statistics worth mentioning, I gathered a few crude facts of a useful kind, which are herewith offered as a sop to the reader who must be informed and improved, or know the reason why. (*In the Strange South Seas*, 26)

Rather than a few crude facts, Grimshaw supplies information which suggests a considerable amount of background reading. Likewise, toward the end of this text, when commenting on the Wairakei Geysers, she states 'instructive, after the tedious scientific-evenings fashion of our childhood, they are not [...] One ought, no doubt, to absorb a great deal of geological information during the tour of the valley, but one is too busy having a good time that one doesn't' (p. 321). But Grimshaw has absorbed geological information which she delivers in the following chapter telling the reader, among other things, that 'Some geysers open in the centre of a cone of siliceous sinter, built up by the deposits from the water, and have no basins' (p. 332). Although influenced by the Victorian discourse of travel as improvement, Grimshaw makes a concerted effort to distance herself from it, and from those with whom it was most often associated, Cook's tourists. Like Boorstin, she presents tourists as questing after the pseudo event: 'I am sorry that the above is not a better story: but the fact is that tourists are not plentiful about Wairakei, and the natives have not learned to invent the proper tourist tale' (p. 325). Amid a body of travel

writing replete with tourist tales and anecdotes this remark sits awkwardly. Opening the door to a process of deconstruction, Grimshaw's travellers and tourists, despite her best efforts to the contrary, refuse to fossilise into binary opposites.

### Authentication

This refusal of Grimshaw's travelling constructs to petrify into rigid dualities is perhaps most evident in the final chapters of *In the Strange South Seas* where, somewhat reluctantly at first, she is very clearly travelling around New Zealand's well-trodden paths as part of a tourist group, consuming sights and 'improving' geological information. Taking a nostalgic turn, Grimshaw describes New Zealand as the 'Britain of the Southern cross' (p. 316). The Britain that she is contemplating is decidedly rooted in the nineteenth-century novel:

Late and dark and cold is the evening when we rattle up to the accommodation house planted in a strange desert spot, where the night is to be passed. Another coach comes in and discharges its load by-and-by. The Dickensonian flavour increases, as we of the earlier coach sit round the great ingle-nook fire of blazing logs in the coffee-room, silently surveying the new comers, while they shed their many wraps and crowd about the blaze. (p. 317)

Grimshaw's touristic construction of New Zealand is shattered by the arrival of three travelling Maoris, who, 'alighting from the coach and taking their place in the warm room, break through the illusion of Victorian romance at a touch' (p. 317). Just as the presence of the colonial tourist alters life in the host country, these three people, simply by being, disrupt the touristic narrative. Tourists, as MacCannell makes clear, do not get a free reign, their quest for 'authentic experiences, perceptions and insights' is controlled to a considerable extent by the indigenous population.<sup>72</sup> And while a tourist decides whether an event, interaction, sight or experience is authentic, frequently he or she will also be under scrutiny and subject to a process of authentication, or otherwise. The ability to authenticate is not the prerogative of any one group; 'authenticity' is, to use Said's expression, a 'travelling theory'.<sup>73</sup> And as such it is certainly not confined to a scopic economy, something that MacCannell's elaboration of Goffman's theory of front and back regions tends to suggest.<sup>74</sup> 'Authenticity' is not simply determined by the visual; tourism takes place in a polysensual world. For Beatrice Grimshaw the 'authentic' is frequently located in interpersonal relations, for example the kindness, hospitality and generosity expressed by many islanders, and especially in what she perceives to be Samoan social solidarity. The unstinting hospitality that she experienced in many of the Islands did not, however, prevent Grimshaw from exploiting the islanders, even their tragic and untimely deaths, for colonial ends.

### Death and the Worker

The museumisation of death for ideological reasons is evident throughout Grimshaw's work. One particularly grotesque and exploitative example occurs in *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*:

There the woman lay on the table, her breast straining audibly in the long mechanical heave of chloroformed respiration, her deep-lashed eyes shut, her pretty little hands

hanging limp and lifeless over the table edge. She was young, attractive, very feminine-looking creature; and the ghastly rift that disfigured her delicate side seemed all the more anomalous and horrible. (p. 219)

After exhibiting the young woman's pain, Grimshaw goes on, quite shamelessly, to use it, and various other deaths, in order to encourage greater colonial interference in the Vanuatuan Islands: 'And I wished, most earnestly, that I could see the strong hand of Great Britain or her Colonies grasp the bridle of this wretched country ...' (p. 219). Grimshaw's engagement with death, however, is not simply determined by the needs of Empire. Identifying the touristic desire for social solidarity as a motivating force behind sightseeing tours of working-class remains in the Paris morgue, Dean MacCannell states:

The relationship of the tourist to the corpse is not merely that of life to death but of order to disorder as well. Ending up on that side of the glass in this establishment indicates a hasty and improper departure from the world and probably an unruly life-style which led to such an exit. The display of the corpses is ostensibly for the purpose of their identification, but what is represented is the importance of social order and of leaving society in an orderly way, preserving one's identity to the very end.<sup>75</sup>

According to MacCannell, mortality became a preoccupation among the travelling classes in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>76</sup> By the end of the century the Paris morgue became a popular tourist attraction where visitors could gaze on a gallery of corpses supposedly for the purpose of identification. But whose identity was being confirmed? MacCannell argues that this exercise in visual consumption was really an attempt to consolidate the tourist's conception of self.<sup>77</sup> In contrast to the nameless cadavers, who may have met their fate in dubious and disorderly circumstances, the tourist, occupying a specific social position in opposition to the liminal space of the corpse, is a named somebody, a somebody who can mercilessly scrutinise those who will never be able to return the gaze, a somebody who is positioned in a somewhere—chiefly the domain of the living. The tourist is observing death; 'yet it is death of the other', death 'occurring at someone else's body',<sup>78</sup> death which underwrites the self as survivor.

Two main attractions for post-industrial tourists are, according to MacCannell, death and work. Commenting on the latter, MacCannell states: 'The worker was integrated as *worker* into industrial society (emphasis in original). The worker is integrated into modern society as tourist and as tourist attraction (work display), as actor and spectator in the "universal drama of work".<sup>79</sup> While death displays feature heavily in Grimshaw's writing, work, that is work carried out by South Sea Islanders, is given a much less prominent position. Pacific labour practices, when they do enter her landscapes, tend to be translated into something akin to leisure pursuits. Shark fishing, highly dangerous and an important aspect of the Aitutakian economy, is described as 'sport' (*In the Strange South Seas*, 130) while a reference to the shark as a 'stupid brute' (p. 131) works to undermine the courage of the fishermen. In describing the fishermen of Penrhyn Island Grimshaw states: 'He will swim all day as easily as he will walk. You may often meet him out fishing, miles from shore, without a boat, pushing in front of him a small plank that carries his bait, lines, and catch' (p. 233). Rather than depicting this learned craft as a skilled labour practice, honed and polished through repetition, Grimshaw naturalises the process by describing Penrhyn islanders as 'strange, wild, semi-amphibious natives' (p. 232). They are merely doing what they have been racially programmed to do, what they can do without difficulty, rather than

engaging in a task that has required patience, fortitude and energy to cultivate. MacCannell recognises that when 'workers are put on display for tourists, it is possible to omit the situation of the worker from the representation of the place of work in society'.<sup>80</sup>

Here is the double character of work displays: they always appear as totalities and they convey vivid impressions, but they do not require that their viewer be responsible for seeing or remembering all their elements, or even their most essential elements, as he reconstructs them into his own firsthand version of society.<sup>81</sup>

While the work display is susceptible to touristic interpretation it nevertheless remains a work display; the 'concrete situation of the individual worker' may be obscured, but the worker is still presented as a worker in a place of work.<sup>82</sup> MacCannell fails to consider that work in the touristic setting may be translated into something entirely different, something not even tangentially connected with labour.

In contrast to the fishermen of Penrhyn, the guano plant on Malden Island, owned and run by whites, is a clear example of a work display. And one which involves a fairly detailed description of a worker made seriously ill by the product; corporate capitalism was not Grimshaw's preferred type of colonial venture. Nevertheless, Malden is presented as a sight/site of labour. And, when one considers Grimshaw's ruminations on why the islanders agreed to take paid work on Malden, vis-à-vis the host/guest or colonial/Other polarity it is an important site:

Why they undertake the work at all is one of the puzzles presented by the Polynesian character. They have enough to eat and enough to wear, without doing any work so to speak of, while they are at home. Usually the motive for going to Malden is the desire of making twenty-five pounds or so. (*In the Strange South Seas*, 230–31)

Grimshaw promptly suggests that the majority of islanders squander their hard-earned money. Her conclusion as to why the islanders go to Malden is interesting: 'So the product of the year's exile and hard work is simply a tour among the islands—in itself a strong attraction' (p. 231). Earlier, when discussing workers who were on their way to Malden, Grimshaw asserts 'The South Sea Islander loves nothing more than change, and every island we touched was a Paris or an Ostend to these (mostly) untravelled natives' (p. 214). Later Grimshaw refers to the labourers as 'wanderer[s]' (p. 231), an epithet frequently applied to herself in the first two travel books. These men who love change more than money conform to Grimshaw's definition of the 'true traveller, who wanders for the joy of wandering' (p. 119). Having done so much to flag up the solitary, highly individualised and elite nature of her tourism, Grimshaw's binarisms, not only between tourist and traveller but also between guests and hosts, begin to show signs of stress. As does the polarity she creates between herself and those people referred to as 'stay-at-homes', people she presents as being in the grip of something similar to institutional neurosis. All these groups desiring change are connected by boredom—socially, culturally and historically specific boredom, but boredom none the less.<sup>83</sup> This was a factor motivating Grimshaw's travel; why, after all, look at a white wall and imagine an elsewhere. Although she failed to mention it in relation to *her* travels, it was nevertheless one of many starting points on that journey. As the 'stay-at-homes' reach and reach again for their 'Marryats, Mayne Reids, and Michael Scotts' (p. 10) in order to escape the monotony, Grimshaw surfs the great wave of ennui by moving from place to place, from sight to sight, from island to island.



In this paper I have demonstrated how Beatrice Grimshaw uses travel as a status bearer, as that which italicises individuality by separating the traveller off from the urban crowd, from fellow tourists, from racialised others, in short, from that which Grimshaw depicts as the herd. This conceptualisation of travel is dependent upon a series of binary opposites: tourist/stay-at home, tourist/traveller, host/guest, constructs which are inherently unstable, constructs which simply do not hold up under scrutiny. This instability is manifested in the travelling 'I', an 'I' that may have already been undermined by the journey. While travel can help to construct and/or affirm a positive conception of self, it can also, as evidenced by Grimshaw's engagement with the volcano on the island of Tanna, and her attempts to domesticate the sublime in the Vanuatuan rainforests, seriously undermine that which constitutes an 'I'. The 'I' which Grimshaw constructs in her travel writing never stands alone; it is one face in a crowd of others—urban workers, society neighbours, tourists, South Sea Islanders—upon whom it depends. The travelling subjectivity which she embraces is dependent upon a negation of the subject position of others. Grimshaw rejected the urban mass—'roaring throat of Piccadilly'—and travelled to 'the ends of the earth'. There she found another 'throat', that of a Pacific volcano. Contemplating the terrifying depth of its 'wolf mouth' she discovered that which she had not escaped—that which she could never escape—a truly dangerous sameness.

Factors looked at when contemplating what prompted Grimshaw to leave Ireland included: ennui, imagination, curiosity; the desire for self-realisation, a longing for the sacred and the silent; a flagging self-esteem; an urge to escape the city and the strictures of home; the quest for authenticity and social solidarity; adventure, excitement; colonial duty and imperial imaginings. But, of course, there is always the inexplicable—unvoiced and unseen. A failure to recognise it is a truly colonial act.

## NOTES

The author would like to thank Kathleen McCracken for commenting on this paper and Patricia Bartlett for proof reading it.

1. Adrienne Rich, cited in Kaplan, *Questions of Travel*, 8.
2. For biographical information on Grimshaw see McCotter, 'Colonising Landscapes and Mapping Bodies', chap. 1.
3. Grimshaw, *Isles of Adventure*, 14. All further references to this text will be given in the body of the paper.
4. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 13.
5. On boundaries and linkage see Doreen Massey, cited in Phillips, 'Writing Travel and Mapping Sexuality', 84.
6. Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, 1959.
7. Grimshaw, *Three Wonderful Nations*; idem, *The Islands of the Blest*. All further references to these texts will be given in the body of the paper.
8. While Grimshaw did not at any time describe herself as a geographer or an ethnologist it has been argued elsewhere that she was actively involved in the production and dissemination of both imaginative geographies and ethnologies pertaining to the Pacific. See McCotter, 'Colonising Landscapes and Mapping Bodies', 18–65.
9. McEwan, *Gender, Geography and Empire*, 3.
10. Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, 23.

11. McEwan, *Gender, Geography and Empire*, 30.
12. Grimshaw, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 31. All further references to this text will be given in the body of the paper.
13. Grimshaw, *The New New Guinea*. All further references to this text will be given in the body of the paper.
14. Gardner, *For Love and Money*, 103.
15. See Kranidis, *The Victorian Spinster and Colonial Emigration*, 158.
16. Grimshaw, *In the Strange South Seas*, 13. All further references to this text will be given in the body of the paper.
17. Grimshaw, *Fiji and its Possibilities*, frontispiece.
18. See Eldridge, *The Imperial Experience*, 17–18.
19. See Maxine Feifer, *Going Places*, 149; Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*, 182–88.
20. On the development of ocularcentric knowledge in connection with travel see Adler, 'Origins of Sightseeing', 8–11.
21. Feifer, *Going Places*, 138.
22. For a discussion of the forest and military imagery see Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, 59.
23. *Ibid.*, *Landscape and Memory*, 197.
24. Simpson, 'Commentary', 254.
25. With regard to the phrase 'All same calico', Grimshaw states 'It is necessary to explain that the Tanna-man always buys red cotton.' *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 236.
26. Rancière, 'Discovering New Worlds', 34.
27. Prior to visiting the volcano Grimshaw states: 'The Tannese have a deadly horror of the place, and only a civilized mission native will venture to approach it.' *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*, 230. The guide therefore has an understanding of the Christian concept of hell, and while his perception of this hell will be mediated through his own cultural experiences he nevertheless appears to be conceptualising the volcano in similar terms to Grimshaw.
28. McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 27.
29. Fothergill, 'Of Conrad, Cannibals, and Kim', 53. For a discussion of race, class and social Darwinism see also Eldridge, *The Imperial Experience*, 140–66.
30. On the development of industrial holidays see Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 20.
31. On travel and self-improvement see Feifer, *Going Places*, 163–200.
32. One of the most popular destinations for working-class holidaymakers was the English coastline. See Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 18.
33. An example of this fusion would be Wordsworth's Michael from the poem of that name. The formidable old man is not only subsumed by but is more crucially a component of the sublime terror. Mason, *Lyrical Ballads*, 344.
34. Williams, *The Country and the City*, 222.
35. For a discussion of borders and borderlands see the following: Grewal, 'Autobiographic Subjects and Diasporic Locations', 247; Alvarez, 'Towards an Anthropology of Borderlands', 225–38; Peckham, 'The Exoticism of the Familiar and the Familiarity of the Exotic', 179.
36. Martin Heidegger, cited in Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, 34.
37. Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, 34.
38. For a discussion of spatial boundaries see Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion*, 32–48.
39. Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, 36.

40. See Griselda Pollock's essay 'Territories of Desire', 63–89. For a discussion of a literary negotiation of the nationalist discourse of the border see Mary Layoun's excellent essay 'The Female Body and "Transnational" Reproduction', 63–75.
41. See Edmond and Smith, *Islands in History and Representation*, 2.
42. *Ibid.*, 1.
43. James Hamilton-Paterson, cited in Edmond and Smith, *Islands in History and Representation*, 2.
44. Walter Benjamin, cited in McMahon, 'The Gilded Cage', 198.
45. Anon., 'Beatrice Grimshaw, Wrote of South Seas', *The New York Times*, July 1953, 29.
46. Broderick, *Wild Irish Women*, 257.
47. Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, 14.
48. Greverus, 'Island as Borderland', 59–76.
49. Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt*, 179.
50. Freud, cited in Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt*, 180.
51. Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt*, 180, emphasis in original.
52. *Ibid.*, 180.
53. Porter, *Haunted Journeys*, 196.
54. Freud, cited in Porter, *Haunted Journeys*, 196.
55. It is very difficult to obtain any information regarding the date of publication. The University of Auckland dates it as 1910, while the University of Otago, which has a copy, leaves the date unknown. An on-line check of book buyers revealed two copies in the USA but these also state that the date of publication is unknown.
56. For a discussion of travel and the death drive see McCotter, 'Islanders, Tourists and Psychosis', 1–18.
57. MacCannell is not suggesting that tourism began with modernity (we know that the ancient Romans, for example, had their own tourist circuits); MacCannell is referring specifically to the phenomenon of *mass* tourism. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 3.
58. *Ibid.*
59. Bruner, 'The Transformation of Self in Tourism', 241.
60. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 48.
61. See Cohen, 'Traditions in the Qualitative Sociology of Tourism', 33–37; *idem.*, "'Primitive and Remote" Hill Tribe Trekking in Thailand', 30–61; Bruner, 'The Transformation of Self in Tourism', 241–42.
62. Kaplan, *Questions of Travel*, 5.
63. Feifer, *Going Places*, 181.
64. For a discussion of tourism and the sacred see Graburn, 'Tourism', 24.
65. See Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, 7.
66. Boorstin, *The Image*, 88–89.
67. Sir Leslie Stephen, cited in Feifer, *Going Places*, 179.
68. Charles Lever, cited in Feifer, *Going Places*, 188.
69. Thomas Cook, cited in Feifer, *Going Places*, 168–69.
70. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 9.
71. *Ibid.*, *The Tourist*, 57.
72. *Ibid.*, 105.
73. Edward Said, cited in Arshi *et al.*, 'Why Travel?', 225.
74. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 102.
75. *Ibid.*, 72.

76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
78. Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body*, x.
79. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 63.
80. Ibid., 66.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., 67.
83. For a discussion of travel, boredom and deconstruction see Arshi *et al.*, 'Why Travel?', 225–41.

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