



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## Edinburgh Research Explorer

### Travelogues of Difference

**Citation for published version:**

Guillaume, X 2011, 'Travelogues of Difference: IR Theory and Travel Literature' Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, vol 36, no. 2, pp. 136-154., 10.1177/0304375411409016

**Digital Object Identifier (DOI):**

[10.1177/0304375411409016](https://doi.org/10.1177/0304375411409016)

**Link:**

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

**Document Version:**

Author final version (often known as postprint)

**Published In:**

Alternatives: Global, Local, Political

**Publisher Rights Statement:**

© Guillaume, X. (2011). Travelogues of Difference: IR Theory and Travel Literature. Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, 36(2), 136-154, doi: 10.1177/0304375411409016

**General rights**

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

**Take down policy**

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact [openaccess@ed.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@ed.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



## **Travelogues of Difference: IR theory and travel literature**

Xavier Guillaume

University of Geneva

Abstract:

The discovery of the Americas, and more particularly Tzvetan Todorov's analysis of certain early modern European travelogues, has had a central influence in the way key International Relations (IR) theorists have conceptualized the identity/alterity nexus over the past 25 years. These authors have used travel writing, whether directly or indirectly, as one of their central sources for conceptualizing and reflecting on the sociological, political and normative dimensions of the nexus. More specifically, this literature centers how this specific event is central in situating the western/Christian/modern impetus in relation to difference. Modern European travel literature has provided IR with a strong heuristic for comprehending the development of modern and contemporary expressions of the international. This heuristic, however, emphasizes the overpowering frameworks of the figure of inversion and the mechanism of othering to make sense of the nexus. These frameworks are limited and limiting in our ability to conceptualize this nexus from both the perspective of social and political theory. This contribution, while retaining the fundamental intuition to mobilize travel literature to provide for an heuristic of the identity/alterity nexus, looks for an alternative way to decentre the European centeredness and modernist core of contemporary IR theory and calls on a non-European and non-modern travelogue to provide for such heuristic. The present contribution starts by identifying the influence of modern European travel literature on IR theory and then contextualizes Todorov's interpretation to show the western-centeredness and modernist core inherent in the appropriation that has been made of his work in IR. The counter-point to this western-centeredness and modernist core follows by first exploring classical Greece as both a similar – the ancient Greeks' relation to alterity was mediated by travels, voyages and, ultimately, colonization – and dissimilar – the perception of the self and the foreign was not based on a sense of centeredness but on a culture of the periphery –

experience to alterity and by analysing Herodotus' travel literature and the ways by which he translates difference to the realm of sameness. Calling upon Herodotus's writing shows that narration of difference does not necessarily imply othering and thus opens up new ways to conceptualize the identity/alterity nexus.

## **Travelogues of Difference: IR theory and travel literature<sup>i</sup>**

The discovery of the Americas, and more particularly Tzvetan Todorov's analysis of certain early modern European travelogues, has had a central influence in the way key International Relations (IR) theorists have conceptualized the identity/alterity nexus over the past 25 years. These authors have used travel writing, whether directly or indirectly, as one of their central sources for conceptualizing and reflecting on the sociological, political and normative dimensions of the identity/alterity nexus. More specifically, this literature centers on the discovery, exploration, conquest and colonization of the Americas, and the travel literature attached to it, as this specific event is seen as central in situating the western/Christian/modern impetus in relation to difference. This partly explains the centrality of static, symmetrical, dual and dichotomized modes of representation to think about this nexus among central contributions to the field of international studies despite their commitment to theoretical approaches centered on processes and practices.

Modern European travel literature, and especially its eighteenth and nineteenth centuries incarnation influenced by the process of colonization, has provided IR with a strong heuristic for comprehending the development of modern and contemporary expressions of the international. This heuristic, however, emphasizes the overpowering frameworks of the figure of inversion and the mechanism of othering to make sense of the identity/alterity nexus. These frameworks are limited and limiting in our ability to conceptualize this nexus from both the perspective of social and political theory.<sup>ii</sup> This contribution, while retaining the fundamental intuition to mobilize travel literature to provide for an heuristic of the identity/alterity nexus, looks for an alternative way to decentre the European centeredness and modernist core of contemporary IR theory and calls on a non-European and non-modern travelogue to provide for such heuristic. What we are looking for then is a resource to help us conceptualize a more encompassing framework beyond the modernist and European experiences while retaining some of its key insights because of their relevance to understand

the international.

The present contribution starts by identifying the influence of modern European travel literature on IR theory and then contextualizes Todorov's interpretation to show the western-centeredness and modernist core inherent in the appropriation that has been made of his work in IR to ground a specific understanding of identity and difference at the global level. The counter-point to this western-centeredness and modernist core follows by first exploring classical Greece as both a similar – the ancient Greeks' relation to alterity was mediated by travels, voyages and, ultimately, colonization – and dissimilar – the perception of the self and the foreign was not based on a sense of centeredness but on a culture of the periphery – experience to alterity and by analysing Herodotus' travel literature and the ways by which he translates difference to the realm of sameness. Herodotus' choice should naturally come to mind as he not only assumed an equivalent position in his time as did the modern European travel writers, but also because to analyze his narratives provide us with hints as to how to consider the cognitive, sociological, political and normative dimensions of the identity/nexus beyond their current modern and western comprehension. Calling upon Herodotus's writing shows that narration of difference does not necessarily imply othering and thus opens up new ways to conceptualize the identity/alterity nexus.

Travel literature and IR theory: a quest for origins

One of the most important sources mobilized to think through the identity/alterity nexus in IR theory has been a specific literary genre set in a specific period, the (early) modern European travel literature. This is a relevant move as travel writing has been one of the primary modes by which difference has been historically appraised, constructed and represented both spatially and temporally in the west.<sup>iii</sup> Authors<sup>iv</sup> such as William Connolly, David Campbell, David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, Iver Neumann, Richard Shapcott, or Michael Shapiro – to name but a few among those whose reference to travel literature contains more than a

passing note to Tzvetan Todorov *La conquête de l'Amérique*<sup>v</sup> – have used travel writing, whether directly or indirectly, as one of their central sources for conceptualizing and reflecting on the sociological, political and normative dimensions of the identity/alterity nexus. More specifically, this literature centers on the discovery, exploration, conquest and colonization of the Americas, and the travel literature attached to it, as this specific event is seen as central in situating the western/Christian/modern impetus in relation to difference. In the words of a scholar whose work on identity and alterity has been very influential on IR theory, "Todorov introduces a zone of intertextuality between late-medieval Christianity and late-modern secular internationality in order to open the present to an interrogation of itself and its past."<sup>vi</sup>

Discussing what he views as paradigmatic sixteenth century's travelogues of the conquest of the Americas, Todorov reads their travel writings or philosophical discussions as best expressing the "direct causality" the conquest of the Americas had on "our present identity."<sup>vii</sup> From the sixteenth century to the present days, western Europe was largely successful in imposing its way of life and values to the world and in assimilating the other; "as Colombus wished, the colonized have adopted our customs and came to wear our clothes."<sup>viii</sup> This conception of the historical centrality of the conquest of the Americas is shared by many IR theorists.

The exploration and *interpretation* of the New World is an historical moment of significant proportions in the development of the modern identity. It is a *moment of intertextuality* in which traditional modes of representation struggle to make sense of contemporary observations. It is a moment in which (inter)national relations are promulgated between divergent groups. And it is a moment when the intertextual and (inter)national relations are implicated in interracial relations. In the invention of

America the confrontation between the European, Spanish, and Christian "self" and the "other" of the indigenous peoples is an encounter of lasting significance for the way in which it brings to the New World the orientations towards difference and otherness of the Old World.<sup>ix</sup>

Modern European travel literature on the Americas, as the main conveyor of this "moment of intertextuality," is thus considered as the main window to understand not only the institution of the specific form the identity/alterity nexus took in its western experience, most notably through othering and assimilation, but also the institution of the international per se. This interrogation on identity, alterity and the international takes two forms. One is a form of genealogical interrogation on the modern origin and contemporary endurance of othering, what Todorov terms the "double movement,"<sup>x</sup> at the heart of the western relation to alterity; this movement transforms alterity into an inferior other while equality is seen through the lenses of sameness. The second form is a normative interrogation on the possibility to move beyond the "structural temptation"<sup>xi</sup> of the double movement; this temptation to other alterity into an inferior difference is not a psychological disposition but reflects the "logic of identity" and "the structural imperatives of social organization."<sup>xii</sup> The fact that it is a temptation highlights the dimension of responsibility of those othering difference. To ground responsibility through an interrogation of this specific historical event is normatively necessary to "*imagine* a world in which a given field of identities might hope to recognize differences without being *internally* compelled to define some of them as forms of otherness to be conquered, assimilated, or defiled."<sup>xiii</sup>

To give but key examples of the resonance of Todorov's work in IR, David Campbell, in order to demonstrate how "America is the imagined community *par excellence*,"<sup>xiv</sup> starts a reconstitution of different key moment of "foreign policy" in regards to alterity between the

discovery of the Americas and the early times of the U.S. republic.<sup>xv</sup> This reconstitution is set under the aegis of Todorov's analysis of the confrontation between Christian/Spanish conquerors and the American-Indians. While acknowledging the limits of tracing a direct link between the discovery and conquest of the Americas and the United States of America, Campbell nonetheless notes that "there can be little doubt that, given its genocidal impact and philosophical resonances, this encounter profoundly though indirectly affected the country that now exercises hegemony over the term 'America'."<sup>xvi</sup> This influence essentially lays in the fact that the self is "*tempted* by the logics of defilement [i.e. othering]" as the self is compelled by the "modernist requirements of order and stability."<sup>xvii</sup> While going beyond this logic is normatively possible, and necessary, this outcome is but a rare actual possibility.<sup>xviii</sup>

The influence of Todorov can also be traced in David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah's work. For them, Todorov's idea of "nonviolent communication," along with Ashis Nandy's notion of "dialogue of visions," are necessary elements to start seeing the "other" as a subject, thus going beyond the mostly western conception of the other-as-object.<sup>xix</sup> Furthermore, Todorov provides as well one of the inspiration for their treatment of the modern origin of the practice of othering as they examine several travelogues or thinkers of the sixteenth and seventeenth century.<sup>xx</sup> For Blaney and Inayatullah, "the self comes to know and act toward the other"<sup>xxi</sup> through the double movement; this highlights the "reflexes" of othering<sup>xxii</sup> that have to be fought in order to reach a situation of critical dialogue.<sup>xxiii</sup> Similarly, Richard Shapcott employs Todorov's analysis of the European encounter with the Americas as it makes "the argument for communication over and against its alternatives of assimilation and coexistence."<sup>xxiv</sup> Shapcott is inferring four "modes of engagement" between a self and alterity from Todorov's *La conquête de l'Amérique*. These four "modes of engagement" – annihilation, assimilation, coexistence, and communication – are not only practices but also "correspond to normative and philosophical positions."<sup>xxv</sup> Moreover, they structure Shapcott's main theoretical and normative argument as they inform his discussion for providing an



account of justice as recognition of difference.

All these authors, via Todorov, call upon what they, implicitly or explicitly, consider authoritative discourses and voices setting the terms of the relations between a western identity and alterity: whether it is Columbus, Las Casas or Sahagún,<sup>xxvi</sup> Francisco de Vitoria, Jean de Léry, Hugo Grotius, or Tomasso Campanella.<sup>xxvii</sup> Yet, what was the actual place of these travelogues in the representation and performance of a "European" collective identity? Were they the sole authoritative voices in their times? Were they the sole *hístôr*,<sup>xxviii</sup> the voices setting the knowledge and moral spaces through which alterity is understood? Putting in perspective (early) modern European travel literature on the Americas becomes important because of the reliance on this particular rendering of this specific experience in regard to a more vast European experience with difference that was also translated in travel accounts of other lands during the same period. To assess this authority we have thus to turn to Todorov's interpretation of these travel accounts, to travel literature as a specific literary genre, and finally to the contexts of enunciation of some of these texts.

The reliance on travel literature on the conquest of the Americas, and Todorov's specific account and conceptualization, can be problematic for several reasons. First, from the perspective of the IR literature whose call is to reach an "ethical way of being" emerging from the recognition of "the very necessity of heterogeneity for understanding ourselves and others,"<sup>xxix</sup> Todorov can actually be a problematic source. He has been precisely criticized by Americanists for (re)producing forms of homogeneity whether on the side of the Europeans or on the side of the Amerindians by shying away or ignoring many historical facts and sources that would go contrary to his argument and by reconstructing an "Indian" self totally inadequate in lights of these facts and sources. More, this "Indian" self is reconstructed through an uncritical adoption of the conqueror's tales about the "Indians."<sup>xxx</sup> In the words of

Deborah Root:

Todorov's apparent rejection of historical factors, particularly those which refer to dissensions within the Aztec empire, results in what is essentially a racist explanation. In effect, Todorov is suggesting that the Mexicans were defeated *because they were "Indians."* This not only assumes that the "Indians" were more like each other than like the Spaniards ... but it erases the particular histories of both the Mexicans and the European invaders. In this way the conquest is produced as a symmetrical, totally unique "event" in which "Spaniards" defeated "Indians."<sup>xxxix</sup>

This homogenization of both Europeans' and Indians' stories and realities results from their categorization by Todorov into binary, symmetrical and static items that are presented in an oppositional mode.<sup>xxxix</sup> These forms of categorization into symmetrical and static dichotomies are also reproduced in IR.<sup>xxxix</sup> To give a quick but concrete example, the index of *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* itemizes no less than thirty-three dichotomies identified and discussed throughout the book.<sup>xxxix</sup> As Gesa Mackentuhn notes, however, "the dualistic theoretical framework of Todorov's analysis is basically identical with the dualism of the colonialist ideology it opposes. Sixteenth-century reality can hardly be pressed into a dualist mold without a few kicks and shoves."<sup>xxxv</sup> Moreover, Todorov's and IR's reading of early modern travel literature seems more influenced by a postcolonial reading of the *post-mid-eighteenth century* travel literature, exemplarily illustrated in work such as Mary Louise Pratt's.<sup>xxxvi</sup> This reading centers on the intricate relations between writer and colonizer but is less "clearly applicable to the earlier narratives of exploration"<sup>xxxvii</sup> usually referred to in IR theory. It is correct that these examples of early modern travel literature

(in varying forms and degrees) bear the marks of a "colonizing imagination"—tropes, fantasies, rhetorical structures—whereby the writers/travellers frequently fall back on defining the cultural others they encounter in terms of binaries that later consolidate and justify full-blown colonialism.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Yet, the "early modern travel narratives do not produce Said's orientalism, but instead recount cultural encounters in which self and other are *not fixed in opposing positions but are rewritten through discursive and social interventions*."<sup>xxxix</sup> What Todorov is thus missing out, and he is not alone in that matter, is the "textual strategies" at play in these texts. Todorov and others are confounding these "textual strategies with what [they] take as the authors genuine experience and [do] not always clearly distinguish between the discourse of the marvelous and the sensations of the authors (of which we can speak only by presupposing textual transparency)."<sup>xl</sup>

Therefore, it is crucial to stress the difficulty in reconstructing a single European experience of or even a Eurocentric stance over alterity from this specific "event" (spanning over centuries) and the translations of this "event" through a specific literary genre (itself evolving over centuries). Travel literature as a genre and the "travel knowledge" that is linked to it is "hardly unmediated insofar as it is shaped by political factors, subject to authorial intervention, and plagued by general epistemological problems that attend the movement of information from one culture to another."<sup>xli</sup> To take into account travel literature as a literary genre is to comprehend it as a "genre composed of other genres."<sup>xlii</sup> In Mary Campbell's words:

It is a genre that confronts, at their extreme limit, representational tasks proper to a

number of literary kinds: the translation of experience into narrative and description, of the strange into the visible, of observation into the verbal construct of fact; the deployment of personal voice in the service of transmitting information (or of creating devotional texts); the manipulation of rhetorical figures for ends other than ornament.<sup>xliii</sup>

At heart, travel literature thus operates an operation of translation via a multitude of textual strategies. What travel literature does is akin to "an operation of translation: it is aimed at transforming difference into sameness."<sup>xliv</sup> From the perspective of identity and alterity, travel literature has always been one of the first and primordial sources to narrate difference and to translate the latter into something intelligible for the self; more precisely, the discourse of the traveler offered "the textuality of a personal discourse ... accounting for the experience of the encounter with Otherness."<sup>xlv</sup> Difference is always translated through textual strategies from which difference become apprehensible and comprehensible in the cognitive, semantic and semiotic realm of sameness. From the perspective of travel literature as a *literary* genre, three stylistic conventions can be delineated in these textual strategies to how the Americas were translated to European readers.

These conventions span from the more monologic in relation to difference to the more polycentric.<sup>xlvi</sup> First, whether through inversion or comparison, this literature in describing difference remained attached to ways of narrating using "one way" formulations by which one see, basically, what has already be seen. What is different, therefore, is not seen as such but as an aspect of something that is already known. Columbus is not discovering the Americas per se but comforting his biblical vision of the world. He is seeing in the "new world" what he already knew. These monologic formulations lead most of the time to mistaken representations with consequences onto what was represented.<sup>xlvii</sup> A second stylistic strategy

to make intelligible difference was found in keeping American names to American things. Naturally, this form of representation already required a certain acquaintance with this new reality, thus leading the way to more precise narratives. The third strategy is the descriptive style by which the autonomy of what is seen becomes possible to be narrated.

Moreover, these textual strategies and conventions are participating in forms of figuration of alterity that are dependent or function of a specific historico-intellectual period, a specific genre and its stylistic rules, and, further, of the own idiosyncrasies of the narrator(s). Figurations of alterity are forms aiming at and helping in translating difference into something intelligible to a specific self-understanding/representation; in so doing, they are part of the process of identity formation, performance, or transformation which takes the form of a "dialogue" between this specific, and usually hegemonic, self-understanding/representation and alternative ones, alterity.<sup>xlviii</sup> Figurations of alterity can take two basic forms: inversion and comparison. Both forms are "heuristic principles" aiming at making intelligible an alterity that would be opaque without it, they help forming a representation of the world, informing an understanding of it, that lay outside the world from which this world is uttered.<sup>xlix</sup> Todorov, and the literature in IR influenced by him, tend to limit their analysis of the identity/alterity nexus to the figuration of inversion as it simply allows to say that there is only a dichotomized binary whereby the self (a) is the inverted subject of the other (anti-a).<sup>l</sup> They rarely, if ever, consider other figurations such as comparison where dichotomisation and symmetries are not necessarily at work.<sup>li</sup> While one can make a link between inversion and othering, thus tending to ground one's analysis on essentialised and static dichotomies, one has always to keep in mind that even these dichotomies are participating in a more complex system of representation that is not necessarily dualistic. Inversion is thus invested to "other" difference in a context of expression, yet this context might differ and inversion might only become a tool to tell difference without necessarily othering it.

The historical and literary contexts of enunciation are thus crucial. Without denying the importance of the discovery, exploration and conquest of the Americas had in setting up the European moral and knowledge spaces in regard to difference,<sup>liii</sup> one should replace this "event" in the contexts of the actual place and impact travel literature on the Americas had on the actual formation of an European/western self-understanding/representation.<sup>liiii</sup> In the context of French travel writing, for instance, Friedrich Wolfzettel notes that from the mid-fifteenth to the early seventeenth centuries and the advent of "Enlightenment's America" (*L'Amérique des Lumières*) one has a hard time,

To defend oneself from the impression that the genuine centre of interest of French travels during this period was the Levant and that "orientalia" were far more in vogue than expeditions and explorations leading to the New World. ... Therefore, the isolated narratives of a Jacques Cartier or a Jean de Léry are literally submerged by a flood of hundreds of travel narratives situated more or less within an ancient mentality.<sup>liv</sup>

This ancient mentality is opposed in many ways to the modern movement of secularization, subjectivisation, and the greater place given to the actual experience of travel, its lived moments (*vécu*), a movement somehow synthesizing the evolution of this genre.<sup>lv</sup> In other words, a major question should be raised when one discuss IR's genealogy of a western/European self-understanding/representation. What is the relative weight of the Americas in this construction? If, as the French case illustrates, this weight came about relatively late, what to make of the main narratives than existed previously to it? Islam, for instance, is most often left out of these discussions to the exception of Neumann's discussion of the Turks.<sup>lvi</sup> Why is it so? Islam has been one of, if not the, most important interlocutor of

the western/Christian experience of difference.<sup>lvii</sup> It is, for example, at the source of an articulation of the Spanish self-understanding/representation through the *Reconquista* that *only afterwards* came to the Americas.<sup>lviii</sup>

Further, Islam has for long been associated with the East/Orient, which has been often, but not solely,<sup>lix</sup> constructed from early on as the inversion of European's experience of subjectivity, polity and society.<sup>lx</sup> This relation to Islam and Muslims is notably important to understand the forms travel literature of the Americas took in Hispanic literature. The image of the Moor and the specific literature attached to it<sup>lxi</sup> has been shown to have echoes in Cortés' correspondence with Charles V<sup>lxii</sup> and a lasting influence on the ways Hispanic literature has dealt with the question of difference.<sup>lxiii</sup> Again, far from denying the importance of the Americas in the development of a European self-understanding/representation, this discussion should make us aware of the limitations arising from relying solely, or mainly, to one particular experience, however central, expressed in a very specific genre in a limited period in order to provide for a more general understanding of the identity/alterity nexus.

To rely almost entirely on a specific corpus and genre to conceptualize the process by which the identity/alterity nexus function is problematic for this corpus is not a stable one but evolve through space and time.<sup>lxiv</sup> Further, the static, symmetrical, dual and dichotomized modes of representation on which IR generally rely upon to think about the identity/alterity nexus were far from being the sole employed in early travel European writing. This therefore indicates a more complex relationship to difference during at least early modern times than is often depicted in IR. It thus calls to put into perspective the reliance on modern European travel writing to conceptualize the identity/alterity nexus whether from its cognitive, sociological, political and normative dimensions. Modern European travel literature, however, and its eighteenth and nineteenth centuries incarnation through the process of colonization has

provided for IR a strong heuristic for comprehending the development of the contemporary international. Yet, while retaining the fundamental intuition to mobilize travel literature to provide for an heuristic of the identity/alterity nexus, one might want to look for a way to decentre the modernist and European centeredness of contemporary IR theory and call on another figure to provide for such heuristic. Herodotus should then come naturally to mind as he not only assumed an equivalent position in his time as did the modern European travel writers, but also because to analyze his narratives provide us with hints as to how to consider the cognitive, sociological, political and normative dimensions of the identity/nexus beyond their current modern and western comprehension.

From the moderns to the pre-moderns

To call upon a pre-modern figure to help us grounding a specific approach or to offer new insights is hardly new in IR. Thucydides, to name but one of the most famous pre-modern figures in IR, is overwhelmingly seen as a patronizing figure for the study of international relations and is still often considered by most as forbearing a realist perspective on international relations.<sup>lxv</sup> The use of such intellectual figures or historico-intellectual eras such as classical Greece to illustrate or institute what is IR is a legitimate undertaking to the extent it does not run the risk of becoming ahistorical and teleological, effacing the contexts of enunciation and the intents of the authors in order to legitimize a parochial and hegemonic reading.<sup>lxvi</sup> What is first required is a reflexive approach to our use of past figures or epochs, whether pre-modern or modern. The best illustration of this reflexive move is to be found in the criticisms that have rightly been presented to this reading of Thucydides as a forbearer of realism. There has been, for example, a call for providing a more contextualized and balanced account of Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* as the latter has been shown not only to be only marginally "realist," but actually at the core "constructivist."<sup>lxvii</sup>



Indeed, as argued most forcefully and cogently by Ned Lebow,<sup>lxxviii</sup> while most IR textbooks would present Thucydides in the light of either the entire Book I of *The Peloponnesian War* or the famous Melian dialogue,<sup>lxxix</sup> they will generally do so completely disconnected with the more general normative framework from which Thucydides is actually speaking.<sup>lxxx</sup> One is here confronted with the tension between the nomothetic drive to generalize and the idiographic drive to comprehend, a tension that is especially felt in critical theorizing in IR.<sup>lxxxi</sup> The idiographic drive has especially been present in recent attempts to integrate within IR the pre-modern past as a way to go conceptually and empirically beyond our modernist and Eurocentrist, i.e. nomothetic, conception of the "international." This effort has spread from rethinking our conception of political units acting in the "international" realm,<sup>lxxxii</sup> of the processes at work in the formation of those units,<sup>lxxxiii</sup> of the idea of nation<sup>lxxxiv</sup> and difference,<sup>lxxxv</sup> of power,<sup>lxxxvi</sup> of (post)colonisation,<sup>lxxxvii</sup> of the political and justice,<sup>lxxxviii</sup> or of religion.<sup>lxxxix</sup>

Calling upon Herodotus to show that narration of difference does not necessarily imply othering and that he offers a way to open up how we might consider our conceptualization of the identity/alterity nexus is relevant for several reasons. Herodotus is one of the major *hístôr* in Ancient Greece. He is a witness of certain acts he conveys to his contemporaries.<sup>lxxx</sup> Moreover, an *hístôr*'s narrative places the ordering of one's own self-understanding/representation into a space, which is both a knowledge space and a moral space. He has an ability to tell sameness in telling difference.<sup>lxxxix</sup> The choice of Herodotus as a contraposition to modern European travelogues is also justified for several reasons tied to the period in which he was writing.<sup>lxxxii</sup> On the one hand, both classical Greek and modern European experiences of difference were mainly related to travels, voyages and, ultimately, colonization. Both experiences were articulated through rhetoric of alterity translating

difference to the realm of sameness, "through the filters of the colonizer's mentality."<sup>lxxxiii</sup> There is, therefore, an apparent commonality in these experiences making their paralleling relevant. The main relevance of this paralleling, however, is situated in the differences between these experiences. First, there is a difference in how both conceived their point of departure. While the European experience is rapidly seen from a culture of the centre, leading more naturally to the specific figure of inversion, the Hellenic culture, at least up to the classical period, was a culture of the periphery. As Jean-Pierre Vernant notes in relation to the ways by which the Hellenes made sense of and interacted with alterity, the Hellenes never radically rejected the latter; there has always been room for the commerce, in its encompassing sense, with difference. "It is an attitude among the Greeks, it seems to me, consisting in a properly rational dimension, a distantiating to the self, a critical opening."<sup>lxxxiv</sup>

The Greek starting point of "place" was one of diffusion, not concentration. ... The Greek place in the Archaic period consisted of difference. Aside from occupying ourselves with the observation of differences between "others" that seems to be the focus of so much intellectual discourse, we should look for a more sophisticated difference within a "same."<sup>lxxxv</sup>

So a first lesson to be drawn from the Hellenic experience is the multiplicity of the self and the necessity to take into account alternative self-understandings/representations whether inside or outside a "collective self." Hellenes saw their identities not only through ethnic or religious prisms, if those prisms actually had the same importance or value as they had in the modern period in the west, but also through their political or civic identities, their federal, colonial, intra-Hellenic, or Panhellenic ones. Moreover, "In no way were such collective identities exclusionary; nor can we point to a priori hierarchies among them."<sup>lxxxvi</sup> A second point of divergence between the European and Hellenic experiences of difference lies in their

conceptions of alterity. Alterity was not seen by the Hellenes as absolute as many Europeans came to see it in the modern period. As Malkin puts it, "Distances, although relative to the technology of travel, still did not imply the complete unawareness and novelty of Columbus's time."<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Thus, the second lesson to be drawn is the fact that Hellenes' figurations of alterity were in general more open to difference as telling and acting toward difference, the translation into the realm of sameness, did not necessarily lead to the assimilation to sameness.

In that respect, Herodotus' *Histories* represents a significant example of the non-reliance by the Hellenes to the sole figure of inversion. As François Hartog points out, inversion is but one of the figurations of alterity that a narrator will use to tell difference to the group from which s/he is narrating. Inversion participates in a figuration of difference as an "operation of translation" aiming at making intelligible the world uttered to the world from which the utterance emanates. As such, difference is always somehow deformed; those who are actually saying difference might lack the proper intellectual categories to make sense of difference in its totality. Translation makes intelligible some-thing/one that might have remained completely opaque without it.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Translation, however, is not bound to posit difference as an anti-self as the figure of inversion would tend to. To narrate difference does not either imply othering whereby a specific figuration is translated and transformed into a politics of alterity. If Herodotus is using elements of inversion, his whole narrative is "not organized according to a simple framework of inversion; its motive is not a generalized inversion." This actually cannot be the case since the Herodotean ethnography is not aiming at fixing a stable image of each population he is narrating the difference, whether the Egyptians, the Persians, the Scythians, the Indians, or the Amazons.<sup>lxxxix</sup> Further, Marco Dorati notes that,

But if all the barbarians are, by definition, different from the Greeks, all are not seen as

such according to the same principle. To the Greek normality, ... an undistinguished and homogenous alterity representing all the barbarians is *not opposed to dualistically*; on the contrary, alterity is presented with very diverse levels.<sup>xc</sup>

Even though the Hellenes are posited at the "centre," that is in the world from which difference is uttered, Herodotus remains quite agnostic about others' ways of life, their *nómoi*.<sup>xc<sup>i</sup></sup> More, Herodotus is using others' traditions and sources, and more specifically the Egyptians', as a critical resource to decentre the Greeks' traditions and sources, seen as based on *mythoi* rather than *logoi* which he deemed to be often unreliable.<sup>xc<sup>ii</sup></sup> Indeed, "wherever the opportunity presented itself he challenged the *mythoi* of the poets and attempted to establish in their place a 'true' *logos*, which constituted a revised history of men, heroes, and gods."<sup>xc<sup>iii</sup></sup>

In order to better understand how alterity is articulated within self-understandings/representations thus requires a wider scope of heuristic tools than inversion. Other figurations of alterity, such as comparison and analogy, could help us to do so.<sup>xc<sup>iv</sup></sup> This is not to suggest that IR scholars are wrong in using the figure of inversion, through the mechanism of othering. On the contrary, I believe that they make a strong case for its use. Yet, it is important to remember that this figure is used within – and thus should be interpreted within – specific discourses located in time and space. Thus, any figuration of alterity – whether inversion, comparison or analogy – participate in diverse horizons of possibility bounded by contextuality, by the *hístôr*'s cultural, political and social capital, and their relationality to specific differences. Not only is the world from which difference is related an interwoven space of self-understandings/representations in which some are trying to become hegemonic, so is the world that is uttered one of multiplicity. Othering, as participating in a figuration of alterity, is not a necessary and sufficient condition of possibility of the self. It is but one possible figuration participating in a more general process

of identity formation, performance and transformation, even though it might predominate in certain historical-intellectual contexts.

The importance of a contextualized reading of travel writing to ground an approach to the construction of the identity/alterity nexus will become clear after discussing Herodotus' travel narrative. While the reliance on European/modern travel literature helps us to think about European *and* modern representations and attitudes to difference, they are not sufficient to altogether ground, through the figuration of inversion and the mechanism of othering, a comprehensive approach to the constitution, maintenance and transformation of collective political identities over space and time.<sup>xcv</sup> To construct one's understanding of the identity/alterity nexus on a single, historically localized and culturally specific experience runs the risks of reproducing some of the limitations of this experience. As an analysis of Herodotus' travel narratives shows, and to which we will now turn to, a figuration of inversion is not necessarily linked to othering. In other words, other experiences, non-western and/or non-modern, of the identity/alterity nexus might offer us alternative ways to conceptualize the *problématique* of difference.

#### Herodotus' travel narrative

Herodotean studies have witnessed important developments and a revival over the past three decades,<sup>xcvi</sup> prompting some to characterize the last ten years as having witnessed "a veritable explosion of Herodotus-related research and publication."<sup>xcvii</sup> These developments were essentially prompted by engagements with works in the philosophy/theory of history, postcolonial studies as well as in anthropology and sociology. Through these engagements, Herodotean studies, and ancient Greek studies more generally, gave more importance to the Greek narratives and forms of representations about the Greek selves and their alterities by considering that they might not be as self-centric and monological as scholars thought them to be until then.<sup>xcviii</sup> Prominent among these engagements, François Hartog's *Le miroir*

*d'Hérodote: essai sur la représentation de l'autre*, first published in French in 1980 and translated in English in 1988, "almost literally turned on its head" Herodotean scholarship.<sup>xcix</sup> Hartog set to the fore the *problématique* of difference in Herodotean studies by showing how Herodotus' description of alterity – the Egyptians, the Persians, the Scythians, and so on – was a mirror to "the Greek conceptualisation through which the Other is grasped, [through] the systematic differentiation from the Greek; but that Greek conceptualisation is often *assumed*, rather than being the 'real' or primary focus of interest."<sup>c</sup> In Hartog's words, Herodotus' mirror

can be understood in two [different] ways. If difference is a negative mirror, the mirror of Herodotus is to be found in the *lógoi* dedicated to the non-Greeks, the mirror he holds up to the Greeks. ... The mirror of Herodotus also is the *histôr*'s eye wandering and relaying the world, ordering it into a Greek knowledge space, and constructing for the Greeks a representation of their recent past.<sup>ci</sup>

Hartog presents Herodotus as one of the major *histôr* in Ancient Greece, he is a witness to certain acts and relates them to his contemporaries.<sup>cii</sup> In a similar fashion as Homer, one of the first Greek *histôr*, he gave to the Hellenes the "intellectual framework of their heterology."<sup>ciii</sup> Homer's *Odyssey*, in contrast to Herodotus' *Histories*, is a "poetic anthropology" at the origin of the "vision that the Greeks had of themselves and of the others. [The *Odyssey*] contributed to, not in an abstract way but through an adventure narrative, a framework, a long-standing paradigm in order to see and say the world, to traverse it and have a representation of it, or to 'inhabit' its lands and make it a 'human' world, that is to say a Greek one."<sup>civ</sup> The *Histories* offer instead a critical enquiry<sup>cv</sup> of the Greek knowledge and moral spaces Herodotus is himself helping to constitute. While the *Odyssey* is a "poetic anthropology," the *Histories* are a social and political anthropology.

While Hartog has written a seminal and groundbreaking book on Herodotus which "transforms our understanding, not only of Herodotus himself, but of much of the world in which he operated,"<sup>cvi</sup> he has been rightly faulted to have vastly underestimated Herodotus' critical and cautious perspective toward his sources, whether Greek or non-Greek, and to have set up rather "stable categories" to approach both the Greek selves and the non-Greek alterities.<sup>cvii</sup> As we have seen with Todorov and his depiction of the Europeans and their others, Hartog tends to present the Herodotean mirror of a rather homogeneous Greek self and non-Greek other. Later Herodotean scholarship, at a level or another inspired by or engaging with Hartog's work, have shown however how Herodotus is conscious of both the "internal" and "external" diversity of the Greeks and non-Greeks alike and how he has depicted this diversity beyond dual and oppositional modes.<sup>cviii</sup> Christopher Pelling, for instance, clearly shows Sparta is "often serving as a sort of *internal* Greek 'Other'" in Herodotus,<sup>cix</sup> while Rosaria Munson notes "When Herodotus describes how various ethnographic subjects differ from the Greeks and emphasizes their separate identities—the different ways in which they differ from the Greeks—this also conveys the different ways in which they resemble the Greeks or different groups of Greeks. The glosses of similarity compensate for the propensity of ethnography to result in a discourse on alterity, especially the alterity of the *barbaroi* as a whole to the Greeks as a whole."<sup>cx</sup>

What interests us more precisely at this point of my argument, and following this recent Herodotean scholarship, is how Herodotus, in his relations to difference, is using a diverse range of figurations of alterity *among which* inversion. Yet, inversion did not necessarily bear the same value and significance than in its European and modern expression. While it is true that the figure of inversion has been present for a long time in Hellenic thinking<sup>cxii</sup> and came to bare more and more importance in Hellenic's depiction of the self as one can witness an evolution from a self-understanding/representation that tended to be aggregative before the

fifth century B.C. to another one that tended to be oppositional.<sup>cxii</sup> It is crucial, however, to note that

Rather than being defined "from without," [the "Greek" self-understanding/representation] was constructed cumulatively "from within." It was a definition based not on difference from the barbarian but on similarity with peer groups which attempted to attach themselves to one another by invoking common descent from Hellen. Since this cumulative aggregation of identity was enacted in the absence of any clear, determinate boundary between Greek and non-Greek, it is inevitable that the definition of Greekness could hardly be as all-encompassing as that which was later to be established externally and through opposition.<sup>cxiii</sup>

However, this opposition did not necessarily mean "othering" difference. Herodotus' *Histories* are in this respect particularly interesting as he is among the first to provide a definition of Greekness in an external and oppositional way in a speech he attributed to the Athenians addressing Alexander.<sup>cxiv</sup> Yet, throughout his work the figure of inversion comes across as one that does not necessarily "other" difference. This is particularly clear in Herodotus' depiction of the Egyptians, their environment, their culture (*nomoi*), and their religion. Egypt and Egyptians possess a central role in ancient Greece's depiction of alterity, and by extension of itself.<sup>cxv</sup> In order to establish the ground for translating difference into something intelligible to "sameness," Herodotus posits certain numbers of tropes allowing him to make the translation possible; as he himself states "we may draw on the familiar to understand the unknown."<sup>cxvi</sup> For instance, Herodotus compares Egyptian and Hellenic religions through the trope of ritual.<sup>cxvii</sup> Rituals, whether through rites or cultic practices, are actually one trope that is thoroughly used in the *Histories* insofar as foreign cultures are often depicted through their religious or "political" rites.



Herodotus posits rather bluntly the place Egypt has *vis-à-vis* "everyone else." Indeed, "In keeping with the idiosyncratic climate which prevails there and the fact that their river behaves differently from any other river, almost all Egyptian customs and practices are the *opposite* of those of everywhere else." Of course, when Herodotus is speaking of "everywhere" or "everyone" he is referring to a specific type of "universal" self; that is a Hellenic self-understanding/representation.<sup>cxviii</sup> This universalisation of a specific self is a classical example of a way to "mask the procedure of inversion, to erase its trademark" rather than a way to equate the Hellenes and "everyone else."<sup>cxix</sup> Herodotus then goes on in listing a series of cultural practices that are the exact opposite of the Hellenes', such as the fact that "whereas everyone else weaves by pushing the weft upwards, the Egyptians push it downwards," that "[s]ons do not have to look after their parents if they do not want to, but daughters must even if they are reluctant," that "priests have long hair, but in Egypt they shave their heads," or that "[o]ther people, unless they have been influenced by the Egyptians, leave their genitals in their natural state, but the Egyptians practice circumcision."<sup>cxx</sup>

This figure of inversion, however, does not lead Herodotus to state that the Egyptians are inferior to the Hellenes. Quite the contrary, Herodotus is placing in many instances the Egyptians *at least* on an equal footing with the Hellenes and quite often see them as superior to the latter. For instance, he not only judges that, from a practical point of view, "the Egyptian monthly system is cleverer than the Greek one"<sup>cxxi</sup> but that, from a general point of view, "for the actual people of Egypt, those who live in the cultivated part of the country make a particular practice of recording the history of all peoples, and are consequently by far the most learned people I have ever come across and questioned."<sup>cxxii</sup> Yet, he does not take their traditions and records for granted and he put them thoroughly through a critical assessment based on probability and the presence of reliable sources.<sup>cxxiii</sup>

This is evident in the Egyptians' account of Helen's abduction. In this story, the Egyptians are depicted as morally superior to the Hellenes on some issues. Herodotus narrates this alternative account of the events in which the Egyptians are not only shown to deliver fair justice against Helen's abductors but also to suffer unjustly from Menelaus' anxiety to sail back home after the Egyptians "looked after him magnificently, returned Helen to him completely unhurt, and gave him back all his property as well." Indeed, Menelaus "treated the Egyptians unjustly. He was impatient to sail away, but adverse winds were holding him up; after this had been going on for a long time, he found a solution, but it was an abomination. He seized two children from local families and sacrificed them."<sup>cxxiv</sup> In sum, from these accounts we can see that Herodotus uses the figuration of inversion yet does not necessarily fall into othering the Egyptian's difference. On the contrary, as we have seen, the Egyptians are praised as intelligent, religious, and moral. More, Herodotus presents them as devote to "memory" and "records," and thus as reliable sources, contrary to the Greek poets who are devote to the muses.<sup>cxxv</sup> This alternative story about the Trojan war, an account in opposition to Homer's which is taken for granted by Thucydides for instance,<sup>cxxvi</sup> is therefore evaluated as a reliable and plausible version whereas Homer's is relegated to the specific need of an epic as a genre.<sup>cxxvii</sup>

In another instance where the Greeks' *lógoi* are decentred, Herodotus makes a great case of the Hellenic import of Egyptian religious life, indeed the "very knowledge of the gods and many religious rituals central to Greek cult practice" are thought by him to be borrowed from the Egyptians.<sup>cxxviii</sup> Herodotus, for instance, traces back Dionysus cult in Greece from an Egyptian origin but states, more generally, that "[t]he names of almost all the gods also came to Greece from Egypt. My enquiries led me to discover that they are non-Greek in origin, but it is my belief that they came largely from Egypt."<sup>cxxix</sup> Moreover, customs or techniques that

Hellenes employ are also deemed of Egyptian origin such as geometry which was discovered by the Egyptians as a "land-surveying technique" and was "then imported into Greece. But the Greeks learned about the sundial, its pointer, and the twelve divisions of the day from the Babylonians."<sup>cxxx</sup> Furthermore, from an ethnographic point of view,

While Herodotus clearly has a sense of each group's "ethnic identity" and ethnic characteristics, he seems equally keen to tell us what one group has borrowed from another. Thus these groups are not isolated, completely discrete entities; cultural traits are borrowed and passed around. There is surprisingly little evidence to be found in Herodotus for the idea of static, "natural," or "original" ethnic characteristics. ... At any rate, he seems willing to collapse the strict divisions between Greeks and non-Greeks and to lay emphasis upon customs and culture, alongside descent, as decisive determinant of ethnicity.<sup>cxxxii</sup>

Such a perspective can be equated to the descriptive style, mentioned in the previous section, in which the world that is told becomes somewhat autonomous from the world from which it is told.<sup>cxxxii</sup>

Another figuration from which a descriptive style can as well be attained is comparison. Indeed, in the same way as inversion, comparison is a "heuristic principle" aiming at making intelligible difference. Comparison can take two basic forms: simple comparison and complex comparison. Simple comparisons are following an elementary schema by which two terms *a* and *b* are made directly comparable by stating that *a* is like *b*; complex comparisons, for their parts, are akin to an analogy, they are using four terms organised in a parallel fashion: *a* is to *b* what *c* is to *d*.<sup>cxxxiii</sup> Like for the figure of inversion, *expression*, *context* and *relations* are as

well necessary for these forms of figuration to become forms of representation,<sup>cxxxiv</sup> without these inversion and comparison are simply either basic forms of argumentation<sup>cxxxv</sup> or forms of translation.<sup>cxxxvi</sup> Turning again to Herodotus' *Histories*, we can see how these forms of figurations were at work.

The simple comparison, for instance, can be seen at work when Herodotus is discussing Egyptians' *nomoi*. "The Egyptians were the first to ban on religious grounds having sex with a woman within a sanctuary and entering a sanctuary after having sex without washing first. Almost everywhere else in the world, *except in Egypt and Greece*, people do both these things, since they do not differentiate between humans and other animals."<sup>cxxxvii</sup> Herodotus is thus stating that the Egyptians' *nomoi* regarding sexual taboos related to religious places *are like* the Hellenes'. In another instance, Herodotus explains that "[t]he rest of the festival of Dionysus the Egyptians celebrate pretty much as the Greeks do, except that there are no choral dances."<sup>cxxxviii</sup> Other simple comparison are offered in regards to the names of the gods or to certain customs;<sup>cxxxix</sup> in a way, even the ways by which the Egyptians are looking at difference are, implicitly, shown to be like the Hellenes': "The Egyptians – indeed – refer to anyone who does not speak the same language as them as a barbarian."<sup>cxi</sup>

One can argue, however, that since Herodotus is presenting the Egyptians at least on equal footing with the Hellenes, and situating them often at the origin of many Hellenes' *nomoi*, he might be a bit positively "biased" toward them. This cannot be said of the Persians and the Scythians. Yet, Herodotus uses comparisons, whether simple or complex, in the same ways he has been with the Egyptians. He is providing a functional comparison of different *nomoi* between the Hellenes, on the one hand, and different social and ethnic groups, on the other.<sup>cxli</sup> From a geographical point of view, for example, Herodotus is trying to situate Scythia by using a complex comparison equating one, the Taurian territory for the Scythians, with

another, the Cape Sunium for the Athenians.<sup>cxlii</sup> Herodotus is conscious of the "conditions of validity of his comparison"<sup>cxliii</sup> as he states that "though in saying this, I am comparing something small with something large."<sup>cxliv</sup> Yet, as Hartog notes, "... the difference between the two is purely quantitative, and by no means qualitative ...; difference is not negated, but is channelled."<sup>cxlv</sup> In another interesting instance, even when he is facing with an ultimate other, cannibalism,<sup>cxlvi</sup> Herodotus is still able to provide a functional description of rituals.

Issedonian customs are said to be as follows. When a man's father dies, all his relatives bring livestock to his house. They sacrifice the animals and chop the meat up into pieces—and then they chop up their host's dead father, mix all the meats together, and serve them up as a special meal. What they do to the head, though, is pluck all the hair off, clean it out, and then gild it. Then they treat it *as if* it were a cult statue, in the sense that the dead man's son offers it magnificent sacrifices once a year, *just as* in Greece sons commemorate the anniversary of their father's death.<sup>cxlvii</sup>

In sum, inversion or comparison can be seen as, and have to be regarded as, forms of figurations; as such they do not tell us much about the forms of understanding and representation they are pertaining to. In order for these forms to take a meaning, we have to pay attention to the ways by which they are expressed, in which contexts they are so and through which relations they are participating in. By using this variety of figurations, Herodotus blurred the boundaries between selves and others; "That does not mean that the categories [of a Greek self and a non-Greek other] do not exist, or that they are not important; but they are problematic from the start."<sup>cxlviii</sup>

Concluding remarks

Herodotus' travel narratives, as far as figurations of alterity are concerned, and in contrast with the modern figurations we encountered in relation to the travelogues about the Americas, help us to draw three conclusions. First, the figure of inversion is not necessarily linked to the mechanism of othering. Inversion is one figuration of alterity among a variety that encompass as well figurations such as comparison or analogy. Second, othering is not necessarily the sole mechanism by which collective self-understandings and representations are formed, performed or transformed. This calls into question the prominence of othering as one of the dominant political and sociological framework by which the identity/alterity nexus is understood. Third, non-othered articulations of a collective identity, articulations that do not imply any form of inferiority of alterity, are not necessarily linked to a normative posture from the "self." These articulations might simply be forms of representation that cannot be assumed to be participating to a good and just dialog with alterity.

These different points are important as one of the key tenant of IR theory's reading of the identity/alterity nexus lies in the adequation between how representations are articulated – whether alterity is situated through a figuration of inversion or comparison – and the normative value attached to these representations – whereby inversion is usually synonymous of othering. This adequation is equally present in a variety of IR traditions,<sup>cxlix</sup> whether it is grounded on social identity theory or a certain poststructuralist or postcolonial reading of the nexus. Herodotus' example calls for a reading of the nexus that is not necessarily immanently linked to this adequation but which can nonetheless integrate it within this reading as othering is very much present in modern politics of alterity. While such a reconceptualization of the identity/alterity nexus is not possible here,<sup>cl</sup> this excursion to pre-modern and non-European hopes to offer some tracks as to how to continue decolonizing IR theory<sup>cli</sup> by multiplying the paths by which such decolonizing can happen.

---

<sup>i</sup> I would like to thank David Blaney, Michael Bloch and Naeem Inayatullah for their useful comments on previous drafts. Note that all translations are mine as all mistakes that may remain in this paper.

<sup>ii</sup> See Xavier Guillaume, *International Relations and Identity. A Dialogical Approach* (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>iii</sup> See, for instance, Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); Tzvetan Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique : la question de l'autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1982). This centrality is still reflected in contemporary attempts by IR scholars to not only make sense of the identity/alterity nexus per se but other issues such as global politics or security studies; see, respectively, Debbie Lisle, *The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) and Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>iv</sup> See William E. Connolly, "Identity and Difference in Global Politics," in James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations. Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington Books, 1989), pp. 323-342; William E. Connolly, *Identity\Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), chapter 2; David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), chapter 5; David L. Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, "Prelude to a Conversation of Cultures in International Society – Todorov and Nandy on the Possibility of Dialogue," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 19, no. 1 (1994): 23-51; Naeem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney, "Knowing Encounters: Beyond Parochialism in International Relations Theory," in Yosef Lapid and

---

Friedrich V. Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), pp. 65-84; *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (London: Routledge, 2004); Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: "The East" In European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Richard Shapcott, *Justice, Community, and Dialogue in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Michael J. Shapiro, "Moral Geographies and the Ethics of Post-Sovereignty," *Public Culture* 6, no. 3 (1994): 479-502.

<sup>v</sup> Todorov, note 3.

<sup>vi</sup> Connolly, note 4, 1991, p. 42; see as well Neumann, note 4, pp. 21-22.

<sup>vii</sup> Todorov, note 3, p. 13.

<sup>viii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 308.

<sup>ix</sup> Campbell, note 4, p. 111, my emphasis.

<sup>x</sup> Todorov, note 3, pp. 58, 67-68, 308-309.

<sup>xi</sup> Connolly, note 4, 1991, p. 8.

<sup>xii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48. A more thorough discussion of othering and structural temptation and their place in IR theory can be found in Guillaume, note 2, chapter 2.

<sup>xiv</sup> Campbell, note 4, p. 105.

<sup>xv</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 2.

<sup>xvi</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>xvii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93, my emphasis.

<sup>xviii</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 99-101, 252-259.

<sup>xix</sup> See Blaney and Inayatullah, note 4.

<sup>xx</sup> See Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 1996; 2004.

<sup>xxi</sup> Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 1996, p. 75.

<sup>xxii</sup> Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004, pp. 11, 15.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Blaney and Inayatullah, note 4, 1994, p. 45; Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004, pp. 9-



---

16.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Shapcott, note 4, p. 13.

<sup>xxv</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-26.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Campbell, note 4, chapter 5; Connolly, note 4, 1989; 1991, chapter 2; Shapcott, note 4, chapter 1.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004.

<sup>xxviii</sup> I come back to this notion when I discuss Herodotus' writings.

<sup>xxix</sup> James Der Derian, "Post-Theory: The Eternal Return of Ethics in International Relations," in Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *New Thinking in International Relations Theory* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), p. 58.

<sup>xxx</sup> David Damrosch, "The Semiotics of Conquest," *American Literary History* 8, no. X (1996): 516-532; Gesa Mackenthun, *Metaphors of Dispossession, American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire, 1492-1637* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), pp. 89-100; José Piedra, "The Game of Critical Arrival," *Diacritics* 19, no. 1 (1989): 34-61; Deborah Root, "The Imperial Signifier: Todorov and the Conquest of Mexico," *Cultural Critique* 9 (1988): 197-219.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Root, note 30, p. 215.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Mackenthun, note 30, p. 90; Root, note 30, pp. 206-207.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> See, for instance, Campbell, note 4; Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004; Shapcott, note 4; Neumann, note 4; cf., however, Xavier Guillaume, "From Process to Politics," *International Political Sociology* 3, no. 1 (2009): 71-86.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004, p. 262.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Mackenthun, note 30, p. 90. See also Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh, "Introduction," in Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge. European "Discoveries" In the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 4.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Pratt, note 3. See Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, pp. 9-11.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Kamps and Singh, note 35, p. 2.

---

xxxviii Ibid.

xxxix Ibid., p. 3, emphasis added.

<sup>xl</sup> Mackenthun, note 30, p. 16.

<sup>xli</sup> Kamps and Singh, note 35, p. 6.

<sup>xlii</sup> Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World. Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 6.

<sup>xliii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xliv</sup> François Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote: essai sur la représentation de l'autre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991 [1980]), p. 249.

<sup>xlv</sup> Friedrich Wolfzettel, *Le discours du voyageur: pour une histoire littéraire du récit de voyage en France, du Moyen Âge au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), p. 5.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Campbell, note 42, pp. 249-253; Alexandre Cioranescu, "La découverte de l'Amérique et l'art de la description," *Revue des sciences humaines* 106 (1962): 161-168.

<sup>xlvii</sup> See Greenblatt, note 3; Todorov, note 3.

<sup>xlviii</sup> See, for instance, Xavier Guillaume, "Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002): 1-26; "Unveiling The 'International:' Process, Identity, Alterity," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 3 (2007):741-759.

<sup>xlix</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 227.

<sup>l</sup> Ibid., pp. 225-237.

<sup>li</sup> See Guillaume, note 2, chapter 2.

<sup>lii</sup> See Greenblatt, note 2; Pagden, note 2; Todorov, note 2.

<sup>liii</sup> See, for instance, the contributions in Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge. European "Discoveries" In the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>liv</sup> Wolfzettel, note 45, pp. 36-37, see also p. 231.

- 
- <sup>lv</sup> Campbell, note 42, p. 220; Wolfzettel, note 45.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Neumann, note 4, chapter 2; see also Mustapha Kamal Pasha, "Fractured Worlds: Islam, Identity, and International Relations," *Global Society* 17, no. 2 (2003): 111-120.
- <sup>lvii</sup> Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire. The New World, Islam, and European Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Albert H. Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- <sup>lviii</sup> See, for instance, Henry Kamen, "The Mediterranean and the Expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492," *Past and Present* 119, no. 1 (1988): 30-55; "Toleration and Dissent in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The Alternative Tradition," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19, no. 1 (1988): 3-23; Deborah Root, "Speaking Christian: Orthodoxy and Difference in Sixteenth-Century Spain," *Representations* 23 (1988):118-134.
- <sup>lix</sup> Israel Burshatin, "The Moor in the Text: Metaphor, Emblem, and Silence," *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985): 98-118; Isabel de Sena, "Moors or Indians? Stereotype and the Crisis of (National) Identity in Ignacio Altamirano and Manuel de Jesús Galván," in Mercedes F. Durán-Cogan and Antonion Gómez-Moriana, eds., *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 202-203.
- <sup>lx</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).
- <sup>lxi</sup> Burshatin, note 59.
- <sup>lxii</sup> José Rabasa, "Dialogue as Conquest: Mapping Spaces for Counter-Discourse," *Cultural Critique* 6 (1987): 131-159.
- <sup>lxiii</sup> de Sena, note 59, p. 202.
- <sup>lxiv</sup> See Campbell, note 42; Wolfzettel, note 45.
- <sup>lxv</sup> See, for instance, Robert O. Keohane, "Realism, Neorealism and the Study of World Politics," in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 1-26.
- <sup>lxvi</sup> See Brian C. Schmidt, "On the History and Historiography of International Relations," in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International*

---

*Relations* (London: Sage, 2002), pp. 3-22.

<sup>lxvii</sup> If these categories actually make sense for ancient thinkers, see Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, "The use and abuse of Thucydides in international relations," *International Organization* 48, no. 1 (1994): 131-153; Hayward H. Alker, *Rediscoveries and Reformulations: Humanistic Methodologies for International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 23-63; Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3 (2001): 547-560.

<sup>lxviii</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, "Play It Again Pericles: Agents, Structures and the Peloponnesian War," *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 2 (1996): 231-258; note 67.

<sup>lxix</sup> Thucydides, *Histoire de la guerre du Péloponnèse*, trans. Jean Voilquin (Paris: Gallimard, 1966): 5.84-96.

<sup>lxx</sup> See, for instance, *ibid.*, 2.62-65, 3.82-85, 6.9, 8.2.

<sup>lxxi</sup> Xavier Guillaume, "Reflexivity and Subjectivity: A Dialogical Perspective for and on International Relations Theory," *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 3, no. 3 (2002): 41 paragraphs; URL: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0203133>.

<sup>lxxii</sup> Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach, *Polities: Authority, Identities, and Change* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996).

<sup>lxxiii</sup> Victoria Tin-Bor Hui, *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>lxxiv</sup> Bruce Routledge, "The Antiquity of the Nation? Critical Reflections from the Ancient Near East," *Nations and Nationalism* 9, no. 2 (2003): 213-233.

<sup>lxxv</sup> Qing Cao, "Selling Culture: Ancient Chinese Conceptions of 'the Other' in Legends," in Stephen Chan, Peter G. Mandaville and Roland Bleiker, eds., *The Zen of International Relations. IR Theory from East to West* (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 202-21.

<sup>lxxvi</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, "Power, Persuasion and Justice," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005): 551-581.

---

<sup>lxxvii</sup> Irad Malkin, "Postcolonial Concepts and Ancient Greek Colonization," *Modern Language Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (2004): 341-364; Donald J. Puchala, "Colonisation and Cultural Resistance: Egypt and Iran after Alexander," *Global Society* 16, no. 1 (2002): 7-30.

<sup>lxxviii</sup> Stephen Chan, "A Story Beyond Telos: Redeeming the Shield of Achilles for a Realism of Rights in IR," in Stephen Chan, Peter G. Mandaville and Roland Bleiker, eds., *The Zen of International Relations. IR Theory from East to West* (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 79-98; Costas M. Constantinou, "Hippopolis/Cynopolis," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30, no. 3 (2001): 785-804.

<sup>lxxix</sup> Andreas Osiander, "Religion and Politics in Western Civilisation: The Ancient World as Matrix and Mirror of the Modern," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29, no. 3 (2000): 761-790.

<sup>lxxx</sup> Claude Calame, *Le récit en Grèce ancienne* (Paris: Belin, 2000), pp. 124-125.

<sup>lxxxi</sup> Hartog, note 44, pp. 19, 249, 363-372.

<sup>lxxxii</sup> Irad Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 16-20.

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Jean-Pierre Vernant, *La mort dans les yeux: figures de l'autre en Grèce ancienne Artémis, Gorgô*, revised and augmented edition (Paris: Hachette littératures, 1998), pp. 84-86.

<sup>lxxxv</sup> Malkin, note 82, p. 17.

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Irad Malkin, "Introduction," in Irad Malkin, ed., *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Hellenic Studies Trustees for Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 3; see also Jonathan M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and the contributions in Irad Malkin, ed., *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Hellenic Studies Trustees for Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Malkin, note 82, p. 19.

<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 236.

---

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Marco Dorati, *Le Storie di Erodoto: Etnografia e Racconto* (Pisa: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 2000), p. 120.

<sup>xc</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124, emphasis added.

<sup>xc<sup>i</sup></sup> Aldo Corcella, *Erodoto e l'analogia* (Palermo: Sellerio, 1984), pp. 84-91. This actually strengthens Connolly's affirmation concerning "agonistic respect," seen as reflecting "a doctrine of contingent identity and ambiguous responsibility," which he situates in a pre-Platonic time (see Connolly, note 4, pp. 114-122). Irad Malkin rightly notes the absence of an idea of centeredness among Hellenes during the archaic period (see Malkin, note 82; note 85, 2001). In the specific case, however, while Connolly's argument might be seen as "theological," Herodotus is "historical" (see Corcella, this note).

<sup>xc<sup>ii</sup></sup> Virginia Hunter, *Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 69-75.

<sup>xc<sup>iii</sup></sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>xc<sup>iv</sup></sup> Corcella, note 90; Hartog, note 44, pp. 42, 237.

<sup>xc<sup>v</sup></sup> Guillaume, note 2.

<sup>xc<sup>vi</sup></sup> Carolyn Dewald and John Marincola, "Introduction," in Carolyn Dewald and John Marincolas, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 1-7.

<sup>xc<sup>vii</sup></sup> Paul Cartledge, "Taking Herodotus Personally," *Classical World* 102, no. 4 (2009): 378.

<sup>xc<sup>viii</sup></sup> Dewald and Marincola, note 95, pp. 4-6; Christopher Pelling, "East is East and West is West – Or are they? National stereotypes in Herodotus," *HISTOS* (1997), URL: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/1997/pelling.html>.

<sup>xc<sup>ix</sup></sup> Cartledge, note 96, p. 375.

<sup>c</sup> Pelling, note 97.

<sup>ci</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 19.

<sup>c<sup>ii</sup></sup> Calame, note 80, pp. 124-125.

<sup>c<sup>iii</sup></sup> François Hartog, *Mémoire d'Ulysse: récits sur la frontière en Grèce ancienne* (Paris:

---

Gallimard, 1996), p. 87.

<sup>civ</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>cv</sup> Hunter, note 91, p. 11.

<sup>cvi</sup> John Percival, "Review," *Greece & Rome* 37, no. 1 (1990): 98.

<sup>cvi</sup> Carolyn Dewald, "book reviews," *Classical Philology* 85, no. 3 (1990): 217-224; Pelling, note 97. On the critical enquiry and Herodotus relation to facts, contrast Hartog, note 44, and the much more convincing account of Hunter, note 91.

<sup>cvi</sup> See, for instance, Dorati, note 88; Rosaria Vignolo Munson, *Telling Wonders. Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work of Herodotus* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001); Pelling, note 97.

<sup>cix</sup> Pelling, note 97.

<sup>cx</sup> Munson, note 107, p. 133.

<sup>cx</sup> See Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy: Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992 [1966]).

<sup>cxii</sup> See Paul Carledge, *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); "Historiography and ancient Greek self-definition," in Michael Bentley, ed., *Companion to Historiography* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 20-37; Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Hartog, note 44.

<sup>cxiii</sup> Hall, note 85, p. 47.

<sup>cxiv</sup> Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 8.144.

<sup>cxv</sup> Phiroze Vasunia, *The Gift of the Nile: Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>cxvi</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 2.33.

<sup>cxvii</sup> John Gould, *Myth, Ritual, Memory, and Exchange: Essays in Greek Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 359-377.

- 
- <sup>cxviii</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 2.35, emphasis added.
- <sup>cxix</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 226.
- <sup>cxx</sup> Herodotus, note 133, 2.35-36.
- <sup>cxxi</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.4.
- <sup>cxxii</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.77.
- <sup>cxxiii</sup> Hunter, note 91, pp. 50-92.
- <sup>cxxiv</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 2.115-120.
- <sup>cxxv</sup> Hunter, note 91, pp. 57-61.
- <sup>cxxvi</sup> Thucydides, note 69, 1.3.
- <sup>cxxvii</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 2.116.
- <sup>cxxviii</sup> Rosalind Thomas, "Ethnicity, Genealogy, and Hellenism in Herodotus," in Irad Malkin, ed., *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Hellenic Studies Trustees for Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 216; see Herodotus, *ibid.*, 2.43-53.
- <sup>cxxix</sup> Herodotus, *ibid.*, 2.50; see also Hunter, note 91, pp. 50-115.
- <sup>cxx</sup> Herodotus, *ibid.*, 2.109.
- <sup>cxxxi</sup> Thomas, note 127, pp. 215 and 218.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> See Cioranescu, note 46.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Hartog, note 44, pp. 237-242; see also the subtle development in Munson, note 107, chapter 2.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Guillaume, note 2, chapter 3.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Lloyd, note 110.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Hartog, note 44.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 2.64, emphasis added.
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.48.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.59, 79-80, 144, 153.
- <sup>cxl</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.158.



---

<sup>cxli</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 239.

<sup>cxlii</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 4.99.

<sup>cxliii</sup> Hartog, note 44, p. 240.

<sup>cxliv</sup> Herodotus, *ibid.*

<sup>cxlv</sup> Hartog, *ibid.*

<sup>cxlvi</sup> See, for instance, Inayatullah and Blaney, note 4, 2004, pp. 53, 65-73.

<sup>cxlvii</sup> Herodotus, note 113, 4.26, *emphasis added.*

<sup>cxlviii</sup> Pelling, note 97.

<sup>cxlix</sup> See, for instance, Jonathan Mercer, "Anarchy and identity," *International Organization* 49, no. 2 (1995): 229-252; Bahar Rumelili, "Constructing identity and relating to difference: understanding the EU's mode of differentiation," *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 1 (2004): 27-47; Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Realism and the constructivist challenge: rejecting, reconstructing, or rereading," *International Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (2002): 73-97.

<sup>cl</sup> See, however, Guillaume, note 2.

<sup>cli</sup> See Branwen Gruffydd Jones, ed., *Decolonizing International Relations* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).