

# In Search of Adventure: Simmel and Similar Adventures Among (Maya) Ruins

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## Adventure Or Not Adventure, That is the Question

This essay closely explores Simmel's notion of adventure in relation to a travelogue among the Maya of Yucatán, México. This in turn is closely inspected for what it might reveal about the nature of adventure. The question that is posed is quite simple: What are the principles of adventure that Simmel proposes? Are there other kinds of adventure that follow other principles or that are similar yet significantly different kinds of adventure? How do the stories of adventure presented here reveal Simmel's and/or similar kinds of adventure? To address these questions, the writing becomes a bit... "adventurous" at times as the analysis ventures into theoretical or epistemological languages that deal with time, temporality, narrative, contradiction, resolution, experience. Ultimately, the point of this (analytical) adventure is to evaluate and explore the nature of adventure/s as they pertain to and occur in tourism. The question is whether adventure might actually even exist. The evidence, at least as discussed here, suggests that it might not exist in any other sense than as a nominalist ascription after the fact through the vehicle of narrativization.

## An Adventure with Simmel

A number of scholars have noted that Simmel relies extensively on both the fragment or fragmentation and the form or forms of modernity (e.g., Frisby 1988; Featherstone 1991 b; see also contributions in Featherstone 1991a). Given a common-sense association of "form" with "the whole" or wholism, this coupling might at first appear to be contradictory. Yet, it is less a contradiction than a persistent tension and conceptual axis on which Simmel develops his sociological thoughts. Specifically it is a conceptual tension that can alternatively be read as a supplementary coupling of a pair of opposing elements that otherwise have no value; or, the coupling/copulation that resolves into a synthesis in which contradiction becomes essential complementarity. Although this essay does not explore these parallels, it is worth noting that this tension operates by the logic of the supplement or supplementarity that Derrida has analyzed in his work of the 1960s (see especially *Of Grammatology*). Thus, with an expressed focus on the experiential meaning for the subject, Simmel conceived of adventure as a synthesis in which the fragmentary externalities of the world impinge upon and articulate to the formal coherence and continuity of individual life: "While it is outside the context of life, it falls, with this same movement, as it were, back into that context again... it is a foreign body in our existence which is yet somehow connected with the center; the outside, if only by a long and unfamiliar detour, is formally an aspect of the whole" (§2)<sup>1</sup>

This movement of the outside becoming and being inside is the synthesis that constitutes adventure for Simmel. This synthesis is a form and is a fragment; further, synthesis is itself both the opposing tension and unifying resolution of form and fragment as these are understood by Simmel as indexical of the "wholeness of life" and the "accidental and alien." From this perspective, it can be noted, but not further explored in an explicit

manner, that this supplementation — i.e., the “synthesis” which Simmel calls “adventure” — is also a double articulation in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari have defined in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Synthesis is the articulation of symmetrical relations within nested articulations of asymmetrical entities, such as between form and fragment. Nonetheless, Simmel expressly discusses adventure as form, not as fragment. “There is in us an eternal process of *playing back and forth between chance and necessity*, between the fragmentary materials given us from the outside and the consistent meaning of the life developed from within [¶9]. The great forms in which we shape the substance of life are the syntheses, antagonisms, or compromises between chance and necessity. *Adventure is such a form*” (¶10).

In this thinking through the form of adventure a number of additional syntheses (or articulations of symmetrical oppositions such as chance and necessity) are elaborated. For example, there is the synthesis of activity and passivity, what is conquered and what is given, certainty and uncertainty, anticipation and the unexpected, present and future. These, however, are conceptually subordinate to a primary synthesis, which is, to reiterate the above in a different phrasing, the tangential way the external event both remains an experience with a meaning and logic foreign and contingent to that of the individual’s life as a whole and also becomes a significant experience articulated to and encompassed by the subject’s inner meaning of life. The fortuitous foreign becomes integrated and assimilated into the life of the subject along his/her life course, even as it triggers a re-routing, *a detour*, of the meaning, experiences, paths, and coherence of that life trajectory. Thus, for Simmel, adventure is a “*form of experiencing*” (¶22).

As a form it has no content: “The content of an experience does not make an adventure” (¶22). There is a lack of both a subjective substance and an objective content of and for adventure in Simmel. It is not a thing, or any category of thing, nor a content, nor an activity nor a process. On the one hand, anything and everything could be adventure or part of an adventure and, on the other hand, maybe there is actually nothing at all that is adventure in accordance with Simmel’s theory-thinking of this form. Rather, it is the form of the synthesis of the elements of experience that are not pre-given.

This is important to underscore since it already entails a response to the question about specific types of adventure that would correspond to particular domains of life — such as tourism/travel, erotic conquest, capitalist ventures, spiritual life, gambling, a life of drug consumption, 9-5 office work, social science research. Such a typology would be rejected out of hand due to the fact that the constitution of such adventure types would privilege content in order to create a typology of substances. There is no substance to adventure. Thus there can be adventure in any and all activities but it is the same adventure; there is no adventure specific to tourism versus office work versus in the sex industry. This openness of the concept (that is, the absence of definition by substance), however, does not reduce adventure to the pure subjectivity of the subject that experiences and whose experience is formed by the syntheses that Simmel calls adventure. Rather, as suggested by the title of Simmel’s essay, which in English alternates between *The Adventure* and *The Adventurer*, argues that it is a form of experiencing that pertains to a role or mode of individual being, which then embodies, typifies, and substantiates a sociological figure or ideal type. The adventurer is however a meta-figure that transcends the adventure of substantive types — such as would be postulated in the above typology. It is this figurative form of the adventure that makes the experience transcend the domain of pure subjectivity. In either

case, adventure (experience) or adventurer (figure), adventure is a form, not only not a substance nor an activity, but it is also not a structure nor a system.

Indeed this is evident if one considers the greatest, or arguably the greatest, adventure story of all time — adventure, that is, in Simmel's sense. It is not the Iliad, but *Waiting For Godot*. To generalize, the Greek hero is hero precisely because they remain essentially and existentially faithful to the diagnostic traits that make them hero. The story, or the drama of the story, revolves around the expression, conflict, and resolution of all these diagnostics of the hero, both the weak and strong traits. Along the way of the narrative unfolding of the drama there are surprises that we anticipate by suspending our anticipation of these surprises. [We can imagine, after all, that the ancient Greeks who were the original audience of these stories had as an acute sense of Greek Tragedy as do contemporary audiences of the 21<sup>st</sup> century!] This adventure I propose to call the adventure that inheres in tourism. Indeed, it is such an essential trait of tourism that I even propose the extreme proposition that this is the very nature of tourism: Thus, tourism is adventure in this sense. It is in the sense not of synthesis, nor of form, but of a structure, an Adventure-Structure of feeling or experience.

In contrast, while waiting for *Godot*, there is the ironic expectation of the imminent arrival of that which never arrives. Irony is a form of synthesis of expectation and nonanticipation. Further, in the course of this waiting, which is after all a grand symbolic metaphor for the trajectory of human life even life-world, both the expected does not happen and the unexpected happens. Of course, the fortuitous events are rather “anti-dramatic” and anti-climatic since these contingencies are mostly the dialogical expression of thoughts and views that are exchanged during the passage of time while waiting. Yet, since adventure is not a substance, the exchange of words between oneself and another are indeed the fortuitous events of the story. “Both” external contingencies of what happens and what does not happen impinge upon the life course and life-world of the characters causing a formal synthesis of the inside and the outside, the motivated and the arbitrary, agency and passivity, the self and the other.

Just as Simmel defines adventure without recourse to any substance, so too is the Adventure of Tourism not defined by content. Simmel's adventure is an accidental, contingent, and alien externality to tourism, the experience of travel in tourism. The travel of tourism is a structure of experience. This is especially evident if one considers tourism structured as Adventure (i.e., the commodity form of packaged Adventure Tourism vacations). In all of these vacation packages, even when the pieces are assembled by the consumer-tourist as “Travel” (i.e., backpacking, experiencing the world, hiking mountains, animal-adventures, vagabonding, sex adventure, etc.), adventure is a structure, structuring and structured structure (to invoke Giddens, Sahlins and Bourdieu at-their-edge-of structuralist analytics) of experience. It is not the specific content or substance of travel that constitutes adventure. It is not the nature or quality of attractions or activities; motives, economic class, age, nationality or other types of tourist types. Nor is it the specific trial and tribulations encountered when “touristing”<sup>2</sup> Maya or Buddhist ruins, beach or mountains, sex tourism or honeymoons, mosquito infested nights or blasting air-conditioning, business motives or recreational desires, low budget or super elite class, religious pilgrimage or educational tourism that constitutes the existence of adventure in tourism. Thus, what Simmel says for adventure — “the content of the experience does not make an adventure”

— holds true for tourism and the Adventure of Tourism. It is instead defined as a structure, which, to be utterly clear and precise, is not a form, nor a synthesis.

It is a structure with its own teleology of meaning, a defined (however rigorously or not) agenda, and particular methodology of execution. The purchasing of such a teleological structure in the form of a prepackaged vacation or a bricolaged travel set, is internally coherent and is assumed by the purchaser as an unremarkable linear or remarkably deviated continuation of the intrinsic meaning of the life-world of the consumer/practitioner of tourism. In tourism certain experiences are structured by a duplicitous logic, that is by the expectation of the unexpected and the nonanticipation of the anticipated. This structure operates as it does in fiction by the principle of the suspension of disbelief. One suspends belief regarding what one knows and does not know will or will not occur. This is the basis of tourism and it is the logic of adventure that inhabits the structuring of experience. One expects that one will get a “tourist” experience that includes a back stage encounter with the really real authentic native and one suspends, with a wink of the eye, one’s knowledge that that encounter was completely staged *as if* it were “backstage.” This is the principle that Maxine Ffiefer in her book “Going Places” used to identify the “postmodern tourist.”

In contrast, Simmel’s adventure is not in the structure of structuring and structured experience, but in the meaning of the unexpected and contingent that intercepts structured experience. It is not the tour of the ruins nor the zillion mosquito bites, dehydration, and charming native that sold souvenirs and “secretively” revealed the really real, back-stage and authentic culture, but the reaction and meaning of the reaction to any of the above. All of this is to say that all, none, or some of these more or less fortuitous elements might or might not be adventure depending upon the meaning given/created by the would be adventurer. To impose a heuristic and ultimately bad binary to clarify the distinction, you could say that this is the difference of the feeling as form of the experience and feeling as structured structure. Adventure in Tourism is the plan, Simmel’s adventure is the deviation from the plan. But it is *not just any* deviation: It is the deviation among all possible external contingencies that iminge about the tourism trajectory with a meaning that is synthesized in the experience to give it a new and renewed meaning; it is the deviation that is, is associated with, or implicated in a meaning that is both inside and outside. In other words, like the cannibals, nomads, and migrants, adventure, then, is not where it should be. It is not when it is expected or where it is anticipated *in tourism*: It is Other. Simmel’s adventure is with the Other and the similar Adventure of Tourism is with the Same. Simmel’s adventure might or might not occur in the course of the Adventure of Tourism. But, we know only of its occurrence, its existence, when it is narrativized as such in a moment that recalls the past experience as an adventure — and this past is past even if it occurred just a second ago. In contrast, the Adventure of Tourism as a structure of experience is always present in the here and now as a future, as a present future experience and a future present experience. In this sense, the alterity of “adventure as form” and “adventure as structure” is a crucial gap, location, temporality, and articulation that demands a more extended detour into the insightful problems and problematic insights.

If these two distinct types of narratives — the heroic narrative of Greek Tragedy and the anti-drama of *Waiting for Godot* — can be held as exemplary of the difference between Simmel’s adventure and the similar Adventure of Tourism, it would be a mistake to consider these as paradigmatic models of two types of adventure. Rather, if we consider

that narrative is a certain kind of thing — indeed, a form — that is simultaneously a structure and a synthesis, then it is more fruitful to posit narrative itself is the master-paradigm of adventure. Narrative itself is a form that is both — and can be viewed, understood, analyzed as both — synthesis and structure. Further, it is in narrative, in the form of narrative where the synthesis of two adventures occur, that is, the synthesis of Simmel’s adventure and the similar Adventure of Tourism. This idea is especially evident in travelogues and autobiography, which we must recognize as two varieties of adventure and similar Adventure.

In thinking about adventure, these two kinds of adventure, in and as narrative, a another kind of adventure appears as a possibility. Against these two very precisely conceptualized notions of adventure lies a third adventure which is specified precisely by the lack of conceptual content as an emotive response. Rather, how often do we simply proclaim some events and the narration of those events as ... well ... an “adventure”? Adventure here becomes the “simple” often exhortatory, often reactive, ascription of a meaning — “adventure” — onto events, life, happenings, and especially a wide variety of narratives that have recourse to surprise, the unexpected, and the absence of anticipation without the fictional principle of the suspension of disbelief. This adventure appears as a “pure” descriptor of drama, excitement, and the extraordinary in real life. “Wow! What an Adventure!” we might say to these everyday stories that are told by our family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and strangers.

### (Three) Adventures/rs Among the Maya

The nature of adventure seems clearly grounded in the subjectivist experience of the subject position who has the adventure. This is one reason why (or an effect of how) Simmel has recourse to the figure of the Adventurer, that is the subject position of the subject who “has” a form of experience he calls adventure. But, to prevent mistaking adventure as an ontological fact of human phenomenology, Simmel must necessarily define adventure as an attitude of the subject and must therefore exclude some categories of subjects from categorically having the proper attitude. Thus, he rather prejudiciously excludes as adventurer-subjects “women,” because of their postulated passivity, and the “aged,” or those who live a “life-style of old age” (§22); these lack the proper adventure-attitude. While this can only be excused as part of Simmel’s search for logical systematicity, the value judgement and erroneous assessment of empirical reality cannot.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, the logic itself as logic is also worth questioning. But, for the moment, let us consider how the objectivist analysis intervenes in the meaning of the subjectivist experience.

As evident from the examples (and exclusions) of the figure of the Adventurer that Simmel provides of adventure, there is also the outside, objectivist ascription of adventure to the experience that another person, such as a gambler and womanizer, might have. Simmel, in other words, plays on his and our inherited common-sense cultural logics so that we readily accept the assertion that the sexual conquest of another and gambling are adventures *even if* the expression by the subject of their experience as such (i.e., as “adventure”) does not obtain in either internal consciousness or social intercourse. We might ask, even if the basis of adventure according to Simmel is a subjectivist experience, need the experience be expressed as adventure per se? Further, what counts or qualifies as expression of adventure? Simmel’s examples only begs the question: While it seems frequently the case that the Casanova (a figure to which Simmel has recourse) might

expressly feel and consciously define a sexual conquest as an adventure according to a common cultural metaphor, it seems that gamblers would not necessarily define their experience as such. In any case, would the Casanova's identification of his — or her?! — exploits as “adventure” necessarily be adventure in Simmel's sense, or, might it be a similar adventure, perhaps of tourism or dramatic titillation? Thus, despite the adventure being based in subjectivist experience, it is also premised on an outside or objectivist ascription. Indeed, it is easy to think of examples of stories told by a friend or an acquaintance about, for example, their travels in exotic (or even in mundane and familiar places) in which episode after episode of unsuspected trials and tribulations are recounted. In listening to these tales in which surprise events, and the surprising responses they trigger, accumulate one on top of the other, one might almost unconsciously find oneself saying: “Wow! What an Adventure!”

Yet, is it — or *was* it — an adventure if the would-be adventurer is awash in an anguish, sentiment or sensibility that is truly non-adventuresome? For *whom* is adventure and *to whom* does it belong? *When?* When *is* adventure?

Anthropologists are one type of modernist subject or subject-position who in their travels accrue an over abundance of such adventuresome if not also heroic tales from the field.<sup>4</sup> The traveler tales of anthropologists are also the kind of narrative that often triggers the exclamatory commentary. Consider this fragment of a story of an anthropologist who visits Maya ruins. She describes how she became fascinated by the Maya in an introductory anthropology course, but had instead chosen the course of her career as an anthropologist to do research in the USA. She describes her long awaited visit to the Maya ruins of Uxmal, Yucatán:

What had for many years been just textbook image was transformed into experience; it seemed to satisfy a deep longing of which I wasn't even aware. My plan to maintain a distanced gaze -- looking at Westerners looking at Maya -- could not protect me from desire, emotion, and the power of experience. Again, the Mayan architectural and cultural aesthetic seduced me.... [For one young couple in the tour group, the] Maya ruins... were quotes and detritus, a picturesque but arbitrary backdrop to scenes of their own unleashed passions.... Uninterested in the guide's descriptions... they read surfaces and I felt deeply, but... for all of us there still was some mystique of the original... (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651, 655).

“Wow! What an adventure!” you might hear echoing as you read. In being seduced in the description of the power of the experience of the aura of ruins, “we” readers recognize the experience of an adventure, the aura of ruins, that the authors themselves, Mascia-Lees and Sharpe, almost but not quite themselves define as such. Adventuresome but not quite adventure. In turn they invoke a contrastive similarity with the experience a young couple who they assert also had an experience of the aura of Maya ruins; theirs was (sexual) “adventure,” but not quite adventuresome. Indeed, theirs was an adventure with the aura ruins, but not quite expressed as such. In turn, we readers are seduced into almost but not quite also identifying these experiences of the aura of ruins as adventures/adventuresome, if not quite adventure per se. After all, although there was neither self-identification of the authors' own experience nor ascription of another's experience as adventure, it seems that somewhere there might be at least three different and entangled adventures in the proximity of Maya ruins.

This fragment of a travelogue points out that the tension between a subjectivist identification of one's experience and the objectivist ascription of an experience needs significantly more thought. It raises significant questions such as: If a subject can have the experience of adventure in Simmel's sense without actually giving it the identification of adventure, can it be nonetheless adventure? We might also add: Can the adventures of passion be an experience of the aura of ruins even if the subject does not identify it as such? Here it seems that both Simmel and Mascia-Lees and Sharpe tell us it is indeed possible and even valid, at least in terms of the analytics of our social sciences. Thus, the question becomes, "is the adventure a (phenomenological) property of the subject who experiences or has the adventure?" Or, is it a property of the external forces that impinge on the life of the subject who thereby synthesizes the fortuitous elements which the world throws onto one's path as a permanent detour? On the one hand, the experience of the aura of Maya ruins seems to be a property of the experience of Mascia-Lees and Sharpe. On the other hand, the experience of the aura of Maya ruins by the young couple seems interestingly enough not to be their experience, but rather the experience of perhaps the ruins themselves or the analyst who defines the experience as that of aura. To whom does "it" — the adventure — *belong*?

Indeed, on closer inspection, there is no certainty as to who or what is the *subject* of adventure. In an ontological sense adventure is the property of, or belongs to, the agent who creates the experience of adventure. But, who is the agent of adventure — is it the one who synthesizes or is it the external forces of the world that intervene in the life of the one who synthesizes? Who has the agency "of" adventure, "in" adventure? On this point Simmel is quite clear: Through the use of the figure of the adventurer, he defines the subject or the subject position of the adventurer as the sole proprietor of agency in adventure. Yet, it seems that it might not be as he and even "we" expect. As Mascia-Lees and Sharpe point out: "the Mayan architectural and cultural aesthetic seduced me." The Maya ruins seduced the authors with its aura to create, ascriptively speaking, a ruinous adventure.

Or, this suggests another possibility. Is there a kind of sociological usufruct of "ownership" or "belonging to" by way of the analytical-objectivist ascription of adventure to someone else's experience of an event, in this case the event of the experience of aura? Does the one experiencing "it" *own* the adventure as the subject-proprietor of the experience-event? Or, is it a "shared" ownership? Certainly — or at least it *seems* certain that — Mascia-Lees and Sharpe do not "own" the aura of Maya ruins. Would that they "own" the experience of adventure is placed in doubt, especially if it is an analytical objectivist ascription. Or, perhaps, the subject-narrator recounting it (i.e., the experience of the aura or of the adventure) as the subject-content of "one's" adventure(some) experience "own" it via the representational proxy of narrative? Is it not through narrativization itself that adventure and Adventure make that synthetic movement from subjectivist meaning to objectivist cultural reality? This therefore irretrievably leads us down the path to ask if the adventure, or the aura, does not actually also "belong" to us who ascribe to the experience the form of synthesis Simmel calls adventure? Is Mascia-Lees and Sharpe's adventure with aura not "our" adventure? Does it not belong to use who read their travelogue?

Is it not also the case, therefore, that the adventure *happens* to "us," the audience and interlocutors, who listen, read, and valorize the unsuspected turns and dramatic rhythms that we expect of the travelogue of adventure? Do not we the audience also experience the adventure? Apropos of this question, Walter Benjamin (1968) gave particular attention to the reception that film received when this media was first presented to audiences unfamiliar

with its technology: Film, he said “hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him, and thus acquir[ed] a tactile quality.” But, what kind of adventure is this that we the audience experience? Simmel’s or a similar Adventure of Tourism or perhaps even just a dramatic adventure of the third kind? Is it the adventure of synthesis, structure or titillation?

“It hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him.” Adventure, like film, happens, it happens at the phenomenological register of experience. It has an experiential quality and effect right *now, right here in the very moment* of the listening, seeing, or reading the story of adventure. Yet, interestingly, the experience of adventure for the teller of the tale is always in the past. It is just a memory of external contingencies that attains coherence through the narrative synthesis of the internal life-form and the external worldly fragment. Once adventure becomes not simply an experience of the speaker, but also an experience of audiences and interlocutors, the adventure comes alive again, is resurrected, in the present at the moment of their hearing, reading, or seeing the adventure-narrative. In this way, adventure synthesizes, consumes and encompasses, the past into the present, the present of adventure, which is synthesis, and thereby erases the future by negation. This fragmentation or split and then synthesis of temporalities raises complicated questions about the kind of relations of subjectivity, agency, passivity, and proprietorship that both the teller and audiences of adventure-stories have to the adventure, that is, to the form of experience as synthesis and to the structure of experience as tourism.

## The Adventure of Aura and the Aura of Adventure

the adventurer is also the extreme example of the ahistorical individual, of the [wo]man who lives in the present. On the one hand, [s/]he is not determined by any past (and this marks the contrast between him [or her] and the aged, of which more later); nor, on the other hand, does the future exist for [the adventurer]. ¶6

Responses, however tentative, to these questions require a more extended reading of the adventuresome travels of tourists among Maya ruins. In particular, the anthropologists’ travelogue warrants a closer inspection to assess if (the story of) the experience of aura is, or approximates, the experience of adventure as synthesis.

In an essay on the “anthropological unconscious,” Mascia-Lees and Sharpe (1994) tell us how one of the co-authors became fascinated with the Maya as an undergraduate — that is, through the anthropological mystery of the Maya as communicated through, she says, archeology textbooks — but, we might, also surmise ethnographies and the many mysterious articles on the Maya in National Geographic Magazine. This experience with the Maya is profound and is among the factors that shapes one of the co-author’s decision to become an anthropologist. But, she explains, an ethical and political angst of participating in colonialist science prevents her from doing research among the Other. “For years I had been extremely uneasy about doing fieldwork outside of my own society for fear of participating in traditional anthropology’s complicity in colonizing the non-West” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651). She therefore specifically seeks to avoid the complicity and collusion of doing research that would further that power/knowledge nexus. Thus, as is the case for many (if not most) anthropologists, the western romantization and othering of non-Western peoples attracts her and feeds an and her own anthropological imagination. Somehow guilt or doubts about the validity of this motivation pervades: “Particular fascination was unprofessional. Accordingly, I spent years repressing the appeal of the Maya that had drawn me to those undergraduate courses” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994:



651). Thus, she instead develops research projects “at home” in the USA and successfully makes her career as an anthropologist.

Finally, “In 1991 I discovered a rationale to justify visiting Maya ruins in the Yucatán” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651). In order to satisfy her professional and personal interests in the Maya, she/they endeavor/s to get a grant to study tourists “studying” Maya “studying” tourists “studying” anthropologists.<sup>5</sup> “The purpose... was ‘to study a small group of tourists participating in a packaged tour, comparing their images of the Maya with those used to market the Yucatán as a vacation site as well as with those created by anthropologists’” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651). In other words, in order to finally legitimate to her peers, grant review committees, and to herself, a trip to the Mayaland of Mystery, she got a grant to pay her expenses to be a tourist on a charter group with the *scientific* purpose of contrasting the representations of the Maya produced/consumed by tourists, tourism agencies, and anthropologists. Good enough reasoning as it stands and certainly normal for an era of tourism studies in which a significant number of tenured professors convinced their university granting committees of the need to ethnographically study tourist culture by sweating right next to them on the charter bus.<sup>6</sup> Yet, additional legitimacy was necessary for this study of tourism, which is always susceptible to denigration as a para-science. Thus, “[t]he new ethnographic style of turning the gaze back on the Westerner offered me a way out, an acceptable mask to cover my desire” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651). The desire for the Other is there, there on the inside of the subject. It is there as part of the continuity and coherence of the life trajectory, and yet it must be forgotten, elided, hidden from the consciousness of the subject and from the knowledge of others by an erasure if not also expulsion from the inner workings of the self.

But, whose desire is it? She, the authors, state that “In the Yucatán, I disguised myself as a tourist, masking my anthropological exploit to study tourists, while this professional guise itself masked my touristic desire to revel in direct experience of Mayan culture” (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651). With pointed ambivalence and duplicity, the authors use the first person to discuss specific, individual experiences; yet, they do not indicate in the text itself which of the authors is speaking about their motivations, intentions, and desires.<sup>7</sup> There are two authors but they speak in a singular voice based on the synthesis of their difference: The pronoun “I” of the author and authorial voice is a split subject, with a split subjectivity. It would be a mistake to think that this is a fortuitous error or sloppy mistake. Beyond the doubling and coupling of the author’s “I” written in the text and the other author-writer that writes the “I” into the text as a character, there is another double articulation: Since the authors themselves are two writers the singularity of the reference, signified, of the “I” is double, in fact, at least, doubly doubled. These (female/feminist) authors are “I” but this “I” is double; indeed, they are “she” and “she” is already plural.<sup>8</sup> Further, the authors are anthropologists who disguise themselves as “tourists” (for whom?) in order to “hide” their ethnographer-self (from whom?); yet, they are simultaneously tourists who disguise themselves as ethnographers (for whom?) in order to “hide” their tourist-self (from whom?). If the prior discussion that asked “to whom does the experience of adventure in any of its guises belong?” was too theoretical, this narrative of adventure(?) or, at least, adventuresome experience of aura only clarifies — and exacerbates — the question. Beyond the dichotomous split of the subject, the subject here is a multiplicity, a pluralized singularity, a form of synthesis of the plural.

We might even be her. Is she us? Am “I” them? Indeed, after *turisteando* as an ethnographer in and among Maya ruins for most of my life, I think, I feel, “I” am “her” — “I” *am* “she” the anthropologist-tourist of far-flung ruins... Wow. Reading the anthropological unconscious is like living in a dream; it’s a form of experiencing the “anthropological unconscious.”

Her “touristic desire to revel in direct experience of Mayan culture” leads her to join a charter group that takes her to Uxmal, a Maya archaeological-tourist attraction of international fame. At Uxmal she describes an “overwhelming emotional” experience of an “erotic frisson” under the hot Yucatecan sun standing near the smooth round base of the pyramid. She goes prepared and protected, wearing the double prophylactic of the tourist-disguised-as-ethnographer and the ethnographer-disguised-as-tourist:

Nevertheless, I was totally unprepared for the physical pleasure -- bordering on the erotic -- that I felt at the base of the great, majestic pyramid at Uxmal (figure 1): I was so overwhelmed by its size and beauty, by the sensual appeal of the pyramid's gently rounded base, that I remember thinking that were I to die right then, somehow it wouldn't matter. I was awash in emotion, just as my body was being bathed by the hot midday sun. (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1994: 651?)

Wow! What an adventure! As Simmel says, “The dynamic premise of the adventure... is absolute presentness — the sudden rearing of the life-process to a point where both past and future are irrelevant” (§24). The absolute presentism of the experience, that asymptotic approximation (or logocentric dream) of the absolute presence and totality of being, is the sublime moment of adventure that must necessarily erase both past and present, even temporality itself. As a pure presence, adventure *is*, is itself in the ontological and phenomenological register of experience and not its representation. *She says she remembers thinking* “were I to die right then, it would not matter.” Past and present are obliterated, sacrificed to the experience of ... adventure — according to Simmel — and the experience of aura — according to what she begins to later explain to us in the ethnographic travelogue.

It seems clear that this is Simmel’s adventure. Or, is it? Remember, she says, “I remember thinking.” While past and present were experientially sacrificed in the moment of experience, it seems that temporality was not effected; it was neither erased nor forgotten. In this snippet from the entire narrative we have as it were the dramatic crux of the travelogue: It is a moment of climax of the subjectivist experience of adventure. No doubt, at least adventure in the third sense. But, is it a moment of synthesis? Does the adventure form of experience as synthesis exist right then and there in that moment of the experience of being awash in emotion that bordered the erotic? Or, maybe the synthesis, if it existed at all, occurred *in the moment that she narrated* that moment of being awash in emotion? If that is the moment of adventure as synthesis, *when is that* moment? Here the issue of temporality, which for Simmel seems quite simple, becomes an opaque and smoky mirror.

The moment might be in the very instant and instance of the experience when she, the adventurer, begins to think consciously of the experience as a story of adventure to be told with specific elements orchestrated in a specific order of dramatic expression. In the moment of experience itself, in all its plenitude she *remembers* “the future” in order to imagine, *to think*, this present moment *as if* it were past, a past, furthermore, in which she not even be, might not even exist or only exist “as dead,” as the limit-threshold of existence. Is this not the grand and great moment of synthesis when the sensibility of consciousness

articulates to phenomenological experience as a (narrativized) form of adventure? Is not the greatest adventure this form of experiencing existence as non-existent? Of course, that moment of the initial experience of the narrativization as adventure of the experience of adventure might not quite occur *until some other unfortold time in a future present*. It might be, by that curious logic of supplementarity that Derrida delineates, a moment that is both within and outside (before and after) the time of the experience, but yet somehow *not* that very moment of the adventure *itself*. But, if “it” is *that* moment, who could know when that moment *is*? It might be in the present moment of the experience itself or in the future remembering the moment presented as past present. If this is adventure, then, at least for me, I myself do not know *when it is*.

If it *is* the form of synthesis of adventure that Simmel thinks, then maybe Simmel is “simply” incorrect in his assessment of how temporality and the play of past/present operate in this synthesis. This is a grave question, for this is the basis of Simmel’s proposition that *adventure exists in the experience itself*, in its dynamic form of synthesis in its absolute present moment of experience and *not in the representation of it*. In other words, adventure is not the signifier, but the signified. Yet, the moment of synthesis, at least based on the evidence of the travelogical ethnographer, occurs as a thought remembering and imagining — representing — across that great and inaffable span between the phenomenology and the epistemology of experience. In which case, maybe, either Simmel is “incorrect” or there really is no adventure? Maybe, that is, Simmel’s adventure does not exist? It maybe the case that it does not exist at all; there are only similar adventures.

But then again maybe it was not, after all, a synthesis at all. Maybe it was “just” a tourism structure of feeling that we have called Adventure? Curiously enough even this non-Simmelian synthesis or Derridean non-synthesis of past/future in the present, provides a *structure of temporality* of Adventure-Tourism. In this meta-structure of experience, there are additional structural elements of duplicity: the protracted and overwhelming suspension of disbelief regarding not only the “power of Maya ruins” but her own deeply felt fascination with the Maya Other that she worried might broach over into an “uprofessional fascination” and romanticist obsession. She disguised herself as a tourist to disguise herself from herself as an anthropologist to disguise herself as anthropologist to hide from herself her tourist-self. “My plan to maintain a distanced gaze -- looking at Westerners looking at Maya -- could not protect me from desire, emotion, and the power of experience. Again, the Mayan architectural and cultural aesthetic seduced me.” Woow! *This is Adventure!*

And, of course, it, that moment, was adventuresome — adventure as dramatic titillation and frisson. I remember, afterall, even when I read again and again this article at night in my bed in snowy Albany, New York, during that long winter, I felt the sweating heat of the Yucatec sun enveloping me in an oceanic feeling. I felt frisky. I was wet all over. “It” *too* “hit [me] like a bullet. [Like a bullet.]<sup>9</sup> It happened to [me].” There *was* a tactile quality.<sup>10</sup> Woow! Wow!

Was that *my* adventure? Or, was it *hers*? Maybe I *am* her? And she is “I”?

But, then again, maybe it is indeed Simmel’s adventure and not just a similar Adventure? If the fragment of the quote is returned to the context of the trajectory of the narrative as a whole, then the form of a synthesis does somehow appear and appear again as a possibility. To review the narrative, she says that “[i]n the Yucatán, I disguised myself as a tourist, masking my anthropological exploit to study tourists, while this professional guise itself masked my touristic desire to revel in direct experience of Mayan culture.” This we

have suggested is a key of the structuring of the structure of experience of this Tourism-Adventure. Yet in the immediately subsequent sentence this structure is “twisted” and “tweaked”: “*But how* in this age of simulacrum and pastiche was I still capable of an intense *frisson*<sup>11</sup> in the presence of the original? *Didn’t Walter Benjamin anticipate* that the aura of originals would wither in the age of mechanical reproduction?” (emphasis added). Here the structure of suspension of disbelief is refined with specific substance and given an additional layering of anticipation of the unanticipated and the unexpectation of the expected. Believing in Benjamin, she too anticipated the withering of aura and specifically the withering of the Maya aura. Yet, she knew all too clearly that she had to “protect” herself from that aura and maintain a “distanced gaze” of the ruins. “How?” indeed did she have that “intense frisson” “bordering on the erotic” is the troubling, titillating, *even adventuresome* question that persists and produces. It is the productive origin of the synthesis-adventure.

The adventure of synthesis begins here in *this moment of consciously asking* precisely about the synthesis of the external fragment that fortuitously intervenes in the internal form of coherent continuity of a life course. Interestingly, this moment is of course non-temporal. It is an “originary” moment to use Derrida’s notion that reveals the logocentric quandaries of the archæ-logical origins, for example, of language in speech and/or in writing. As in *differance*, this originary moment is spatial, rather is a spatial distribution, spacing, deference, and deferral of time. There is no origin, but origins are scattered about, disseminated throughout. Thus, if we look closely at the text there is actually two — or maybe three! or more? — moments of origin of this questioning of experience in relation to Benjamin which in turn is the inaugural moment of the narrative form of synthesis of this adventure of aura.

Indeed, the essay begins with a variation of a standard rhetorical trope of ethnography: a cultural paradox or puzzle is posed at the onset of narrative as the thing to be explained through recourse to ethnographic, i.e., fieldwork based, knowledge of “local” customs. A nephew is born with a physical defect that disturbs the adventurer-author. Why is the visual image of this defect of a close relative so disturbing, she asks. And, so we are cast away on an ethnographic travel adventure to find an answer. Notice however that she all but states that she does not know that this external and fortuitous fragment is the beginning of her Tourism-Adventure in ethnographic explanation. In the structure of the narrative itself, she suspend belief in the knowledge that she has of this as an originary moment as she nonetheless places it as origin. In the structure of the experience itself, she forgets about the defect in her normal life, forgets about the disturbing image until one day she remembers. In the face of another image, a familiar image from her past as a schoolgirl in archaeology class, she remembers at once why it is disturbing. She sees again one of those stereotypical images of the ancient Maya practice of head deformation of elite children. It, this image of Maya head deformation, reminds her, she says in a Nietzschean reversal of cause-effect, of the disturbing image of the nephew’s birth defect. It is a reversal, because “actually” as she looked at the image of head deformation, which was not a memory that was reminded of (not the object of the reminding), but the reminder (the subjunctive action-agent) of another image, the deformed Maya head which, indeed, triggered, that is, reminded, her of the memory-image of the disturbing image of the nephew’s birth defect. In turn, when she originally saw the nephew she was not reminded of anything specific, but rather she was reminded of nothing; she was only disturbed by remembering a memory-image that could not be remembered *at that moment*. That is the

disturbation, the dis-ease, of being “reminded” of something — of having the illusion of being reminded of something — while actually *not* being reminded of nothing at all, of something that remains absent and outside of memory and remembering. In turn, the Maya head deformation seemed to remind her of the nephew’s physical defect, but it reminded her actually of having this disturbance which in turn reflected back to her at that moment, the image of the deformation of Maya heads. We might ask — as she herself does, repeatedly, and explores theoretically through the idea of “anthropological unconscious” — of this dynamic of memory and remembering, with all its smoke and mirrors, *what* is the origin of the remembering? And, *when* is it?

Just as in this reflective play back and forth between the image internalized in the life course as a budding anthropologist and the external image of a loved one fortuitously effected by birth, there is another level of synthetic movement to which this originary moment is articulated. *This* remembering in itself is neither the cause nor the trigger of the narrative of adventure. It is not the adventure. Rather, the dynamic of this remembering (of images of birth defect/head deformation) is itself remembered in another, different moment when it, this synthetic play, is, as it were, “remembered” in and by the adventuresome event at the base of the round, smooth pyramid. She says, “What had for many years been just textbook image was transformed into experience”: Yet, which textbook image? The image of Maya ruins or of Maya head deformation. But, in neither the recounting of that event itself nor, we can imagine, in the erotic frisson that is represented by the narration, is there an actual, *literal*, image of Maya head deformation or birth defects. Nor is there a mention of which specific image of ruins and pyramids (except the one she narrates) or what categories of images became presented in the experience to become transformed as experience. Indeed, it is crucial to her argument that it remain a generalized and generic reference to an unconscious memory of anthropological images of (Maya) otherness.

“Image was transformed into experience.” Given the above discussion of the double articulation of the temporalities of future, past, present, this narrativized representation of *the* experience begs the question: Which experience? Somehow it seems that the experience of the transformation of experience goes beyond the experience itself to be a narrative synthesis, even necessary conflation or articulation, of doubled images and doubled experiences: “Again, the Mayan architectural and cultural aesthetic seduced me.” The articulation of the “remembering” of one in and by the other occurs in another moment, the moment when those originary moments, scattered as they are throughout the continuity of a life, are connected as the thread of an answer to the double questioning of experience along Benjaminian lines of the withering of aura in an age of simulacra and of the cultural puzzle to be solved by ethnographic explanation.

This double synthesis of articulations “seemed to satisfy a deep longing of which I wasn’t even aware.” Indeed, for what appears as the fragmentary and fortuitous outside — the textbook images of head deformation, birth defects, Maya architectural and cultural aesthetics, the chance research on tourists as a “tourist,” authentic ruins in an age of mechanical reproduction — is already inside, already internalized as part of the trajectory of the adventuresome life course of this anthropologist-tourist. *It only appears as if* these fragments were contingencies that intervened from the outside in the continuity and coherence of life. At least, she and I agree on this: It only appears fortuitous; these fragments only appear as if they were externalities.

It only appears so, according to her, the anthropologist-adventurer, after much reflection and theorizing about the specific nature of today's mechanical age of reproduction. We are anthropologists afterall: We suspect connectivity. We are believers in the invisible connections of and between scattered fragments and far-flung ruins that appear, only appear, as if external detritus and contingent debris. Believing in this, being trained to believe in this, we search all our lives for these imagined articulations. As Weber or a new age spiritualist might say: things happen for a reason, everything has a reason for happening, and they happen because of that meaning. In this might lie the fundamental, crucial difference between the anthropologist and the adventurer: While we do believe in and suspect, however, much we might suspend our suspicious beliefs, the adventurer has neither belief in nor suspicion of either the pre-given connectivity or the externality of the debris, detritus, and far-flung ruins amongst which she calmly goes adventuring.

Our adventuresome tourist-anthropologist believes and suspects. Thus, she has faith that although Benjamin set up the structure of anticipation of the unanticipated, he too has the answer for her ethnographic puzzle/paradox. Well, at least, in a modified form: She proposes the idea of the anthropological unconscious modeled on Benjamin's optical unconscious via a detour through Taussig's *copying* of Benjamin's idea of mimesis.<sup>12</sup> The theory-travelogue goes something like this: There is an unconscious remembering of images that articulates them into a vague, yet precise unity at an individual and collective unconscious. These images derive from the vast archive of anthropological production of knowledge, images, understandings, misunderstandings, and imaginings of the Other, others, and "our" alterity. Mechanically reproduced and scattered in the most surprising places, the anthropological imaginary is disseminated in a most profound manner in our collective and individual unconsciousness. It is this "un/conscious" articulation that makes for the experience of Maya ruins an experience of authentic ruins in Benjamin's sense *for her* and, she postulates from the objectivist distance of the tourist-analyst, *for* the passionate couple for whom ruins were quotes, detritus, and debris that became simply a stage for their own adventures of a third(?) kind.

"Wow! What an adventure!"

### Asymptotic Ruins: Seduced Again

Here, above all, is the basis of the profound affinity between the adventurer and the artist... For the essence of a work of art is, after all, that it cuts out a piece of the endlessly continuous sequences of perceived experience, detaching it from all connections with one side or the other, giving it a self-sufficient form as though defined and held together by an inner core. A part of existence, interwoven with uninterruptedness of that existence, yet nevertheless felt as a whole, as an integrated unit — this is the form common to both the work of art and the adventure. Indeed, it is an attribute of this form to make us feel that in both the work of art and the adventure the whole of life is somehow comprehended and consummated ... Moreover we feel this, not although, but because, the work of art exists entirely beyond life as a reality; the adventure, entirely beyond life as an uninterrupted course which intelligibly connects every element with its neighbors. It is because *the work of art and the adventure stand over against life* (even though in very different senses of the phrase) *that both are analogous to the totality of life itself*, even as this totality presents itself in the brief summary and crowdedness of *a dream experience*. (¶5).

It is precisely in this thinking-theorizing of aura in her tourist experience of ruins and anthropological experience of birth defects that there is the synthesis that Simmel calls adventure. The travelogue-theory is the narrative vehicle and form of representation of that synthesis. It is the supplement itself of the experience of auratic frisson at the base of the pyramid. As such, we might ask, which is the contingent outside and which is the coherent inside? The experience of adventure or the theory-travelogue of aura? I, for one, am certain of my uncertainty on this point. Yet, I am also certain that it is precisely at this point when and where the synthesis dissolves, evaporates, or distillates into a structure, a structure of pure narrativity that we have very precisely called Tourism-Adventure. This, it seems, is quite antithetical, if not exactly non-synthetic, to Simmel's adventure.

If this is the case, then with some uncertainty we know that the Adventure of aura is just an aura of adventure. Perhaps. But, what is aura? Here I too confess my belief in Benjamin, who tells us that aura is that "unique phenomenon of distance no matter the proximity (to the self)" (see Benjamin 1968). Aura, then, is that impossible, asymptotic approximation that inserts distance and difference no matter how close one approaches the (other) object. In this search for adventure, it seems that adventure is not where it was expected and precisely there where it is not. It was there in narrative where it is not — that is to say, it is not there according to both the anthropologist-tourist and Simmel himself. Unless I am dreaming, of this I am certain, that either adventure does not exist or it exists as narrative, indeed, even as a theory of narrative and narrative theory — that is, theory-narrative. Adventure-theory, in other words — maybe I *am* dreaming!?

But, Simmel's adventure is not a dream, that is, not a representation nor a narrative. Yet, it seems certain, that this is all it could be. Or, it, adventure too is an asymptotic approximation. It, like the mystique of the original, is just an aura (of an experience); but not a dream. At least, (Simmels') adventure "is" (Benjamin's) aura. Might also, aura be adventure? [Ugh! It makes me shudder, just thinking about it.] In which case, we can then, finally, answer the question anticipated in the title of the first section of this essay: She — Mascia-Lees and Sharpe, those Adventurers of Tourism *suspended in webs of disbelief* (do we need add?) *that they themselves have spun* — is both and neither an adventurer and not an adventurer.

Certain uncertainty remains, however, about the experience of adventure itself. Who can say about this experience? Was it aura? Simmel's adventure? Or Similar? Regardless of the persistence of this timely question, at least we can conclude with utter clarity and certainty: She is/not adventurer. To be sure, there is no uncertainty about it. This much is clear — even without getting into all that hubris about woman being or not being "womanizers" and "casanovas"! [Remember, ethnography is cheaper than porn — usually.] Uh-ahm, hm, all that noise about whether woman, women, and the figure of woman seduce or are seduced, indeed even capable of seducing or just pure seducible, seduction itself; whether they are colonizers, heros, anti-heros, anti-conquest narrator-travelers (cf. Pratt 1992); or whether or not woman/women should be theorized as traveling/travelogical prostitutes, single moms, babysitters, nomads, skiers, pilgrims, immigrants, strangers, flaneurs, dishwashers (Veijola and Jokenin 1994; Jokenin and Veijola 1997) or, indeed, as simple "global people."

Eeh. Just thinking about all that makes me tired. Imagine having to theorize seducibility? It makes me feel old. Like an old man. Makes me want to sit in front of the TV. Even without reception, I just want to watch the snow. I think I will just stop here and

close the file. Maybe some other day, all that feminist stuff you know, but now I want to relax or, uuh, maybe clean the house. Yes, clean the house — after a week of writing the whole day in and day out, well, you know how it is, *dirty*. I better turn off the computer as well. Yes, I better, I remember now Juan told me news of a hurricane approaching Mérida. I dare not lose my work. I imagine myself now, crying to the editors, “my lost work, my lost work!”

The horror, horrible thought. The clouds have disappeared in the black skies — I can see the tempest coming from my desk — and I feel the winds gusting through the parisian window slats. Oh, no. There is a growing puddle of rain splashing by the window behind me. Smashing rain and the wind is getting quite strong now — it takes my breath away.

Wow. Looks like this will be an adventure.

Signed ...

Mérida, Yucatán, September 22, 2002.

### (What Does the Adventurer Think She Is?)<sup>13</sup>

Dear Q.,

... As for adventures, I think I've had some -- sexual, sensual, and otherwise -- but now, after reading your chapter, I'm not so sure. It didn't seem so complicated at the time!

Con carino, L.



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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The quotes from Simmel are from a downloaded internet version of the original text translated into English by David Kettler based on the 1919 [1911] 2<sup>nd</sup> edition published in Leipzig by Alfred Kroner as “Das Abenteuer” in *Philosophische Kultur. Gesammelte*. The number references the paragraph of this version.

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish translation of the English loan word “tourist” is “turista.” Out of this noun, Spanish speakers have created a verbal slang form, “turistear.” *Turistear* means to engage in, enact, or perform activities that are associated with and diagnostic of tourists, especially gringos (US-North American nationals). It is in other words, a posture, a pose, posing, and an attitude that anyone can assume or perform, whether in parody, playful or embarrassed self-consciousness, or straight, unreflective embodiment. The anthropology of tourism needs to borrow this invented (and transculturated) word back into the English language. It would help clarify some analytical and conceptual confusions that persist in the field, especially regarding the assumption of the ontological existence of the tourist, of tourists, and of tourism. In other words, tourists do not exist — they are just a fictional representation of a way of engaging the world.

<sup>3</sup> The original paper presentation included an extensive discussion of these issues and are elaborated in another manuscript.

<sup>4</sup> This allusion is a reference to the large and diverse literature on anthropologists’ travelogues. Noteworthy here is Claude Levi-Strauss’s *Tristes Tropiques* which became a focal point for critical commentary by such unlikely bedfellows as Susan Sontag, Clifford Geertz, and Jacques Derrida. Although the issue of the ethnographic self-fashioning of author and authority was quite extensively debated it may be worth while to return to these issues now that new figures and rhetorics are being produced apace without an historical consciousness of the problems involved.

<sup>5</sup> See Castañeda (1996, 2001) and Himpele and Castañeda (1997) for a related study.

<sup>6</sup> This satiric voice is just jest: In air-conditioned buses, the anthropologist might “sweat” about other issues than heat. The study of tourism has always been marginalized by main stream social sciences. This is no less the case in the 1980s when the anthropology of tourism was entering adolescence, there was need for rigorous ethnographic study of all aspects of tourism, including tourists and tourist cultures. While this object of study was reasonable in sociology, in anthropology this implicated studying western cultural groups. Since this was the decade in which “studying up”, ethnographic “home”-work, and research in the USA was just becoming legitimate, the participant observation of tourists was open to serious disdain; thus, it was only possible for established professors to do this kind of research often on “small grants” provided by home institutions. Although it is not clear of the number of professors that did do this, only a few publications have resulted, such as that under consideration here and see Bruner (1995). The political and economic basis of this component of tourism research in anthropology itself requires anthropological investigation, especially in relation to the vast university industry of educational tourism.

<sup>7</sup> My personal knowledge of one of the authors and related extra-textual information leads me to have a suspicion about which author is indicated. However, since I have not corroborated this hunch, I can only be faithful to this provocative ambiguity.

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<sup>8</sup> This point is of course a well worn feminist slogan that spans, in diverse variations, across a wide spectrum of feminisms, from Luce Irigaray and Donna Haraway to Gloria Anzaldúa, and Judith Butler, as well as beyond and before these illustrious adventurers.

<sup>9</sup> The repetition of the phrase references Frank Zappa's 1971 album, *Live From the Fillmore East*, especially the song "What Kind of Girl Do You Think We Are?"

<sup>10</sup> I mean, you know, somebody somewhere has said that ethnography is (a kind of) pornography. And its true! Plus, its usually a lot cheaper — especially now with Anthrosource®, the online source for all your USA anthropology journals.

<sup>11</sup> This French loan-word means a brief and nearly imperceptible spasm, shudder, or quiver that might also entail a gasp or loss of breath. This corporeal reaction can be triggered by fright, sexual arousal/desire, surprise, otherworldly spirits, or a fleeting yet powerful memory, idea, or image; or indeed it might be a response to some other or additional, external factor that intervenes in the subjectivity of a person who experiences frisson. Frisson, in short, is quite adventuresome if not an adventure itself. Frisson *is* certainly the *aura of adventure*. Like Coke, it's the real thing.

<sup>12</sup> I defer my desire to detour this text with a lengthy commentary on her discussion of ruins. To be brief I can only assert the conclusion of an argument: All archaeological ruins are indeed copies, *modern* copies, of something that never existed. They are in other words, simulacra as defined by Baudrillard (1994). Yet, they are copies of the archaeological imagining and *idealized vision*, of the past, of *what might have existed there in that unique time and space* (see Castañeda 1996, 2001; Himpele and Castañeda 1997). But, this vision of course has its primary, if not only, existence in those ruins built in accordance with that imagining of the past. Archaeological ruins *are* thus simultaneously *both* copies and ruin *and neither* copy and ruin (in Benjamins' sense of these terms). They are also simulacra and are *not* simulacra.

<sup>13</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari (1987) on double articulation.