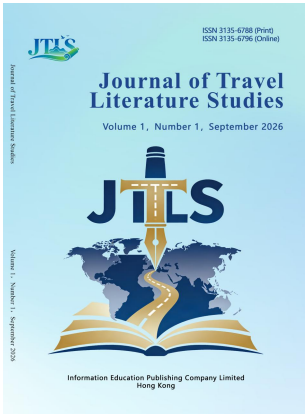

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Anthropology of Travel

Junwu Tian and **Tingcong Lin**

Abstract: This paper aims at eliminating the consumerist misunderstanding of travel prevalent in the academic field and reevaluating the ontological meaning of travel from the perspective of anthropology. As a kind of spatial displacement in geography, travel exists in the whole history of humankind, ranging from "Out of Africa" migration in the remote antiquity to the contemporary transnational flows of population. Travel, in the sense of anthropology, not only covers the variety of spatial movements such as ethnic migration, geographical exploration, military expedition, commercial trade and foreign communication, but also refers to the collision of human thought in performing these geographical activities, therefore reflecting the grand human progression. Thus, classical anthropology holds that the core of anthropology is travel, the oblivion of which is the amnesia of human history.

Keywords: tourism; travel; travel anthropology; progression of modernity

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Introduction

When thinking of travel, the first thing that comes to mind for most Chinese people is tourism, especially "Chinese-style tourism." In fact, behaviors such as taking photos at scenic spots are not exclusive to "Chinese-style tourism"; the foreign middle class also engages in such behaviors. As Susan Sontag (1973, p. 10) notes, "Most tourists feel compelled to put the camera between themselves and whatever is remarkable that they encounter. Unsure of other responses, they take a picture. This gives shape to experience: stop, take a photograph, and move on." Sontag's remark commented on the tourism behavior of European middle-class workers in the 1950s and 1960s. Whether Chinese-style tourism or the European middle-class tourism described by Sontag, both differ essentially from what "travel" means for anthropologists—especially pre-modern human travel. The distinction lies not only in the difference of connotations between the two but also in their different roles in the human social process.

Examination of the Connotations of Travel and Tourism

As Frances Bartkowski (1995, p. xxiii) writes, "Travel is movement, movement through territorialized spaces movement by those who choose to move and those who are moved by forces not under their control." In the remote ancient era, when travel tools were extremely lack, travel could only be undertaken on foot; thus, "travel" at that time was extremely painful, a degree of suffering far beyond the imagination of modern tourists. Scholars have verified that the word "travel" originates from the French "travail" (hardship), which in turn derives from the Latin "trepalium," referring to a torture instrument (Fussell, 1980, p. 39). In ancient time, there were two main causes of travel's pain: the absence of modern transportation and the hazardous travel environment. As John W. Parkers (1839, p. 12) notes,

> The difficulties of land-travel, so often interposed by the simply natural circumstances of the earth, are largely experienced by all creatures that move by the aid of feet, and, therefore, among the rest, by all the human race …. The atmosphere, the seasons, the hours of the day and night, are sometimes hostile,

> for shorter or longer periods; but, besides these, there are difficulties of the surface only, which last the entire year.

Beyond the natural environment, the dangers of the social environment also made travelers suffer. David Constantine (1984) studies 16th-century European travel in Greece and concluded that "The journey to Greece and travel in Greece were strenuous and dangerous. The travelers risked capture and robbery by pirates at sea, by brigands on land; as well as plague, harassment by the Turks and a thousand casual accidents" (p. 6). The time consumed by travel was even longer than modern tourists can imagine. Due to the lack of modern transportation, the Greece–Egypt journey of the "father of history," Herodotus (484–425 BCE), took more than 20 years, whereas under modern conditions it would take at most a week. Even by the 13th century CE, when travel tools and environments had improved to some extent, Marco Polo's (1254–1324) journey to China still required four years.

In contrast, "tourism" is more closely related to "pleasure," "holiday," and prescribed destinations; it is a consumerist behavior. As S. Medlik (2002, p. vii) notes, "For most people tourism has a connotation of leisure travel and tends to be synonymous with holidays (vacations). This is also reflected in dictionaries, which commonly refer to tourism as travel for pleasure." Etymologically, "tourism" implies "circulation" or "circling," which emphasize the cyclical nature of spatial displacement. Tourism refers to short-term departures from home to scenic places for recreation and sightseeing, usually with a return to the original residence after viewing the destination. Alister Mathieson and Geoffrey Wall (1982, p. 1) similarly describe tourism as referring to "the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs." Modern tourism began in the early 19th century; the advent of modern transportation tools such as steamships and trains significantly shortened travel time, reducing physical pain and spiritual loneliness, and endowing travel with entertainment characteristics. In 1841, Thomas Cook led a tour group on a one-day excursion between Leicester and Loughborough in Britain, marking the shift from travel to tourism. As David Seed (2004, pp. 1–2) describes,

> Some time after the middle of the nineteenth century, as the Graphic Revolution was getting under way, the character of foreign travel—first by Europeans, and then by Americans—began to change. Formerly travel required long planning, large expense, and great investments of time. It involved risks to health, even to life. The traveller was active. Now he became passive. Instead of an athletic exercise, travel became a spectator sport.

Thomas Cook's tourism industry once prompted scholars of travel to lament that the rise of modern tourism signaled the end of traditional travel: as Michael Mewshaw (2005, pp. 2) argues, "travel no longer exists. It's all been replaced by the plague of tourism." Nevertheless, some anthropologists insist that "travel" will not end with "tourism." Biswanath Ghosh (2010, p. 3) argues that "tourism and travel are not synonymous. All tourism involves travel, but not all travel is tourism." For these scholars, traditional travel will never perish. Travel is indispensable in human life because "immobility reminds us of that ultimate fact of life—i.e., Death—we remain eager to prove we're still alive by moving around and rubbing up against our fellow traveler" (Mewshaw, 2005, p. 2). Travel is even elevated to the Cartesian philosophical level of "I think, therefore I am," becoming "I travel; therefore I am" (Mewshaw, 2005, p. 3).

To distinguish "travel" and "tourism" ontologically, Western scholars tend to use the term "journey." "Journey" not only denotes physical remoteness and the hardship of the travel process but is also elevated metaphorically to refer to spiritual growth and life experience. As George Lakoff and Mark Turner (1989, pp. 60–61) note,

> All journeys involve travelers, paths traveled, places where we start, and places where we have been. Some journeys are purposeful and have destinations that we set out for, while others may involve wandering without any destination in mind. To understand life as a journey is to have in mind, consciously or more likely unconsciously, a correspondence between a

traveler and a person living the life, the road traveled and the "course" of a lifetime, a starting point and the time of birth, and so on.

Anthropological Representations of Travel

"In spite of Levi-Strauss's grumpy protesting against travelling and explorers, not even he could deny that anthropology and travel are intrinsically connected" (Grgurinovic, 2012, p. 45). Anthropologically, "Travel is defined as going from one place to another, usually over some distance, and in many ways the modern world is defined by people traveling around the world. Humans have traveled ever since Homo sapiens began to walk out of Africa and populate the world." (Taylor, 2022, p. 3). In prehistoric times, although bipedal walking freed ancient apes from animal nature and evolved them into humans, these newly human-like apes soon faced new survival crises: group expansion, food scarcity, and climate change. To resolve these, group-living apes adopted the modern human practice: migration. As William H. McNeill (1984, pp. 1–18) points out: it can be said with certainty that when our ancestors evolved into humans, they had already begun to migrate, wandering around and hunting. Migration and travel are mutually inclusive: "Migration describes the movement of a person away from their usual residence whereas travel describes a person who passes from place to place, for any reason. Migration and travel have shaped the history of humanity and enriched societies economically, socially and culturally" (Semenza & Ebi, 2019, pp. 1–13). The chief causes of migration, especially large-scale group migration, include climate change, deterioration of living conditions, war, and the search for resources. The "Out of Africa hypothesis" holds that human ancestors originated on the African continent. More than 1.9 million years ago, Homo erectus living in African primitive forests migrated en masse to escape climate change and forest fires, reaching the vast African savanna and beginning plains hunting and simple farming and herding. Subsequently, to survive better, these African Homo erectus began migrating from Africa to the Eurasian continent—an unprecedented large-scale human migration known as "Out of Africa." About 1.9 million years ago, Homo erectus appeared on the African continent. In the following tens of thousands of years, they spread throughout Africa, the farthest reaching the Eurasian continent—becoming the first primitive humans to leave Africa (Krause & Trappe, 2021, p. 30).

During migration, Homo erectus gradually evolved into African Homo sapiens. About 200,000 to 60,000 years ago, when our ancestors reached northern Europe and Asia along the Alps, they encountered cold climates, different food sources, and new food predators. Eventually, evolution began in these wandering tribes: their skin brightened, their metabolism adapted to new food sources, and their immune systems coped with different pathogens. These Homo sapiens began evolving into different subspecies, or different races (Hunter, 2014, pp. 1019–1022). African Homo sapiens later evolved into the ancestors of the four major races—Black, Brown, Yellow, and White—first migrating to Europe and Asia, then entering the Americas via the Bering Strait. Among these migrating groups, one branch settled in Europe; the Neanderthals, said to have become extinct in Europe, are descendants of African Homo sapiens who left Africa. On the other side, about 600,000 years ago, the Homo erectus remaining in Africa separately evolved into Neanderthals, Denisovans, and modern humans (Krause & Trappe, 2021, p. 30). According to the "Out of Africa" hypothesis, the British may also be descendants of African Homo sapiens; fossils found in the Thames Valley prove that Homo sapiens appeared in Britain approximately 1.25 million to 700,000 years ago. Britain's most direct and recent ancestors are likewise products of migration. The Celts, Britain's nearest ancestors, "were tribes from the upper Danube River. They spread outward from there and eventually settled in Italy, Spain, and Britain. … They came to Britain around 700 BCE and soon replaced the primitive tribes there" (Strong, 2022, pp. 4–5). Anthropologist Franz Boas (1928, p. 30) examines the changing genealogies of African, European, and Asian races in geographical environments and concludes: "From the beginning, we have a map of continuous human migration, which includes the fusion of various human groups." Although migration plays a decisive anthropological role in human racial distribution and formation, it is realized through travel. "Any migration—whether voluntary or forced—must be achieved through travel. But unlike ordinary travel, spontaneous migration is often a decision after careful consideration. Therefore, after spontaneous migrants leave their point of departure, they mostly will not choose to return for long-term residence" (Fan, 2013, p. 40).

Migration not only dispersed African Homo sapiens worldwide, forming modern world nations, but is also semantically linked to modern "immigration" and "diaspora." "Immigration is a kind of migration. Immigration can be simply divided into

international immigration and domestic immigration" (Fan, 2013, p. 40). Regardless of type, immigration has voluntary or forced causes. Britain's immigration phenomenon is typical. "Today we would call Britain an immigrant nation, built by centuries of encounters, interactions, and exchanges among a succession of migrant groups and ethnic communities." (Cramsie, 2015, p. 3). In British history, especially the 19th century, immigration included domestic and international forms. Domestic immigration accompanied industrialization, with large numbers of Britons moving from countryside to rapidly industrializing areas such as Birmingham, Manchester, and London. Throughout the 19th century and earlier, Britain maintained an open-door immigration policy, attracting foreigners. The largest group was the Irish, until the great famine represented by the potato event. By the 1870s, Britain launched large-scale overseas immigration. "In the 19th century, Britain became a pioneer in large-scale overseas group immigration. The main target countries for British overseas immigration were the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa" (Hatton, 2004, pp. 149–171). Between 1853 and 1913 alone, 1.3 million Britons left Britain and settled elsewhere.

According to their methods and legality, immigration can be divided into legal and illegal. Illegal immigration mainly appears as "smuggling," "refugees," and "asylum seekers." Whether legal or illegal, long-term residence in a foreign country inevitably produces the melancholy feeling of "being expelled from home and displaced" and nostalgia for the homeland; this phenomenon is called "diaspora." In Jewish culture, "diaspora" refers to "Israelites 'scattered' throughout the world. 'Diaspora' thus acquired such meaning. A certain ethnic group left its homeland to live in a foreign land; their diaspora always carries the theme of 'testing asceticism' yet maintains the characteristics of homeland culture" (Peng, 2013, p. 4). After the "Babylonian disaster" in 586 BCE, the Jewish scattering worldwide lasted more than two thousand years. Besides Jews, other nations experienced large-scale diaspora due to slave trade, livelihood pressures, religious conflicts, etc.—for example, Africans in the 16th century, Chinese in the 19th century, and Slavs in the 20th century. Thus, "diaspora" generally refers to minority ethnic immigration and "is the external manifestation of travel and the result of crossing borders. In this sense, it can become the theme of travel literature performance, such as displacement, seeking foreign lands, contacting the alien" (Choi, 2019, p. 69).

Travel not only shares an anthropological origin with migration but is also closely related to exploration, especially geographical exploration. In distinguishing travelers and explorers, Mike Grimshaw (2014) points out: "The difference between traveler and explorer is that the traveler sets out to find what already exists, while the explorer sets out to find what should exist. Their commonality is that both must undergo the journey to reach foreign lands" (p. 44). Grimshaw's view is quite absolute; in fact, travelers' departures are not always to find what already exists—many unknown regions were discovered unintentionally during travel. As John Cramsie (2015, p. 35) states: "British travellers built on medieval movements between Europe and the North Sea, North Africa, and, thanks to the 'decisive influence' of Marco Polo's account, Asia. Atlantic voyages of discovery gave a new impetus to acquire first-hand knowledge of humanity, near and far." Many unknown countries and regions in Europe, Africa, and the Atlantic were discovered intentionally or unintentionally by these travelers. Of course, as travelers with clear discovery goals, explorers or explorers play a greater role in discovering unknown areas and bear greater hardships. Since untraveled paths are usually more dangerous, many explorers even died en route. All this shows that exploration and travel share many commonalities—sometimes so many that anthropologists find it difficult to distinguish them. "It is not easy to distinguish exploration from the commonly known travel. Even in the days of crossing the Atlantic, every traveler felt he was an explorer" (Hamilton, 1906, p. 19). Italy's Marco Polo, Spain's Columbus, and Britain's James Cook are all famous historical travelers and explorers whose journeys and explorations worldwide left precious cultural wealth for humanity. Because the two are not easily distinguished, in many historical, anthropological, and sociological writings they are sometimes simply juxtaposed. "Explorers and travelers determined to 'scrutinize this foreign world, to perceive it in all its empirical qualities—and to write home about it in meticulous detail'." (Cramsie, 2015, p. 35).

As a spatial displacement behavior from home to foreign lands, "this travel … can also be a personal or political appeal (e.g., merchants or colonists), or out of simple knowledge curiosity (e.g., Ibn Battuta's travel reports), or out of complex motivations (e.g., the European Crusades)" (Friedman & Frigg, 2017, pp. vii–viii). Myra Shackley (2007) explicitly states: "In ancient society, travel mainly had commercial … political and military motivations, although there is also a small

amount of evidence that some travel has recreational factors since ancient Greece" (p. 6). Trade is originally a commodity-buying-and-selling behavior "but has become the main driving force for human flow in world history since ancient times. Although its meaning is no longer obvious today, before the arrival of the virtual market it has always been inextricably linked with travel" (Van Meersbergen, 2019, pp. 256–258). In ancient Greece, trade between city-states became the main reason for regional travel. To meet demands for grain, gold, silver, ivory, and other items, merchants shuttled between prosperous Mediterranean cities via land and sea transport. By the Roman Empire period, commercial travel expanded to distant lands such as China, India, and Tanzania in Africa. The ancient "Silk Road" is the classic representation of East–West commercial travel. Modern commercial development followed the same pattern. In January 1601, the London-based East India Company, about to undertake its first Asian commercial voyage, first sought help from Richard Hakluyt (1552–1616), believing that this compiler of the epic *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* and British consul in Paris possessed the greatest authority on Asian commercial knowledge. As Aske L. Brock and others (2021, p. 1) state,

> … as "historiographer of the Viages of the East Indies," Hakluyt had access to some of the most complete and up-to-date information about Asian commerce available in Elizabethan England. Over the previous decades he had acquired, edited, translated, and published a vast array of texts that detailed the experiences of European travellers across the world. Drawing on oral and written testimonies from Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and English travellers to Asia, Hakluyt was well-versed in the region's geography, politics, and cultures, and could offer advice ranging from the principal places where pepper grew to the type of herb (China root) thought to most effectively cure syphilis.

The Crusades belonged to military travel. In fact, from the beginning of recorded human civilization, travel had military purposes. As anthropologist Ke Fan states: "War is also inseparable from travel. Before the world entered the nation-state era, royal powers and empires of different regions often conducted long-distance

conquests for economic and population plunder" (2013, p. 38). For example, in ancient Greece, a 100,000-strong Greek coalition once took more than 1,800 warships, endured sea hardships, and traveled thousands of miles to attack Troy. In the Roman era, Alexander the Great of Macedonia led a huge army, marching more than 22,000 miles in 12 years and conquering more than 70 cities along the Mediterranean coast. The Crusades, lasting more than 300 years, were Europe's military expeditions against Asia. However, Europe's eastern expeditions were more like travel or immigration than warfare. Especially the civilian Crusaders of the first expedition seemed not to go to fight against Christianity's enemies but more like family immigration; they used oxen and sheep as horses, dragged two-wheeled carts along the way piled with broken luggage, with children sitting on them. Every time they passed a fortress or town, the children stretched out their hands and asked, whether it was Jerusalem (Thompson, 1997, p. 489). Yet this seemingly pitiful group massacred large numbers of Jews and Hungarians they regarded as "heretics" during the long journey. Throughout history, wars have included just wars of self-defense and far more unjust wars of aggression; the latter brought enormous harm to people's lives and property worldwide, including controls on travel and destruction of transportation facilities. As Jonathan S. Burgess (2019, pp. 19–32) writes,

> In the Hellenistic Age, following the military campaigns of Alexander the Great, the spread of Greek culture and language throughout the eastern Mediterranean facilitated travel. During the Roman empire, the *Pax Romana* enabled relatively safe transportation throughout the Mediterranean.

Travel and the Human Modernity Process

Caren Kaplan (1996, p. 1) believes that travel "is very much a modern concept, signifying both commercial and leisure movement in an era of expanding Western capitalism." The travel modernity that Kaplan defines is more likely to be a kind of tourism modernity, since large-scale tourism indeed arose during capitalist development. Strictly speaking, travel's modernity refers to its historical role in the entire human modernity process. "Travel has always played a crucial role in the long river of human evolution and development. We know that without exchanges between different cultures and human groups, human civilization could not have reached

today's achievements" (Fan, 2013, p. 38). Taylor (2022, p. 4) further positions the traveler as both agent and witness of historical events:

> Travelers are agents of historical events, i.e. they make history, and they are also witnesses to those events. They provide insight into places through the lens and bias given where they come from. How travelers tell their stories, to whom and what their experiences tell us about the circumstances are in many ways as meaningful as the journeys themselves.

Examples are numerous: medieval travelers' accounts of European encounters with indigenous peoples are the only historical documents we possess today. Matteo Ricci spent decades studying Chinese culture; his Chinese travel logs influenced Western imagination of China for centuries.

In fact, travel's anthropological ontological features inherently link it with modernity. Regarding modernity's essence, scholarly views differ. As Peter Osborne (2005, p. 282) notes: "There are few bushes more tangled than the concept of modernity into which it falls." The earliest use of "modernity" is generally attributed to French literary critic Charles Baudelaire's 1863 series "The Painter of Modern Life." Baudelaire's "modernity" pertains mainly to art: "Modernity is transience, fleetingness, contingency; it is one half of art, the other half being eternity and immutability. For every past painter there existed a form of modernity" (Baudelaire 1996, p. 136). What, then, is sociological or anthropological modernity? In anthropology and the titles of numerous works in the social sciences and humanities, monographs and articles containing the word "modernity" abound, yet there is no consensus on its content, boundaries, form, or temporal limits (Hubinger, 1998, pp. 85–95). However, "for a 19th-century British or American commentator, modernity mainly referred to rationality, industrial progress, democratic ideas, and social adaptation. Pre-modernity and non-modernity were primarily associated with myth, superstition, rural lifestyles, feudal government, and stable social customs" (Hansson, 2011, p. 257). In the author's view, Marshall Berman's (1982, p. 15) definition of "modernity" best aligns with anthropological and sociological concerns. Berman writes:

> There is a mode of vital experience-experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life's possibilities and perils that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience "modernity." To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world-and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. Modern environments and experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology: in this sense, modernity can be said to unite all mankind.

According to Berman, modernity is the human subject's perception of external-world changes and the subject's simultaneous self-change while altering the external world. As the West's most dynamic concept, modernity is closely linked with the idea of progress and is regarded as change and improvement. We need not expend much effort to find examples from many teleological ideologies—from ancient myths to today's various religions and political doctrines, including Marxism-Leninism (Hubinger, 1998, pp. 85–95). Modernity manifests in multiple forms (e.g., scientific rationality, the emergence of the state, urbanization, globalization), and many factors promote the human modernity process. Among them, travel is both content and one of the chief means of advancing modernity.

As an important way for the subject to perceive external change, learning and education "make direct and independent contributions to individual modernity" (Yin, 1985, p. 97). Learning and education appear not only in systematic academic institutions but also in travel. Since ancient times, travel—the behavior of moving from one place to another—has always been regarded as a metaphor for learning, gaining experience, and acquiring knowledge (Hunt, 1976, pp. 44–47). In ancient Greece, travel was viewed as an important way to broaden horizons and learn foreign knowledge. The word "theory" originally came from Greek "theoria," referring to travel and observation activities; city-states sent special observers to other city-states to watch ceremonies, and upon return they reported foreign conditions, thus forming "theory." In the Renaissance, Bacon (1908, p. 79) deeply recognized travel's educational role: "Travel is part of education for the young; for the old, it is part of life experience." In the Enlightenment, the "Grand Tour" was seen as necessary for

young gentlemen to gain modern knowledge and educational growth. As Michel Delon (2013, p. 622) argues, "The Grand Tour is a growth travel that enables young British gentlemen to increase knowledge in social and political practice through travel in various European countries and study of Italian classical culture." Travel drives learning and educational modernity because it

> … is an encounter, an encounter between the eyes of the other and strange reality … Further, travel is a spatiotemporal process. In travel, time and space have complex meanings. The time dimension … constitutes the entanglement of the traveler's own traditional time level and the current time level of the destination. Spatial transfer not only involves sudden geographical changes but also huge contrasts in humanistic environments. The complex comparative reference between one's own society and culture and those of the destination inevitably produces profound recognition and reflection on one's own culture and identity. (Zhou, 2000, p. 115)

Only through travel can humans leave familiar domains, enter the unknown world, broaden their horizons, and better recognize the external world. Under the strong impact of new external things, humans generate strong reflection, break with traditional concepts, and produce modern consciousness.

Colonialism is one of the decisive factors promoting global modernity and globalization. Gerard Aching (2010, p. 29) points out that "modernity is a global phenomenon that arose with the rise of European overseas colonies and empires." Although Asian, African, and Latin American countries and regions (exemplified by modern China and India) internally nurtured capitalist modernity's germination, feudal traditional forces were too strong and suppressed its development. Western colonialism opened the feudal doors of backward countries and regions from outside, drawing them into global modernity and globalization. For the Chinese people, post-1840 modern Chinese history is undoubtedly a humiliating history; the Opium War forcibly opened China's sovereign door, turning China into a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. Yet from another perspective, beginning in 1840 China moved toward modernity, enlightenment, and awakening—an extremely painful process accompanied by rupture with feudal tradition and the violent pain of sovereignty loss.

During this period, modern Chinese intellectuals represented by Lin Zexu, Wei Yuan, and Yan Fu awakened, proposed the modern slogan "learn from the West," and launched movements such as the Self-Strengthening Movement and the Hundred Days' Reform aimed at making China a modern nation.

Murray Pittock (1997, p. 150) believes travel "is linked with empire through the worship of the colonial qualities in Orientalism and early archaeology." The relationship between travel and colonialism lies in the fact that travelers' and explorers' discoveries of foreign geographies, customs, and objects aroused European colonialists' desire for colonial conquest. "The oriental travels written by early Western adventurers directly stimulated the emergence of colonialism, because the Orient they described was full of gold, jewels, spices, and silk; behind those beautiful words beat the desire for conquest and plunder" (Kong, 2017, p. 13). Moreover, "the intensification of worldwide travel since modern times originated from the rise of colonialism" (Fan, 2013, p. 40). This bidirectional interaction portrays the isomorphic relationship between travel and colonialism. Especially during the Age of Discovery and the Industrial Revolution, demand for overseas raw materials and markets prompted "various 'exploration' and trade fleets to cross oceans and compete fiercely for overseas colonies and markets. Capital became the direct driving force for overseas exploration voyages. With the establishment of overseas colonies and markets, the human travel network further expanded" (Fan, 2013, p. 40). Wherever this travel network reached, it drew local races into the world modernity system formed by colonial trade. An example vividly illustrates the relationship: Indian anthropologist Amitav Ghosh once conducted fieldwork in an imagined remote Egyptian village. Upon arrival, Ghosh was surprised to discover that local life had already integrated into the modernity process of the entire Middle East and even the world. Villagers had long escaped the narrowness of small countries and few people; they shuttled between Middle Eastern countries and linked the village to the outside world through commerce.

In Western writings, modernity is always combined with mobility, and mobility is regarded as a main feature of modernity. Just as travel is human spatial movement, mobility first refers to humans' spatial movement: "Mobility involves spatial displacement—the displacement behavior of different spatial points. These spatial points can be towns or locations a few centimeters apart. This is the simplest

understanding of mobility on the flow map" (Cresswell, 2006, p. 12). Mobility involves time, space, and speed; it refers to the same concepts as travel and can even be said to be travel. "Mobility is the foundation of human life. From the birth of humans, humans began to migrate and travel, whether voluntary or involuntary, for spiritual and material pursuits, out of spiritual necessity or simply out of curiosity" (Schaff, 2020, p. 11). John Urry (2007) expands mobility's meaning to three aspects:

> First, there is the use of mobile to mean something that moves or is capable of movement …. Second, there is the sense of mobility deployed in mainstream sociology/social science. This is upward or downward social mobility …. Third, there is mobility in the longer term sense of migration or other kins of semi-permanent geographical movement.

Thus, besides referring to bodily spatial displacement, mobility also refers to the movement and flow of objects, information, capital, gender, class, culture, and other fields. The relationship between mobility and modernity is that "mobility is a progress, a freedom, an opportunity, a modernity" (Cresswell, 2006, pp. 1–2). In Anthony Giddens's view, mobility enables the modern subject to break free from spatial constraints; this "disembedding" constitutes modernity's hallmark. With such disembedding, humans are no longer confined by tradition, can conduct regional and national exchanges, spread ideas, and enable economic capital flow, so society overall tends toward progress.

The relationship between mobility and modernity is especially reflected in the modernization of travel and communication tools. To achieve faster bodily displacement and idea dissemination, humans have never ceased improving and inventing communication and transportation tools. As Michael Kimaid (2015, p. 54) states:

> Speed is the primary objective and function of technological development as it relates to transportation in the modern era. Prior to the advent of the steam powered engine in 1781, horsepower was a literal term. People and things moved at speeds dictated by biology and geography. The application of the coal powered steam engine, and later the oil and gas powered internal

> combustion engine to transportation had a profound effect on the modern world as it developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Railroads and ships made transportation faster, and the increased efficiency was a primary interest of the commercial markets the machines served.

In 1761, British aesthetician Edmund Burke, after a 200-mile trip from London to northern Britain, was deeply impressed by steam-era travel speed. He comments that, in the past, traveling to the countryside was considered as difficult and great as sailing to the Indian islands; but in his time, the repair of roads and the improvement of many travel facilities have opened a new situation for exchanges between several regions in our British Isles (Burke, 1786, pp. 206–207). People bravely set out and found they could easily cross the entire country: carriages, machines, airships, post carriages, and other transportation tools are always ready to transport passengers in distant places in cities and kingdoms; a girl can eliminate time and space restrictions before dreaming of her lover's arrival and embrace her lover (Burke, 1786, pp. 206–207). The transportation tools that Burke saw were mainly pre-modern—carriages, post carriages, primitive steam trains. The speed revolution brought by 19th-century transportation transformation far exceeded 18th-century imagination. The 19th-century train, as the invention and advent of modern transportation, greatly promoted the flow of personnel, goods, and information; mobility is modernity's typical manifestation. As Anthony Giddens (2011, p. 90) notes: although migration, nomadism, and long-distance rushing were commonplace in the pre-modern period, compared with the dense mobility provided by modern transportation tools, the vast majority of the pre-modern population remained in a relatively solidified and isolated state. John Urry (2007, pp. 2–3) even materializes modernity—with modern transportation as its main representation—as "the train," believing the train enables large batches of people to move at high-speed relying on mechanized tools, which is a huge innovation; the train thus has become the symbol of modernity.

Conclusion

From the perspective discussed above, travel in an anthropological sense is

> … one of the earliest and oldest of man's activities, its history coextensive with that of the race itself, a primary impulse of the human species and a major determinant of history. Whether as migration or exploration, science or pleasure, enforced displacement or irrational wanderlust, it has figured as a condition of every race and age, era or culture. (James, 1958, p. 13)

Precisely because of travel's crucial role in human development history, Mary Beard and John Henderson (1998, p. 31) firmly assert that "the core of classical studies is travel", and forgetting travel is humanity's own amnesia. Percy Adams (1983, p. 80) extends travel to "every field of the intellectual world, to every important commercial, political … academic or creative activity." It is well known that Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1721) is an epistolary novel of 160 letters reflecting the early Enlightenment spirit of re-understanding reality and seeking truth. Yet the book's writing owes much to works describing travelers' journeys in the East. His famous political-science treatise *The Spirit of Laws* (1748) also quotes enormous travel materials, not merely discussing climate's influence on law. Montesquieu's travel borrowings influenced later European thinkers and writers such as Leibniz, Voltaire, and Goethe. John Mandeville, "the arm-chair traveler," by simply contrasting British and Arab people freely in *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, played a crucial role in Europeans' understanding of its external world. No wonder Lévi-Strauss sighs that since the Renaissance, Western Europe experienced "crucial moments … thanks to the great discoveries, the human community that once thought itself perfect suddenly learned … to achieve self-cognition, it must first look at the unrecognizable image of itself in the mirror" (1979, p. 102). In short,

> … travel from the beginning, from the moment in which mankind realized its uniqueness and importance, has acquired a wealth of connotations; many of which transcend its purely utilitarian, practical character that could be discerned in the ventures of a missionary, colonial, exploratory or scientific nature, where the goal is clearly defined and accounted for. These are mostly connotations of a social, philosophical and cultural nature. Thanks to them travel has become a factor stimulating the growth of European civilization,

> and an important, unique way of life, the way of spending life and the model of culture. (Sztachelska, 2010, p. 3)

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