A PASSAGE TO PREMODERNITY: CARL SAUER REPOSITIONED IN THE FIELD

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to mediate between the different perspectives on Carl Sauer and his work that fix him in the "field" of geography. By repositioning Sauer literally in the "field" in Mexico (and later, in South America) through a reading of his correspondence and fieldnotes, I hope to open up Sauer and cultural geography to a new range of questions and debate. In the course of the thesis, it is maintained that you cannot consider Sauer and culture in the "field" of geography without remobilising him as geographer amidst culture in the "field";

nor can you consider Sauer as fieldworker in isolation from the "passage to premodernity" of his life and work. Sauer is thus positioned ambivalently in various "moments" of the practices and politics of dwelling and travelling in the "field" and presented as an antimodernist looking for a cultural and an academic "home".

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KEY TO FOOTNOTES:

Throughout the thesis, I refer to primary material in the footnotes as follows:

Sauer papers:

(i) Personal correspondence: PC.

(ii) Organisational correspondence: OC.

(iii) Notebooks: SN.

(iv) Leighly quotations: LQ (and S for supplement).

(v) Rockefeller Archive: RA.

(vi) Parsons personal collection: PAR.

(vii) Sauer speech: address.

(viii) Miscellaneous file: misc.

See the appendix for the sources in full.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION: SAILING DIRECTIONS; CHARTING MY COURSE

Textual fields; critical archives

"How to begin to find a shape - to begin to begin again?"[1]

For any critical intervention in the debate surrounding the writing of Carl Sauer, there is the problem of a beginning and an end. In attempting to retrieve Sauer differently from the archives and open intellectual exchange, I cannot avoid the repetitions and closures of the contextual "archive" of my retrieval.[2] Every attempt at critique will be a "new start" and a "different kind of failure"[3] and, without doubt, "future generations will laugh" at my "mermaids in the ocean, sheep-trees on land".[4]

In a sense, however, problematising a beginning is a means to beginning again: the vague outline of a critical shape. To date,

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[1] Carlos Williams in Harari, 1979, p.64.

[2] "Archive" is used here in the Foucauldian sense of a set of rules for writing and thinking in a particular field, itself part of wider discursive practices. According to Foucault, the era's archive can never be known (and thus escaped?) since it represents the "Unconscious" from which we speak - hence here the the notion that, through lack of such awareness, my own study of Sauer will have its limitations. See Selden, 1989, p.101 for a discussion of Foucault, discourse and the "positive Unconscious".

[3] See Eliot, 1940, p.13: "Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt/Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure". See also Spivak in Guha and Spivak, 1988, p.337 for this notion that critique can only go so far: "ruptures" are also "repetitions".

[4] See Porter, 1991, p.21 for a discussion of the contextual limitations of our claims to truth and the rapidity with which we all "become historical".

Sauer's writing has been treated as "work" - concrete, autonomous "occupying a portion of book-space" with Sauer as author - the origin of the text, the source of its meaning and the only authority for its interpretation.[5] There has thus been a tendency to take the "great man"[6] approach to the disciplinary past of Sauer and his geography, focusing on Sauer's work and life without problematising either.[7]

An alternative would be to reconceptualise the "work" as textual "field": a living text actively producing meaning amidst infinite play, referring reflexively to other texts, signifying the "death of the author".[8] Having no first author, Sauer's textual field thus has no last reader and is therefore open to interpretation. Critically, then, I can choose my beginning, intervene in the text at will. At the same time, I have to recognise that my intervention is only one of many: the text remains open for further interventions. In this way I hope to escape the finality and fixity of the "work and man" approach, claim no mastery of the text, no closure. I begin again critically with the awareness that

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[5] See Selden, op. cit., p.78.

[6] See Driver, 1992, p.28.

[7] See Selden, op. cit., p.51.

[8] See Harari, op. cit., pp.381-389. See also Selden, op. cit., pp.51 and 78-79 on Barthes: the notion of the "death of the author" accompanies a structuralist belief that writers can only draw upon language that is "always already written", thus the "author is stripped of all metaphysical status and reduced to a location (a crossroad), where language, that infinite storehouse of citations, repetitions, echoes and references, crosses and recrosses" (ibid., p.79).

criticism is also text,[9] open to interpretation, to other critical trails: my end is also a beginning.

I cannot, however, begin and end with the text. Concentrating solely on Sauer's writing neglects the "worldly" nature of his textual "field": his writing is placed in the world, it has a discursive context, i.e. historical, cultural and, most importantly, political moments to its production and reception:

> "The understanding of a text consists first of all of placing it in its proper sociopolitical configuration, in having the text confront its historical context, and in calling on a broad anthropological tradition."[10]

The textual "field" is situated amidst the "fields" of discursive practices that regulate knowledge and power in the "archive" of Sauer's time. However, not wanting to lose Sauer completely amidst discourse, the notion of Sauer as simply author-function is rejected in favour of a strategic positioning of changing Sauer-subjects for the purpose of critique.[11] We move from the "work and

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[9] See Harari, op. cit., pp.60-72 for the notion that critical discourse has no mastery over the text and is itself open to critique. See also Bhabha in Young, 1990, p.155: "the space of critical activity is also that of the (re)construction of knowledges."

[10] Said in Harari, op. cit., p.45. Said stands here with Foucault in the rejection of reducing everything to the level of the text and preferring instead to focus on the discursive context.

[11] Via Foucault, the "author" is transformed into the "author-function" - simply one mode of the functioning of discourse: "The authorial function is but an additional instrument for the exercise of a knowledge whose only politics is that of power. The author...is a principle of power, but one which is always presented...as being only an instrument of knowledge" (Foucault in Harari, op. cit., p.44). I, however, choose to follow Spivak (in Guha and Spivak, op. cit., p.342) and to position Sauer - in different "moments" - as subject (making no claims for a

man" focus to a contextualised, critical history of a strategically placed Sauer.[12]

In this way, by problematising beginning and ending, criticism becomes a form of travel: a deconstructive journey rather than a fixed site, along which there is a productive contradiction between position and displacement - the tendency to:

"backtrack at each stage of the journey and dismantle the position on which one was relying, while waiting to attain a position where one stops long enough to deconstruct the position one has just left."[13]

The field of geographical travel

We begin with Carl Sauer, geographer-polymath, in an "originary non-place"[14] of intellectual travel, arguing against any disciplinary confinement of the "field" of geography.[15] To bound such travel, disallow freedom of thought and interaction, said Sauer, would mean "to face extinction...This way lies the death of learning".[16] Geography, by definition, for Sauer was undelimited - its language spoke beyond any notion of discipline, boundaries were

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definitive Sauer) as a useful "strategy" for critique.

[12] See Driver's notion of a "critical history" of geography as "an account which is sensitive to the various ways in which geographical knowledge has been implicated in the relationships of power" (Driver, op. cit., p.23).

[13] Harari, op. cit. p.36.

[14] See Bhabha, 1992, p.146.

[15] Sauer did attempt to bound and define geography in his early article, The morphology of landscape (Sauer in Leighly, 1969, pp.315-350) but his later intellectual theme was one of "travel" - freedom in the academic field.

[16] Ibid., p.355.

permeable and this was its "nature" and its "destiny". The "field" was beyond partition and control, greater than those who practiced it - they were merely "tillers" of the "field". Sauer said:

"If we shrink the limits of geography, the greater field will still exist; it will only be our awareness that is diminished."

"..should we disappear, the field will remain and it will not become vacant."[17]

The individual geographer thus had a choice between truth and repose: true geographical enquiry was to travel; the "field" of geography was also trail. Even here, maintained Sauer, geography defied confinement: there must be no dominant trail, no beaten path, but the freedom of individual travel for the geographer: you could not "predetermine the quest for knowledge":[18]

"No field of inquiry can be properly defined by any specific means or methods of gaining knowledge."[19]

Sauer claimed that he himself kept the "field" open and the trail unmarked "by any arrows of methodology".[20] His own work stepped aside from the "fields" of concern of other geographers of his time and contradicted accepted theories. Williams portrays him as an "intellectual Voortrekker" darting "about the geographical scene" and "moving on when he saw the next man's methodological smoke".[21] This did not, however, preclude Sauer from wanting to meet others

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[17] Ibid., pp.394 and 389.

[18] Ibid., p.387.

[19] Ibid., p.381.

[20] Ibid., p.401.

[21] Williams, 1983, p.2.

around the camp fire:

"Only when we reach that day when we shall gather to sit far into the night, comparing our findings and discussing all their meanings, shall we have recovered from the pernicious anemia of the "but-is-this-geography" state."[22]

Honorific limbo; critical closure

"The tradition of the camp-fire versus that of the pyramid."[23]

It is paradoxical and somewhat ironic that, despite all Sauer's talk of camp-fires and sailing directions, two opposing camps have firmly positioned him intellectually and forged "beaten trails" within the discipline.[24] The former, hailing Sauer as "legend" and "prophet",[25] has passively received Sauer's work, a form of honorific closure which truncates his potential for debate. The latter, its critique defining itself against a benchmark of Sauer's ideas, has frozen Sauer in time and essentialised his work to a point which precludes any alternative reading. Denied the freedom of disciplinary travel, Sauer is thus brought sharply up against a double dead end.

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[22] Sauer in Leighly, op. cit., p.355. Although, in the course of this thesis, Sauer is shown to be more concerned with defining geography and with restricting others academically than he is portrayed here, I find Sauer's rhetoric, at least, encouraging. In the present day, there is still too much concern with the "but-is-this-geography" state, which, in my mind, precludes (or, at best, delays) the taking on board of exciting theoretical advances from other disciplines. In this instance, Sauer continues, for me, to speak wisely to the present and I pursue this in the Conclusion.

[23] Buber in Chatwin, 1987, p.186.

[24] See the later quotation by Sauer on "leaving the beaten trail". In Stoddart, 1991, p.19.

[25] See Parsons, 1976, pp.83-5. See also: Hewes, 1983; Stanislawski, 1975 and Leighly, 1976.

Honorific limbo

Carl Sauer died on July 18, 1975. According to Parsons,[26] even in his lifetime he achieved the status of a legend. Beginning with graduate work in geology at Northwestern University, Sauer studied at the University of Chicago under Rollin D. Salisbury, moved to the University of Michigan's joint geography and geology department, where he became a full professor in seven years, and then on to the University of California at Berkeley to eventually remain as Chairman of the Department of Geography for thirty-one years until his retirement.

Within the Department of Geography, Sauer was something of a cult figure: according to Parsons, his work was his life, his mind universal, his research all his own.[27] Sauer was particularly respected for his command of a wide range of academic interests, a result of his multi-disciplinary training. When asked in 1951 by a student to list his interests, he said "earth history in human times, man as an agent in modifying the surface of the earth, migrations and blending of cultures and the forming of new culture patterns".[28] This summary of Sauer's interests has frequently served as the basis for potted histories of his academic career, seeking no further than to document his life experiences and to connect them to his later work. In his tribute to Sauer, David Stoddart notes his amazement at how many of Sauer's ideas and

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[26] Parsons, op. cit., pp.83-5.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Sauer in Leighly, 1976, op. cit., p.344.

phrases he had made his own over the years:

"Now I find myself reproducing them again and in so doing reproducing Carl Sauer's thought."[29]

This "index of the pervasive influence of this scholar" is, for Stoddart, an indication of Sauer's greatness as an academic. It also, however, represents an uncritical adoption of his ideas.

Critical closure

Over the past decade, a "new cultural geography" has been constructed which focuses on a critical rejection rather than adoption of Sauer's ideas, particularly his definition of culture. Equating Sauer with the Berkeley department and North American cultural geography as a whole, it dismisses them as outmoded, relegating them to the "old cultural geography", the heritage of the "new".

Sauer's definition of culture, states James Duncan[30] in his pioneering article of cultural critique, reifies culture, missing the wider social context in which it is constituted and expressed and limiting the questions that may be asked within the discipline. Sauer's "superorganic" view of culture, says Duncan, sees culture as an entity at a higher level than the individual, governed by a logic of its own, actively constraining human behaviour and leaving little room for human agency - we see reality "through the

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[29] Stoddart, op. cit., p.17.

[30] Duncan, 1980.

creature's eyes and act accordingly".[31] Duncan attributes this superorganic notion to Sauer's close links with Alfred Kroeber in the Department of Anthropology at Berkeley, from whom these ideas were apparently uncritically adopted and filtered down to Sauer's students in the geography department. Peter Jackson,[32] in a more recent critique, adds that Sauer's view of culture is too rural, materialist, historicist, concentrating on mapping the distribution of non-urban cultural traits in the landscape and deciphering the nature of their origins. As an alternative, Jackson advocates a convergence of cultural and social geography and the adoption of a more political approach to culture which allows a real concern with social agency and the constructed nature of culture.

Price and Lewis,[33] two former Berkeley students, have recently replied to this critique, rightly criticising its reductionist view of cultural geography at Berkeley and its relegation of the latter to the defunct half of an old/new intellectual dualism. While accepting the critical input of the "new cultural geography", they resent its destructive approach:

"Although members of the new school claim to be revitalising the sub-discipline, they are in fact reinventing it, casting aside all of the features that have long distinguished American cultural geography."[34]

Price and Lewis advocate a mutual toleration in cultural approaches

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[31] Freilich in Duncan, op. cit., p.191.

[32] Jackson, 1989.

[33] Price and Lewis, 1993.

[34] Ibid., p.2.

to geographical enquiry: they seek not to reinstate Berkeley as the true exemplar of cultural geography, but to prevent its misinterpretation.[35]

In spite of this assertion, however, there is something of an "establishment" feel to their tone. The delay in the reply to the "new cultural geography" is exemplary of the long-established positions of Berkeley geographers within the sub-discipline. As they themselves note, they do not have to participate in "intellectual jockeying": their ways are "time-honored".[36] The conceptualisation of the representatives of the "new cultural geography" almost as the "youth of today", elbowing their way in, has connotations of their having to earn their place within the tradition. Price and Lewis seem to forget that they are as much a selective self-invented tradition as the caricature forced upon them by the "new cultural geography".

Neither do Price and Lewis, in my mind, adequately answer the challenges of the "new cultural geography". To meet Duncan's criticism of the superorganic, with its twin allegations of tribal holism and discounting the individual, with the response that Sauer was aware of the former but never did anything about it and, as for the latter, he "did accord historical efficacy to individuals but generally only to those who remained anonymous" (for example unamed

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[35] Ibid., p.3.

[36] Ibid., pp.2 and 8.

women and Columbus!) is inadequate, to say the least.[37] Sidestepping, Price and Lewis dismiss the matter, maintaining that Sauer did not even pay much attention to conceptualising culture:

"Given the international orientation of the Berkeley school, "culture" was a shorthand for those foreign peoples in whose land geographers muddied their boots."[38]

This, however, just reinforces Duncan's critique that culture is "out there", and the point that culture is something other (foreign) people are dominated by and from which the geographer is exempt. Only he can swim against the cultural tide.

While Price and Lewis thus seek to mobilise the "old" cultural geography from its ossified form imposed by the "new", they do not unfreeze their own conception of their tradition, especially the role of Carl Sauer. True, the "Berkeley school" is not reducible to Sauer's work and influence. However, he is a significant part of its (constructed) history and later work is defined in relation to him. The "Berkeley school" may have "many voices", but Sauer was the first. We therefore need to take another look at this legend.

Leaving the beaten trail: geography in the field

"The important thing is to leave the beaten trail and start cutting one of your own; it will lead into a land of delight. That is both the advantage and difficulty of being a geographer."[39]

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[37] Ibid., p.10.

[38] Ibid., p.11.

[39] Sauer in Stoddart, op. cit., p.19.

Perhaps a way to leave the beaten trail and to remobilise Sauer is to begin with the closure the "Berkeley school" and the "new cultural geography" have in common: to move onto geography in the "field" as well as the "field" of geography. While both "camps" acknowledge Sauer's work in the "field" and debate its rigor, neither attempts to consider Sauer's views on culture as articulated and implicated in the "field" or to unpack the significance of fieldwork in any critical fashion in relation to the cultural debate. This is of particularly contemporary importance if, as Price and Lewis maintain: "Berkeley geography continues to distinguish itself through its extended fieldwork".[40] The discussion of fieldwork methods takes place largely in isolation from any notion of culture and fails to conceptualise Sauer as fieldworker, traveller, active, putting his ideas into practice in the "field". While at one level, both "camps" debate the relation between Sauer's view of culture and that of the anthropology department at Berkeley, neither thinks to pursue the connection between the anthropologist interacting with cultures in the "field" and Sauer "muddying his boots in culture". The point is not for the Berkeley school to study culture and politics in the field but for them to be aware of the cultural politics of the "field" - their political position as fieldworkers amidst culture, and that of their predecessors. Similarly, the new cultural geography cannot discard Sauer's cultural geography in abstract as apolitical without looking at Sauer himself - fieldworder, traveller - as (a)political. Sauer once said that geographers did

[40] Price and Lewis, op. cit., p.9.

not know the work he was doing, thought him off "on some anthropological trail" that was "not worth reading about"[41]- it is precisely this anthropological trail that is worth reading.

We travel, then, across disciplinary boundaries to draw on the "new ethnography"[42] in anthropology to situate Sauer as traveller and fieldworker amidst a "predicament of culture": the process of looking at and writing about culture while in culture (see figure 1).[43] By this definition, Sauer is revealed as an "ethnographer of sorts"[44] and brought to the same crisis of authority directed at anthropologists by the "new" ethnographic critique. Sauer's authority for cross-cultural interaction and representation is questioned (his right to speak for the identity and authenticity of other cultures, to define them essentially): the cultural practices and politics of Sauer's negotiation of his "self" and "others" in the "field" are brought to the fore.

For Clifford, this question of cultural identity is inherently spatial.[45] The definition of cultural others is also a

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[41] Sauer in Williams, op. cit., p.14.

[42] Texts of the "new ethnography" might include, among others, Writing culture (Clifford and Marcus, 1986); The predicament of culture (Clifford, 1988) and Works and lives (Geertz, 1988). All attempt to look critically at the process of writing culture in anthropology, contextualising and problematising the figure of the ethnographer as a producer of partial cultural truths amidst politics.

[43] Clifford, op. cit., p.9.

[44] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), 12/2/93.

[45] See Clifford in Grossberg et. al., 1992.

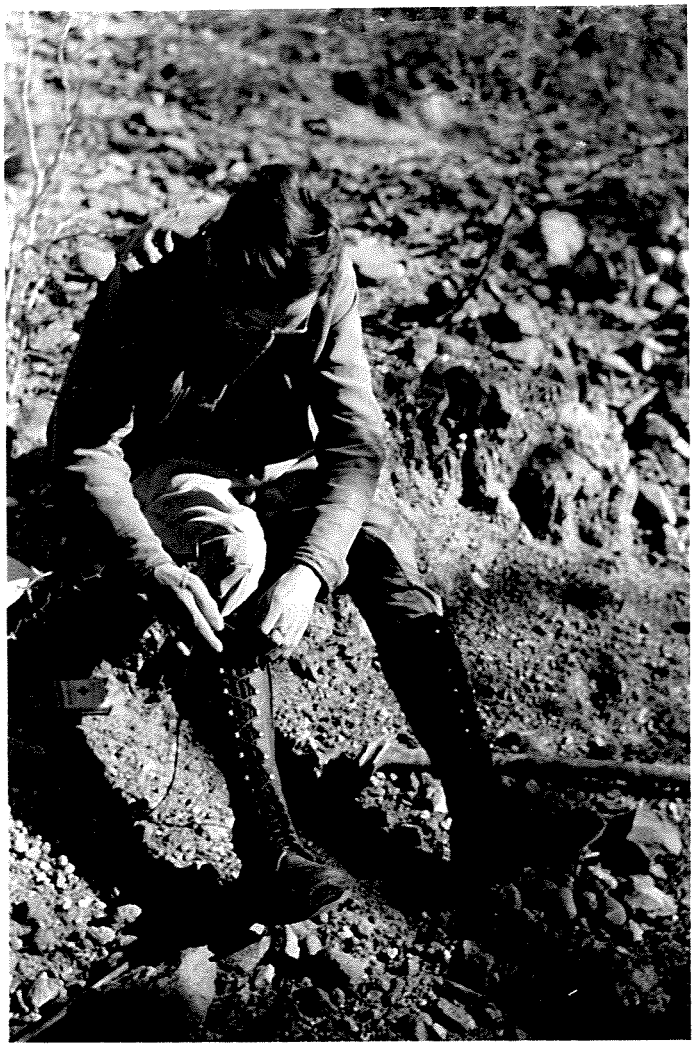

Figure 1:Muddying boots in culture?
Berkeley students in the field (Robert West, Mexico, 1941).

localisation, the drawing of a boundary. Like Clifford, I am interested in the spatiality of cultural authority and cultural futures. In a shift of focus from geography as "field" to geography in the "field", I am left with a complex view of Sauer amidst intellectually and spatially bounded travel: fixed in the academic "field" and fixing his authority in the "field"; mobilised in the "field" and mobilising against fixed authority in the academic "field". Retaining this tension between dwelling and travelling allows for an ambivalent and productive approach to Sauer's authority: holding onto an ethnographic crisis but an enabling crisis that searches out the limits to authority and the grounds for its transgression.

Homecomings

There are trails that must be followed if we are to get some answers. We begin with Sauer's life and work as bounded marginal spaces in a "passage to premodernity".[46] Sauer is always already travelling, displaced amidst a condition of "ethnographic modernity"[47] and looking for a cultural and intellectual dwelling ("home"). Following Sauer's premodern passage into Mexico, the "field", culture and their inscription in Sauer's notes and works are treated as ambivalent attempts at homecoming amidst travel -the positing of academic and cultural truths - "the notebook of a return".[48] Allowing the spatial tension to resonate throughout different "moments" of Sauer's life and work, Sauer is thus

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[46] Mathewson in Kenzer, 1987, p.105.

[47] Clifford, op. cit., p.3.

[48] Ibid., p.173.

positioned ambivalently and strategically, negotiating the identity of self and others amidst wider discourses of dwelling and travelling. Finally, through a second and imposed ("home") coming, Sauer is ambivalently repositioned in the modern via the example of his South American trip of 1942 with the question that perhaps it is this that constitutes the true notebook of a return.

CHAPTER TWO:

PASSAGE TO PREMODERNITY: A SPATIAL BIOGRAPHY

"Home is where one starts from..."[1]

"I haven't been there - yet."[2]

If a consideration of Carl Sauer's Mexican fieldwork has been truncated to date, it has been through an overemphasis on "work" at the expense of the "home". While Sauer's "field" and "home" may be viewed as spatially distinct, any conceptual dichotomy between work and life is misleading. Rather than drawing boundaries around the "field", it becomes more interesting to connect the "field" with Sauer's life experiences and values: to explore the "motley baggage of ideas"[3] that Sauer must have taken with him (from birth, from his environment) into the "field". A consideration of the spaces of Sauer's work and life and an unpacking of the "home" must be made to inform (and expand our sense of) the "field" rather than be separated from it. In other words, we need - eventually - to start with the "field" as value-laden space: already in part shaped (meaningful) before Sauer's fieldwork (and our critical analysis of it) begins. This chapter, then, attempts to tell the story before the "field"; to set the scene and present Sauer's self-fashioning amidst the trauma of the twentieth century.

In a spatial biography of Carl Sauer, however, it is in fact hard

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[1] Eliot, op. cit., p.14.

[2] Carter, 1992, p.113.

[3] Hooson in Blouet et. al., 1981, p.167.

to begin with a "home": "home" not in the sense of the "warm, redwood house"[4] that James Parsons immediately associates with Sauer (see Figure 2), but in the sense of identity, the sense of belonging. Sauer himself conceptualised his life as a kind of off-beat existence: that of the small-town "peasant", tangential to a modernising, urbanising United States within which he emerged as dissenter, "maverick", even "jester".[5] In fact, born second generation into a German immigrant community, Sauer was in a way already marginal to the United States, displaced by birth. Thus, rather than taking "home" as our starting point for granted, it becomes more productive to begin with a condition of displacement; the important query being not so much "Where are you from?" but "Where are you between?": James Clifford's question of intercultural identity that puts the very notion of "home" to the test.[6]

Rather than unproblematically charting Sauer's biography, then, I choose to view "home" critically as a persistent issue in his life. Beginning with the ambivalence of the German-American "home" (Heimat) into which Sauer was born, I go on to position him in a further "unhomely dwelling",[7] disorientated by a modernising United

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[4] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit. Here Parsons is referring to Sauer's house in Berkeley.

[5] Sauer in Williams, op. cit., p.21.

[6] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.109.

[7] Bhabha, op. cit., p.141. I realise that there is much to Bhabha's discussion of the "unhomely dwelling" (the "paradigmatic post-colonial experience") and that I am here quoting out of context. However, what appeals is Bhabha's sense that the border between the home and the world are confused and the private and

Figure 2: At home?
Carl Sauer's "warm, redwood house" in Berkeley.

States. Within this context, I find Sauer's reaction to be one of retreat (in response to the United States as "lack"): a desire for cultural and academic alternatives and a replaying of his German background as traditional "home" against American societal change. This reaction is spatialised in Sauer's life and work as a "passage to premodernity":[8] an association with non-modern spaces forming a trajectory that eventually situates him in the "field" in Mexico. The exploration of the "field" as antimodern "home" provides us with sign posts for the remainder of the thesis.

Heimat?

Carl Sauer was born in Warrenton, Missouri in 1889 where, with the exception of three years in Southern Germany,[9] he remained until 1908. Although moving further and further away in later life, according to Kenzer,[10] Sauer would often look to Warrenton for "that hometown feeling" that he could not find elsewhere. Indeed, Sauer's boyhood years in "hometown" Warrenton were certainly distinctive: his parents had migrated to the Midwest amidst a wave of intellectuals escaping Germany in the 1850s[11] and were thus part of a German cultural renaissance in the United States. Whole

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public are part of each other: a notion of "the world-in-the-home and the home-in-the-world" which I am trying to use here as an approach to Sauer.

[8] See Mathewson in Kenzer, op. cit., p.105.

[9] Sauer was with his parents in Calw in the Schwarzwald from the age of nine to the age of twelve (1898-1901).

[10] Kenzer, 1985a, p.261.

[11] See Kenzer, 1987c, p.41.

villages had migrated intact, bringing a sense of "Heimat"[12] from Germany (see Figure 3): a cohesive community to be rooted firmly in the soil of Missouri. As "custodians of culture" living in a new country,[13] they attempted to recreate the ways of the old. Sauer's early experience was thus of a way of life in exile: he communicated with his parents in German[14] and attended Central Wesleyan College (CWC), a bilingual Methodist school which had grown out of the nineteenth-century migration. According to Kenzer, CWC had perhaps the foremost collection of German literature and religious works available in the United States at that time and prided itself on being a very "German" college;[15] in turn, Sauer's father was apparently "the best of the religious and

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[12] "Heimat", directly translated, means "home"; however, it gains a wealth of meaning from its participation in the "volkish" movement of mid nineteenth-century Germany - a spiritual reaction to the dislocation of urbanisation and industrialisation. This movement incorporated, along with the highly romantic notion of the "Volk" (the people), a focus on rootedness in the landscape ("Verwurzelung"). The "Heimat" was "the specific location where the Volk was rooted and where it maintained its elemental ties with the natural world" (Bassin, 1987, p.123). The very strength of the term "Heimat" thus came from its resistance to the mobility and alienation of the times. While Sauer's parents moved from their home region in Germany (their true "Heimat"), they can, in a sense, be seen as reforming this concept in the face of dislocation. Later on (indeed, throughout the thesis), Sauer seems to turn to some form of "Heimat" in the face of change.

[13] Carter, op. cit., p.100. See Carter for an interesting discussion of how meaning is constructed in a migrant situation: the clinging to cultural baggage versus the mirroring of the host culture and the third alternative of what he calls an "authentically migrant perspective".

[14] This was up to 1918. Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit., p.49.

[15] Kenzer, 1985a, op. cit., p.262. For Kenzer, CWC offered a traditional German education with its emphasis on the natural and physical sciences and its fostering of a historicist perspective. Kenzer is also keen to point out the importance of such classical German writers as Goethe in CWC's intellectual landscape.

Figure 3: Heimat? Calw, Germany:
Sauer's parents' home town.

educational life" of the "Germany of other days".[16] Thus, as a result of both parental and college influence, Sauer's early environment was distinctively Germanic.[17]

However, if Warrenton's community provided a sense of "home", it was a precarious one. Although the German emigres felt that they had established a second Rhineland,[18] they were not allowed to call it their own: for "true Americans", they were the "enemy forces":

"rag-tag and bob-tail cutthroats of Beelzebub from the Rhine, the Danube, the Vistula and the Elbe."[19]

This was particularly the case during the First World War when anti-German sentiment in the Midwest mushroomed and the "American" sense of place challenged the Germanic.[20] Towns changed their names under pressure - Berlin became Lincoln! - and in 1918, CWC was forced to remove a large percentage of its German program as a

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[16] Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit., p.50.

[17] Sauer continued his German education while a graduate student in Chicago, familiarising himself with German social science. See Glick, 1988, p.446.

[18] Warren County was one of the several counties that, as a function of German migration, constituted "The Missouri Rhineland" during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Kenzer, 1985a, op. cit., p.260.

[19] Lears, 1981, p.29. Lears is quoting here from an American editorial of 1886.

[20] Copley, pers. comm. (I), 12/3/93. For Copley, there are strong memories of anti-German sentiment in the Midwest around the time of the First World War. Sauer, he suggests, may well have been affected by such persecution and this could have fuelled his later move to the west. Similarly, Williams (op. cit., p.4) asserts that the "American reaction to Germans during the First World War" left Sauer with "indelible memories".

result of war-related hostilities.[21] Less overtly, German immigrants like Sauer's father, true to tradition, felt intellectually threatened by the society around them: American individualism, secularism and passion for "progress" challenging their highly historicist views.[22]

Sauer was thus born into a travelling culture with its (and his) identity already in question; as German-American, the very notion of "home" was unstable, the sense of belonging incomplete. It is perhaps for this reason that Sauer, contrary to Kenzer's statement of Warrenton as "home", later asserted that:

"By some childhood association, the only part where I have had sensations of "hominess" have been in protestant South Germany - elsewhere strictly the tourist."[23]

A bewildered witness

On leaving Warrenton in 1908, Sauer found it somewhat of a "jolt" to be turned "loose into the bad world" outside after the "good

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[21] Kenzer, 1985a, op. cit., p.262.

[22] Iggers (in Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit., p.52) defines historicism as: "an intellectual and scholarly movement which dominated historical, social and humanistic studies in nineteenth-century Germany". As a movement, its aim was to comprehend reality historically; its focus on source, origin and genesis and the specifics of time (and place) rather than universal laws. Speth (in Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit.) has argued for the rooting of Sauer's disciplinary world view in German historicism but Glick (op. cit., p.446) stats that this connection is not sufficiently documented and requires further exploration.

[23] LQS6, Sauer to Anderson, 9/15/55. The notion of Sauer as "tourist" is returned to in Chapter Three and Chapter Six. See also Chapter Five for a renewed discussion of Sauer's "hominess" and Germany.

Methodist family"[24] in which he had been raised. Like Joseph Conrad's "bewildered travelers" encamped in the modern age,[25] he considered himself a "bewildered witness"[26] of the change of tempo that followed the First World War. As a self-proclaimed "peasant", used to the stability of "backward areas",[27] Sauer felt that he could not understand "the exhiliration that people [got] out of change":[28] scared of the speed of progress in the modern,[29] he found himself "afraid of the present and the future".[30]

This fear of the modern was not only temporal but spatial. Sauer sensed in wider American society a rootlessness and displacement

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[24] Sauer, pers. comm. (V), 24/8/70. According to Wagner, pers. comm. (I), 10/6/92, Sauer later rejected any formal sense of his Methodist religion. However, religious rhetoric was very much a part of Sauer's vocabulary - especially in matters of morality - and this remains an interesting line of pursuit, although it is not developed here.

[25] See Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.96.

[26] Sauer in Thomas, 1956, p.66: "As a native of the nineteenth century, I have been an amazed and bewildered witness of the change of tempo that started with the First World War, was given an additional whirl on the Second, and still continues to accelerate."

[27] According to Kenzer, 1985a, op. cit., p.260: "the Warren County that Sauer was born into ...was an extremely stable place where change was gradual at best". In the almost twenty years that Sauer remained in Warrenton, Kenzer notes limited changes and a population that remained fairly rural and strongly communal. The stable image of Warren County may, however, have gained added currency for Sauer in the face of wider societal change: a stick to beat the present with?

[28] LQ22, Sauer to Knight, 1/10/54.

[29] Sauer, 1970, p.9.

[30] LQ16, Sauer to Willits, 11/3/47. Sauer's distrust of change and fear of the future was not restricted to the post-War period but a major theme throughout his life: he maintained the stance that America was "going to hell the fastest way" (LQ32, Sauer to Bronk, 28/4/52).

that contradicted the - if threatened - community of his "hometown" Warrenton. This new image of the "Restless American" was, to Sauer, greatly disturbing and continued as a concern into later life:

"We have since become a greatly nomadic people at all levels and occupations...The moving van and the house trailer travel our highways coast to coast unendingly. Home ownership may be more practical and convenient than rental, but in either case there is a short expectation of staying. The community ties are greatly loosened or lost, the home a temporary address, not the place where the family puts down its roots."[31]

Sauer thus found himself further displaced in a society representing the antithesis of his upbringing: not only a disrespect for history and tradition but a restlessness, a nomadism and a further destabilisation of "home". For Sauer, as for Lears, not only "home" but identity was seriously threatened once people "cut loose from geography": how far backward then over the days could "the uninterrupted "I" be said to extend?"[32]

In addition to a sense of spatio-temporal dislocation - change as disorder - the modern for Sauer, as for many, was constituted as loss. After the War when "the world blew up"[33] and "American civilisation began rolling,[34] Sauer found American society wanting both culturally and academically. On the one hand, he interpreted the modern as a form of urban culture monster: inauthentic, overriding cultural particularity and destroying the diversity of

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[31] PAR, Sauer to Jackson, 24/6/60.

[32] Lears, op. cit., p.5.

[33] Williams in Mathewson in Kenzer, 1987, op. cit., p.107.

[34] Sauer, 1945, p.124.

American small-town communities.[35] In Homestead and community on the middle border, Sauer lamented the loss of community, the village break-up with emigration: it would, he said, be missed.[36] Sauer enjoyed diversity: he rejected the modern path to "hear the same thing, see the same thing, think the same thing"[37] and wanted a world that resisted uniformity.[38] Later in life, he watched the transformation of California with anxiety, viewing it as a microcosm of the modern cultural crisis spreading throughout the United States:

"There is a lot of experimentation going on out here, but it is for the gaining of general acceptance. We get a fashion of housetype, supermarket, basket-ball competition, betting on races or mixing drinks, that if successful sweeps the state...Our goal seems to be that we look alike, have the same manners and the same thoughts...We are the perfect example of a highly mobile mass in which change must affect all parts or die out."[39]

On the other hand, in addition to the inadequacy of this "succesfully industrialised world" eradicating the cultural landmarks that he cherished, Sauer also feared the loss of

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[35] Sauer's concern for the destructive potential of the modern was not purely cultural but also environmental. In his speech to the Royal Geographic Society in 1975, Sauer cautioned: "Civilisation in our time has developed a technical dominance that has changed the world and is impoverishing it...Biology is aware of the limited world. Geography must not forget it." (SN34, misc.). This concern arose out of his early fieldwork and involvement in land surveying in Michigan, witnessing at first hand the effects of environmental neglect. For Sauer - since culture was expressed via the landscape - culture conservancy and nature conservancy went hand in hand. This thesis, however, concentrates predominantly on the former.

[36] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.41.

[37] Sauer, 1945, op. cit., p.124.

[38] LQ5, Sauer to Smith, 19/4/38.

[39] Sauer in Williams, op. cit., p.19.

academic interest in cultural particularity. The modern mood appeared to be "antihistorical and antigeographical"[40] and Sauer - who felt he "did not know how to think except in terms of time and space"[41]- found himself increasingly disillusioned. What, he said, was the point of:

"knowing the illuminated letters of a missal, the finding of a Gregorian chant, the tying of a trout fly"[42]

if history and geography were becoming irrelevant; the conservation of cultural difference alien thinking? American academic geography was becoming for Sauer far too seduced by modern trends: its practitioners were "slick salesmen" turning thematically towards the economic, politic and the urban; embracing the contemporary (which for Sauer was the political) and looking to apply, synthesise, plan and, worst of all, universalise. As James Parsons notes, Sauer's "ecologic, historical, cultural interests...found little reflection in the main currents of the times".[43] There was a "blindness" in the "modern age",[44] a lack of curiosity: cultural particularity, history, and the whim of discovering difference seemed to be becoming passé.

Sauer thus positioned himself uncomfortably amidst a modernising

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[40] LQ5, Sauer to Smith, 19/4/38.

[41] Sauer in Williams, op. cit., p.20.

[42] Ibid., p.22.

[43] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[44] LQ9, Sauer to Bowman, 5/12/42.

American society: "off to one side"[45] of cultural and academic trends. Although this became increasingly articulated at the intellectual level for Sauer - a feature in his work as well as his correspondence - it remained a highly personal issue; a question of identity and "home". The spread of modern culture, it must be remembered, threatened his own community of Warrenton; the academic neglect of the past challenged his own early historicist education. Many experienced the modern as cultural disintegration;[46] Sauer integrated it into his work - it was not, however, any less personal.

Passage to premodernity

"Sauer..lived through a period of quite unprecedented change in all the places that he knew best, in the face of which he held even more tenaciously to his more traditional values."[47]

Sauer's response to his "unhomely dwelling" in the modern was to take refuge in retrospect. Sauer himself said he was "either born or conditioned to look on the world historically"[48] and perhaps both were true: the historicism of his early "Weltanschaung" fusing with the shock of the new to make him hold on to a sense of tradition.[49] Either way, although he may have been afraid of the present and the future, he had no misgivings about the past. It

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[45] Hooson in Blouet et. al., op. cit., p.166.

[46] See Clifford, op. cit., pp.4-5.

[47] Mathewson in Kenzer, op. cit., p.105.

[48] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.389.

[49] Also, Sauer's early academic training in the natural sciences, particularly geology, endowed him with a concern for "all human time" and, later, for geography as a retrospective science.

was here that Sauer hoped to find some compensation for the loss of the modern; some form of cultural and academic belonging. Indeed, the modern was only constituted as lack by Sauer because it had departed from the past. The answer lay in a return to cultural and academic tradition.

For Sauer, the question of return resided not only in retrospect but also in mobility. As John Leighly notes, he attempted to:

"...escape from the obtrusive ugliness of our culture, which does not spare the academic community, in the exploration of remote times and remote places."[50]

Sauer can thus be viewed as antimodern traveller, looking for alternative spaces to reinforce a sense of tradition; a sense of identity and "home". His reorientation to the antimodern is spatialised as a "passage to premodernity" - a trajectory that takes him further back to the past and into the "field" in Mexico. This can be divided into a series of dischotomies: urban/rural; east/west; north/south, each of which speaks to Sauer's antimodernism and the issue of "home".

Aging in the wood[51]

Viewed synoptically, Sauer's life and work were pitted by bouts of anti-urban sentiment and a strong association with the rural.

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[50] Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.7. My use of emphasis.

[51] See Leighly, 1979, p.15. "Aging in the wood" was, for one of Sauer's students, the process of doing a thesis in Berkeley. This speaks to the section below on Berkeley as a form of academic "home": a return to a form of intellectual craft and a rural (read: authentic) alternative set apart from the more urban San Francisco environment.

Sauer was based in urban areas for much of his life but, according to James Parsons, did not "especially like cities...though he was himself a part of them".[52] He resented urban encroachment on the countryside and wrote with disappointment that "the ways of the country" were "becoming subordinated to the demands of the cities"; the farmer "becoming a town dweller".[53] The cities and city masses, said Sauer, were "an offense to a good and sweet-smelling world"; he was against them, against all the:

"masses of people rushing about, making unnecessary noises, gobbling sweets and chocolate drinks, dragging their wet and smelly infants about."

Cities were part of civilisation's "garbage, literally and figuratively", and he dismissed them.[54]

Since, as James Parsons notes, Sauer studied "things he liked and had sympathy for",[55] it is not surprising that this rejection of the urban should filter into his academic work. It was not, says Wagner, part of Sauer's "vision to take account of the apogee of urbanism":[56] "Too complicated" Sauer would say "as he looked out

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[52] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit. The cities Sauer lived in, however, were not all as "urban" as each other: Berkeley, for example, would have been less so than the rest of the Bay Area cities and than Sauer's earlier Chicago environment.

[53] Sauer in Thomas, op. cit., p.61.

[54] LQ22, Sauer to Hess, 15/9/55. Mexico City and Washington D.C., as we shall see in Chapters Five and Six, were the ultimate city spaces for Sauer to avoid.

[55] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit. Also, according to Copley (pers. comm. (I), op. cit.), Sauer once said: "I've yet to meet an urban geographer who likes cities."

[56] Wagner, pers. comm. (I), op. cit.

over the urban sprawl of the Bay Area" in San Francisco "and let it go at that".[57] Urban geography for Sauer was simply "fustian and feathers"[58]- he turned away from cities and claimed incomprehension:

"I do not know what urbanism means. I have kept away from cities in my thinking. The growth of cities reflects something that is happening in and to the country round about. It is a phenomenon, and as such worth studying, but I cannot get into it."[59]

Despite often living in cities, Sauer was very conscious of the rural nature of his beginnings: "his roots...sunk deep in Midwestern soil"[60] in "the wooded triangle between the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers".[61] In the midst of the urban, Sauer continued to claim an association with the rural:

"Mainly we were country-bred of prairie and woodland soil, and kept this knowledge and quality when we went to the cities to live."[62]

As respite from the urban, Sauer's early fieldwork returned him to the rural areas of Missouri and Illinois. His later work for the State Geological Survey in Southern Illinois and for the Michigan Land Survey allowed him to escape the city for the country again.[63]

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[57] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[58] Sauer in Stanislawski, op. cit., p.553.

[59] Sauer, 1945, op. cit., p.127. The "country" here is the reality, the "city" merely an intruder.

[60] Parsons, 1976, op. cit., p.83.

[61] Leighly, 1976, op. cit., p.337.

[62] Ibid.

[63] The period of fieldwork covered here is from around 1916 to the early 1920s.

Unlike the city masses, Sauer considered "country people..functional", they had "a place in the order of things" and belonged with "the flora and fauna".[64] These "folk" ("Volk") were for Sauer "simple people living in close contact with inorganic nature" - unlike the urban crowd, they were not "rushing about" but shared "the wisdom of the primitive peasant rooted to his ancestral lands".[65] Writing a series of articles on the pioneer life of such "frontier" societies, Sauer thus chose to focus academically on the rural.[66]

This urban/rural polarity for Sauer, however, was not so much a spatial issue as temporal. Sauer saw the city as the embodiment of the modern - "one of the catastrophes of civilization"[67]- and his association with the rural was thus a turning towards the past: if the city represented the modern, the rural could provide a sense of antimodern return. Thus in his study of the Pennyroyal, Sauer found that the past was:

"still potent...in the heritage of blood and in the preservation of traditional attitudes".[68]

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[64] LQ22, Sauer to Hess, op. cit.

[65] Sauer in Thomas, op. cit., p.57. The theme here is familiar: we see a resurfacing of the German concepts of "Volk", rootedness and, it seems, "Heimat" - these "peasants" offer a sense of "home" and a return to the past.

[66] See, for example, Sauer's articles: The economic problem of the Ozark Highland (1920); Geography of the Pennyroyal (1927); Conditions of pioneer life in the Upper Illinois Valley (1916) and The barrens of Kentucky (1927).

[67] LQ19, Sauer to Marriott, 29/4/53.

[68] Sauer, 1927, p.131.

Similarly, writing on the Ozarks, Sauer maintained that the "blood of the frontier" had survived the encroachment of the modern:

"the people were primitive in their condition when they came, they are nearly as primitive now".[69]

In preserving the past, these rural communities also offered Sauer a cultural alternative to the modern: here was variety that was holding out against the trends of the time. Missouri and Illinois, Sauer felt, had not lost their identity: the modernisation process was yet a gentle hybridisation so that communities survived; pockets of unstandardised culture could still be found. These were not restless Americans but "home- founding and home-maintaining people".[70]

This was not just a generic interest in rural culture but a highly personal one - focusing on the rural Volk of the middle and eastern parts of the United States, Sauer could recall his own sense of community, build up his own cultural identity. Sauer saw himself as peasant, provincial: his brothers in spirit were in the "backwoods" and his study of the Upper Illinois Valley was in this sense:

"a study in home geography, a study of the old home with its many and vivid associations...With the increasing distance interposed by time and space, there yet remains forever given the scenes of early years..."[71]

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[69] Sauer, 1920, pp.218 and 223.

[70] LQ19, Sauer (address).

[71] Sauer in Stoddart, op. cit., p.19. My use of emphasis.

Sauer's own experience of and reaction to modernity were thus displaced onto city and country space. The notion of the country allowed Sauer to time and space travel: a link back to a more "homely" past and place from the unappealing context of the modern.[72] For Raymond Williams, this spatial trope is age-old: "a contrast between city and country, as fundamental ways of life" reaching "back into classical times"[73] and giving expression to the displacement of the new:

"The pull of the idea of the country is towards old ways, human ways, natural ways. The pull of the idea of the city is towards progress, modernisation, development. In what is then a tension, a present experienced as tension, we use the contrast of city and country to ratify an unresolved division and conflict of impulses."[74]

As Williams also notes, the relation between country and city is "not only objective problem and history" but also "a direct and intense preoccupation and experience":[75]

"A dog is barking - that chained bark - behind the asbestos barn. It is now and then: here and many places."[76]

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[72] Sauer's polar forms are very like those of the sociologist, Tönnies, who posited an evolutionary perspective from rural to city space over time and a concomitant shift from a cultural form ruled by natural will ("Gesellschaft") to one determined by the rational ("Gemeinschaft"). However, while
for Tönnies the path from country to city was irreversible - the community could not be regained once it had been lost - Sauer's spatial and temporal travel seem to allow for a process of (at least imaginary) return. See Saunders, 1981, pp.86-88.

[73] Williams, 1973, p.1.

[74] Ibid., p.297.

[75] Ibid., p.11.

[76] Ibid., p17.

Young man (going west)

"For our country here at the west of things
Is pregnant of dreams; and west of the west
I have lived...a dreamy unrest."[77]

While shuttling - literally and intellectually - between city masses and rural enclaves in the Midwest and East provided Sauer with some respite from the modern, his move west to California in 1923 expressed an antimodern impulse at a different spatial scale.[78] The West as a whole - at least at a distance - seemed to offer for Sauer an alternative to the "true" urban Americans of the East (and perhaps their anti-German sentiments); a cultural resistance at a higher level. Unlike the East, the West at that time was "not yet settled", its forms "far from cast":[79] a space of difference, it was still fighting the forces of modernisation:

"We do not believe that this land has been quite standardised into dull purlieus of a monotonous Main Street...mobility still dominates the scene of the West."[80]

Like the Californian poet Robinson Jeffers, Sauer seemed to find some hope of continuity at the "continent's end" - "men.. riding after cattle..plowing the headland...as they had done for thousands

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[77] Jeffers, 1938, p.76.

[78] The original German settlers in Missouri had chosen a western location on the "frontier" in the hope of eventual return. While, as Kenzer notes, many second generation German-Americans later moved east and became assimilated into urban American society (Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit., p.42), Sauer seems to have preferred to relocate once more at the "frontier".

[79] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.52.

[80] Ibid.

of years"[81]- an access to the past. As Cecil Robinson notes, many were turning away from the modern to a more pleasing pastoral image of old California - perhaps Sauer was no exception.[82]

The West for Sauer was not, however, simply a space of cultural difference - a continuation of the rural Volk space of the Midwest - but an opening for an academic return. Sauer moved from Michigan to California to take up a position as Head of the Department of Geography at Berkeley and, he said, "to get away from what geographers were doing in the East" which interested him "less and less as narrowing professionalism".[83] In opposition to this intellectual standardisation, Sauer felt that "wide horizons" were open to him in the West, "perhaps wider than" he "would have found anywhere else".[84] Thus, in the same way that Sauer's rural focus gave him some cultural compensation for the modern - a space of "home" that refound a sense of community, the past and the "Volk" - his travel west provided an opportunity to reinstate (what he saw as) traditional geography against the modernising trends to the east.

According to Kenzer, on moving to Berkeley, Sauer began to

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[81] Jeffers, op. cit., p.24.

[82] See Robinson, 1977, p.151. Robinson notes that Jeffers integrated a pastoral idyll of old California into his work, rooting his poems in an ancient past and in earlier peoples and their relationship with the land - again the space of the "Heimat"?

[83] Sauer in Kenzer, 1985a, op. cit., pp.267-8.

[84] Sauer, 1974, p.191.

"appreciate a Germanic conception of the discipline",[85] to construct "his version of European geography on American soil".[86] From the remembrances of John Leighly and James Parsons of Berkeley in the 1920s, this certainly seems to be the case.[87] Both recall Sauer's geography as a turning away from the "favorite topics"[88] of the time in the United States towards past work in Europe, especially Germany. They felt they were "a world apart from most of academic geography",[89] not only because of California's isolation but also because Sauer wanted them to "march to a different drummer".[90] In opposition to modern American geography, the Berkeley strain sought, among other things, to reinstate the importance of intellectual freedom - originality and curiosity; to counteract the "blindness" of the age with direct observation in the "field" and, most pertinently, to reinstate the importance of the past (this, in opposition to the politics of the contemporary).

Thus, as with his cultural displacement in the modern, Sauer sought redress in tradition. Akin to the "Volk" of the rural past, Sauer recreated an intellectual community of his own in Berkeley: academic "peasants" that understood the importance of continuity

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[85] Kenzer, 1986, p.2.

[86] Ibid., p.3.

[87] See Parsons, 1976, op. cit. and Leighly, 1976, op. cit.

[88] Leighly, ibid., p.8.

[89] Parsons, 1976, op. cit., p.15.

[90] Ibid., p.13.

over change.[91] According to Leighly, in keeping with this theme, Sauer considered his academic work as "craft", citing Chaucer's version of the Hypocratic plaint at every opportunity: "The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne".[92] This was not just a question of academic conviction but part of Sauer's own identity crisis: destabilisation amidst the modern and the need for tradition against change - the peasant personality that rests firmly on the margins. In this way, an alternative academic "home" - known to some as "the edifice"[93]- was constructed.

The past is a foreign country[94]

While the "edifice" as academic community remained strong,[95] the western United States for Sauer was only a temporary intellectual focus and he began to turn his gaze to the south:

"across the border in Baja California and the west coast of Mexico there lay virgin territory in which almost everything remained to be studied."[96]

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[91] See Davis, 1990, pp.46-54 for a discussion of another German community springing up in California. Davis concentrates on the anti-fascist exiles from 1930s Germany in Los Angeles - a very different political-intellectual community to Sauer's Berkeley edifice but, at the same time, sharing a yearn for the past: "Segregated from native Angelenos, the exiles composed a miniature society in a self-imposed ghetto, clinging to their old-world prejudices like cultural life-preservers."

[92] LQ2, Sauer.

[93] Parsons, 1976, op. cit., p.15.

[94] This is the title to a book by David Lowenthal.

[95] According to Hooson (in Blouet et. al., op. cit., p.169), Sauer was "at the height" of his academic powers in the early 1940s.

[96] Urquhart in Kenzer, 1987c, op. cit., p.218.

Sauer saw West Mexico as he had seen California before: academically "open", a "tabula rasa" awaiting his "pioneer" effort. Following his gaze, Sauer took twenty "field" trips down the Mexican coast between 1926 and 1967 and, in keeping with his antimodern "trademark" retained a sense of history throughout, focusing almost completely on the cultural past.[97] As Glick notes, this "austral impulse" gave body to Sauer's institutional distancing from "the background assumptions informing both Midwestern geography and northeastern Academia generally".[98] For Mathewson, it was also a continuation of association with the cultural space of the "peasant":

> "The northern Euro-American landscape continuum mediated by post-peasant small land-holders with distant but distinguishable Neolithic roots, was replaced with an hispanic-aboriginal construct. Along this austral trajectory the farmers were still peasants, the Neolithic much nearer, and the remains of ancient civilisations clearly evident."[99]

The space of the "field" in Mexico thus slots into Sauer's antimodern trajectory: the past is not only rural community and western region but also a foreign country. Still in California and yet still moving into Mexico, Sauer continues to be between places and - further disassociating with modern geography and looking for premodern cultures - searching for a sense of (academic, cultural) identity and "home".

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[97] The nature of this focus varied over the years: West (1979, pp.15-22) notes the thematic change in Sauer's fieldwork from archaeogeography to colonial settlement, agriculture and early man: all, however, shared a focus on the past.

[98] Glick, op. cit., pp.446-7.

[99] Mathewson, 1986, p.2.

Through the course of this chapter, I have begun to allow Sauer's "home" life and fieldwork to speak to each other and am left with a more meaningful and more animated sense of the "field". Unlike Mathewson,[100] for whom the spatial charting of Sauer's antimodernism is an endpoint in itself, I want to use the "field" as antimodern space as the beginning for a more critical perspective in the remaining chapters. Rather than a simple matchmaking of Sauer with antimodern individuals and landscapes, I prefer to unpack the implications of an antimodernist strain in Sauer's thinking - to ask how it is made manifest in his fieldwork. In addition, despite Sauer's own positioning against the modern, I want to question to what extent Sauer <u>can</u> be seen as completely marginal to modern institutions and trends: I want to find the <u>limits</u> to his antimodernism. I begin in the next chapter with a consideration of the "field" as integral to Sauer's sense of an academic (and antimodern) "home".

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[100] Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE HAPLESS FIELDMAN?

"The fieldman has been banished
To some benighted land,
The naturalist has vanished
Beyond the coral strand..."

"...The naturalist applies
For jobs to his utmost
While the hapless fieldman sighs
For an undynamic post;
From many an institution
The word is all too clear:
"We've read your application
You won't be happy here".[1]

Carl Sauer, according to Michael Williams, was "never happier" than when he was working in the "field".[2] Although it may be true that fieldwork was important to Sauer because "he enjoyed it",[3] the "field" appears again and again as, more than pure enjoyment, crucial to Sauer's sense of geography and his sense of self. Sauer defined and authorised the discipline of geography with fieldwork at its core: it was this, claims Parsons, that set "geography apart from most, if not all, other fields of inquiry" (its "raison d'être").[4] Fieldwork was the key to the geographer's identity - his

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[1] SN34 (misc.).

[2] Williams, op. cit., 1983, p.9.

[3] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[4] Ibid. This double distinction of Sauer's "field" focus, defined against other American geographers and other disciplines, must be seen at least in part as an "imagined" intellectual landscape. While, as we have seen in the last chapter, Berkeley geography was set apart from "mainstream" American academic geography, it is doubtful that Sauer was a sole "hapless" fieldworker amidst an army of geographers at their desks. Sauer, we need to remember, virtually disregarded American geography and would therefore be positioning himself in relation to an unknown. Nor does it make sense to claim fieldwork as the preserve of

[sic] principal task;[5] it was also fundamental to authority: "a prerequisite for any study approached from a geographical point of view".[6] Thus, through the "field", Sauer constructed geography as discipline, himself as geographer and gave authority to both.

The critical attention paid to Sauer's fieldwork, however, has been disproportionate to this authoritative "weight" of the "field". Although some have documented Sauer's fieldwork experiences[7] and emphasised their importance, all have taken the "field" as authority at face value and left its claim to "Truth" uncontested. Additionally, many contemporary writers continue to define and legitimate geography by appeals to the field.[8] Like Sauer, David

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geography. Despite his perception, Sauer's presence in the "field" must have been mirrored by others claiming fieldwork as <u>their</u> disciplinary theme, for example anthropologists, archaeologists and geologists. However, by an efficient process of academic "othering", Sauer was able to define his (imagined?) geography against these contemporaries - to call fieldwork its own - and claim authority before even entering "the field".

[5] It was in this sense, states James Parsons (pers. comm. (L), op. cit.) that Sauer "liked being a 'geographer' and wanted to be". Fieldwork - "out-of-doors study ...travel ...seeing new places" - was also what drew students to geography.

[6] Kenzer, 1986, op. cit., p.5.

[7] See, for example, West, op. cit. (the most comprehensive documentation of Sauer's fieldwork) and the numerous "work and life" articles with their potted histories of the "field": for example Leighly, 1979, op. cit. and Parsons, 1979, op. cit.

[8] Recent critical works in anthropology have focused on unpacking, rather than representing, the "field" as authority: see, for example, Clifford and Marcus, op. cit. and Clifford, op. cit. Geographers are also beginning to take these critiques on board, as indicated by the papers on fieldwork at the 1993 meetings of the Association of American Geographers in Atlanta. This "movement" is part of a wider "post-structuralist" critique which maintains that there are no longer any islands of priveleged truth from which to speak: all modes of authority are constructed and thus may be contested. The "field" - the cornerstone of anthropology and

Stoddart looks to the European heritage of the discipline for "why we call ourselves geographers" and comes up with the emphasis on "field science" that "emerged as Europe encountered the rest of the world": the point, he claims, when truth became "our central criterion".[9] Positioning Sauer in the field, it is thus important to ask, like Clifford Geertz, "how the thing is done".[10] Rather than allowing the "field" to remain untouched as password to the legitimacy of Sauer's work, we need to unpack its construction as authority. I do this by looking at Sauer's constitution of fieldwork as spatial practice and observational strategy - sites and sights used to support Sauer's and the discipline's claims to "Truth" - and at his "rites" of education for geographers: the formation of guided and unguided fieldworker identities.

Throughout this chapter, I try to show that the authorities and identities constructed are gendered: that it is not only a question of reinstating the "field", fieldwork and the fieldworker as legitimate but also of labelling them as inherently "male". The sense of discipline and self from the "field" for Sauer thus did not read simply "geography" but also (if subliminally) "patriarchy". This critique comes from the work of Gillian Rose who argues that geography is masculinist, that:

"to think geography - to think within the parameters of the discipline in order to create geographical knowledge acceptable to

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geography's claims to Truth - must also take its turn at being taken critically apart.

[9] Stoddart, 1986, pp.28-33.

[10] Geertz, op. cit., p.2.

the discipline - is to occupy a masculinist subject position".[11]

More specifically, Rose states that fieldwork is:

"a performance which enacts some of the discipline's underlying masculinist assumptions about its knowledge of the world":[12]

it prioritises a male "heroic" fieldworker over a female "Other" and, remaining central to academic geography, requires a feminist critique.

This leads me finally (and, most importantly for this thesis) to a third sense of "self" from the "field" which comes from contextualising Sauer's call (indeed, need?) for fieldwork as authority. Following on from the last chapter, Sauer may be repositioned amidst American academic geography and, at the same time, against its modernising trends - one of which was the turning away from work in the "field". In keeping with his antimodernist stance, Sauer objected to what he saw as the reluctance of other American geographers to prioritise fieldwork over desk work and positioned himself once more on the margins (the "hapless fieldman"):

"For Carl Sauer, nothing mattered more than fieldwork; and no other single issue annoyed him more than the ever increasing tendency among American geographers to rely on field observations only as a last resort".[13]

In opposition to the applied and armchair geographers who seemed

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[11] Rose, 1993, p.4.

[12] Ibid., p.65.

[13] Kenzer, 1986, op. cit., p.5.

only to synthesise what others had gone into the "field" and found, Sauer chose to associate instead with their antithesis - a European counterpart where "all but the most unusual" were "raring to get out, far and long, into the field".[14] Thus, in a replay of the last chapter, Sauer's own extensive time periods in the "field" may be seen as a turn towards tradition (fieldwork) in the face of modernisation (desk work). At the broader level, then, the "field" becomes an academic "home" amidst displacement but also, beyond this - as seen in the discussion of spatiality below - a forum for expression of Sauer's cultural antimodernism. Ultimately, through revealing the complexities and contradictions of the sites, sights and rites of Sauer's geography, their gendered nature and this blurring of fieldwork and Sauer's personal antimodern goal, I hope to "read against the grain" of Sauer's authority.[15]

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[14] Hewes, op. cit., p.144. As seen in the last chapter, Europe and, more specifically, Germany tended to be Sauer's traditional point of reference against which he measured his "displacement" in the United States. The binary opposition of "fieldworker Europe" and "deskworker America" was probably more for Sauer's own need for antimodern distinction than an accurate portrayal of geography at the time.

[15] See Spivak in Guha and Spivak, op. cit., p.351 for the notion of "reading against the grain" as critical strategy: allowing "misfits" (contradictions; "moments of transgression") to point the way to critique.

SITES

"Being afoot, sleeping out, sitting about camp."[16]

In Travelling cultures, James Clifford reflects on the "powerfully ambiguous ways" in which the "field" experience has been portrayed and asks:

"what specific kinds of travel and dwelling (where? how long?)...have made a certain range of experiences count as fieldwork?"[17]

and, more importantly, as authority. For Clifford, the ethnographer's status as fieldworker comes from being a "homebody abroad" - someone who stays and digs in for a time - gaining authority from dwelling simultaneously in village and "field"

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[16] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.400.

[17] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.99. Clifford is also concerned here with the forms of cultural interaction that constitute fieldwork: discursive as well as spatial practices. Sauer was renowned among his students for the "interview" as field technique - a "low key" interaction with "locals" in the "field", "pumping" them for information (see West, op. cit., pp.13 and 136). Sauer, however, had no knowledge of Spanish on first crossing the border in 1928 and taught himself the language from a German dictionary (itself of interest for our later discussion of Sauer's cultural self-fashioning in the "field"), leading us to question the "accuracy" of his information from the "field". As Clifford states, no matter how fluent the fieldworker, he/she can only ever work in part of the language and thus the ability to "speak" for others, to represent them "truthfully" is never possible. I will consider Sauer's cultural interaction in more detail in Chapter Five with an emphasis on Sauer's representation of rather than communication with others in the "field". In this chapter, while focusing on the spatial and observational elements to Sauer's fieldwork, I am aware that these are not independent from issues of culture in the "field" and attempt to integrate these via footnotes along the way. Wary of creating a textual "homeland" (see Pratt, 1985, pp.126-7) and artificially separating culture from the "field", it does however seem necessary for a thematic biography of Sauer.

rather than passing through as traveller.[18] While Sauer, for James Parsons, was "an ethnographer of sorts" (just as he was an economic botanist, historian...),[19] his fieldwork was a process of living not so much with the culture as with the culture area.[20] For the young Sauer, based in the United States and studying the familiar scene as "region" (the known), this manifested itself as a dwelling and mapping of the "field" as "home geography". However, later moving outside the United States to the unknown, fieldwork became a trail of discovery, a process of cumulative travel that could eventually posit the Mexican "field" as known. Throughout, Sauer's main distinction was not between fieldwork as dwelling and travelling but between the geographer's experience in the "field" and the "tour". Thus, both dwelling and passing through (unlike Clifford's ethnographer), Sauer retained authority for himself and the discipline against the spatiality of the tourist. This anti-touristic stance also marked geographer and geography as "male" and gave expression to Sauer's cultural antimodernism.

Familiar scene to journeyman-geographer

Sauer attributed his early interest in fieldwork to his "rural

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[18] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit.

[19] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[20] While, as we have seen above, Sauer did interact with "living" culture in the "field", his focus was on material culture and the reading of cultural pasts from the landscape (culture history): "The ability to distinguish the hand of nature from that of primitive man is not learned from classrooms, books, or museums. It was acquired by such amateur field observers who lived with their particular area" (Sauer, 1956, p.9. My use of emphasis).

surroundings" in Missouri,[21] stimulating his curiosity in "people who went out, saw the country and wrote about it". His years as an "apprentice geographer" were spent in mapping and survey work locally in Illinois, Missouri, Michigan and Kentucky with a focus on the region as "field".[22] This, for Sauer, was "home geography"[23]- the familiar scene that every geographer should begin with - and this attitude percolated into his early published work:

"All about us lies a great and essentially uncultivated field of geography. The strange and distant scene has borne an unholy charm to the geographer who has thought that travel in far lands is the beginning of geographic research."[24]

Although Sauer recognised the popularity of the "grand tour" for the "man of culture" - the movement away from the familiar scene - he criticised its "competence to evaluate the geography of a country" without the comparative perspective of the "home". The geographer thus could not leave the local scene without fully immersing himself into its problems; preparation was by way of familiarity: "Then only can we discover truly the significant contrasts of far countries."[25]

In 1928, presumably with this comparative basis, Sauer left the

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[21] Sauer, addressing the Royal Geographical Society in 1975 (SN34, misc., op. cit.).

[22] Sauer, pers. comm. (V), op. cit.

[23] Sauer in Stoddart, 1991, op. cit., p.19.

[24] Sauer, 1924, p.32.

[25] Ibid.

United States for a trail of discovery into Mexico:[26] "I went into Mexico for discovery - it's that simple".[27] Moving away from the familiar scene, Sauer felt that he was pushing back the boundaries of the (and his) unknown - "it was a kind of primitive way of going exploring" since "hardly anything was known about anything" and:

"in those days, geographers didn't take off for the ends of the earth for months and months at a time".[28]

This change in Sauer's personal experience spoke to a wider audience in The education of a geographer.[29] The article begins with a reconceptualisation of fieldwork as trail of discovery and the field worker as "journeyman"[30] who "goes forth alone to far and

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[26] The notion of a comparative basis resurfaces in Sauer's transition from Mexico to South America which is explored in Chapter Six.

[27] Sauer, pers. comm. (V), op. cit. It was not actually, as we saw in Chapter Two, quite that simple. Sauer's physical travel into Mexico was as much escape as discovery - a critical distancing from other (modern) geographies. In fact, by attempting to reconnect with the European tradition of fieldwork, it was more of a rediscovery. Additionally, it is ironic that Sauer should use the modern rhetoric of discovery here to escape the modern and that he should write against (colonial) discovery (see Chapter Four) but use its (colonising) rhetoric to conceptualise his own presence in the field. See Carter (1987) for a consideration of the rhetoric of discovery and its ordering forth of countries linguistically and spatially as colonial appropriation.

[28] Ibid. This seems contradictory to Sauer's earlier definition of the geographer and the familiar scene against geographers that were travelling to far lands for geographic research. It is, however, useful at this stage for Sauer, attempting to define himself as solitary journeyman.

[29] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.389-406.

[30] Whether homebody or journeyman, the fieldworker was written up with continuity by Sauer as male. See the discussion of Sauer's "fieldman" at the end of this section.

strange places". The focus is no longer the familiar ground of the "home" territory but the exotic, the ends of the earth:

"to go where none of your kind has been, to see and learn and make sense out of what has not been known to any of us."[31]

Although Sauer has altered the domain of the fieldworker from the familiar scene to the "foreign", he maintains his critique of the "tour" and emphasises the distinction between traveller (geographer) and tourist:

"The geographer and the geographer-to-be are travelers, vicarious when they must be,[32] actual when they may. They are not of the class of tourists who are directed by guidebooks over the routes of the grand tours to the starred attractions, nor do they lodge at the grand hotels...they may pass by the places one is supposed to see and seek out byways and unnoted places where they gain the feeling of personal discovery. They enjoy striking out on foot, away from roads."[33]

The spatial and intellectual practice of the geographer is therefore to "leave the beaten trail",[34] to keep away from the sites of the tour if he wants to avoid being an academic "tourist" himself.[35] The geographer not only discovers unknown space but also

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[31] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.396.

[32] Contrary to West, op. cit., p.9, Sauer did allow for some "armchair" (vicarious) travel for the geographer as a complement to actual travel (see the next section on visuality and the map) but only when necessary.

[33] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.392.

[34] Sauer in Stoddart, 1991, op. cit., p.19.

[35] Sauer was extremely critical of what he saw as the academic "tourists" in the east of the United States: the "herd", the "tub-thumpers, spellbinders and slickers" (the tourists of the modern?) that ran with politics and the contemporary and seemed to have given up the pursuit of "the good, the beautiful and the true" (Wagner, pers. comm. (I), op. cit.).

goes in search of the academically authentic: conquering "a bit of truth here and a bit of truth there",[36] the physical discovery of lands is matched by the scientific discovery of "pebbles on the shore of a sea of truth".[37] Sauer's fieldworker is not, however, completely free to roam. Travelling away from the tourist and striking out into the unknown, he must eventually limit his travels to a place that he can know - he must bound the unbeaten trail into a field:

"the human geographer cannot be a world tourist, moving from people to people and land to land, and knowing only casually and doubtfully related things about any of them."[38]

Prepared, the fieldworker thus leaves the "home" scene and, keeping away from the "herd", intimately comes to know the "field". Once again, therefore, Sauer's critique is of the incompetence and inauthenticity of the "tour", constructing the spatiality and mentality of the geographer so as to avoid this.[39]

Repositioning Sauer in Mexico, we achieve a more grounded sense of the importance of geographer-traveler as distinct from tourist. According to Deplar, the 1920s and 1930s in the United States witnessed a "vogue" for things Mexican and a wave of American

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[36] Conrad in Driver, op. cit., p.24.

[37] Leighly, 1979, op. cit., p.9.

[38] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.362.

[39] With this in mind, it is strange that West (op. cit., p.143) should call Sauer's later Mexican visits "grand tours". Perhaps at this stage (the late 1940s), Mexico was considered by Sauer as "known" and could therefore be toured at leisure - with "no definite purpose in mind, save to get back to Mexico for a spell."

tourists - "Anglo-Saxons in herd formation" - were heading across the border towards the end of the period.[40] Thus while Sauer may have considered himself as journeyman-explorer at the "ends of the earth" in Mexico, he was certainly not alone. In fact, ironically for Sauer, the Mexican government was campaigning for American tourists in exactly the same year that he was crossing the border for his first Mexican "discovery."[41]

Thus while Sauer was travelling in Mexico, textualising his trip in his fieldnotes, others were being introduced to the country through the pages of a guidebook, Terry's guide to Mexico being a prime example of the period.[42] True to the mentality of the "tour", Terry's presented Mexico as a place to travel through quickly, with limited knowledge of language and institution, in order to return with the whole:

"The constant aim of the writer of this guidebook is to show the user how he can best see all there is worth seeing in Mexico with the least outlay of time, energy and money."[43]

Mexico, said Terry's, made "foreign recreation" easy: it was "just

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[40] Deplar, 1992, p.58. This period was apparently characterised by discovery. Leftist artists and intellectuals (hardly Sauer!) made a political pilgrimage to Mexico encouraged by the socialist promises of the post-revolutionary period, while others saw the country as a cultural "Mecca" and went in search of "art" and "civilisation". This political cultural and academic travel laid the foundations for the tourist wave.

[41] Ibid. While tourists had been reluctant to visit Mexico, associating the country with violence, banditry and instability, the Mexican government's campaign to promote tourism in 1928 reconceptualised Mexico as safe, unspoiled, cheap and, best of all, just across the border.

[42] Terry, 1938.

[43] Ibid., p.xiia.

across the line from Uncle Samuel's domain" (so easy to communicate by telegraph, receive the New York Times, return home) and yet "foreign in the fullest sense of the word".[44] A new smoother travel experience awaited the "old traveller": "a frictionless and wholly delightful travel adventure"[45] where the climate was "healthful", the people helpful ("hands ready to be of service") and the language simple. In ninety days, the tourist would be speaking like "the average man on the street" so that the lack of the language " should never deter the traveller from visiting Mexico".[46] It was, in essence, "one of the easiest foreign countries to travel in", "as pleasant as a foreign journey could possibly be".[47]

Moving on from this generic picture of quick and easy travel, we find that not only were tourists crossing the border into Mexico with Sauer but, more specifically, touring his "field" of the Northwest.[48] In 1927, the Southern Pacific Railroad had been

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[44] Ibid., p.xi.

[45] Ibid., p.xxiif.

[46] Ibid., p.xxiia. If in difficulty, the tourist could turn to Terry's companion, Speak Spanish at once, for a travelling language to ease passage through the country (ibid., p.xxiic).

[47] Ibid., p.xxiif. The traveller is advised on what to wear: male tourists are allowed, among other things, "24 handkerchiefs (panuelos) - cotton or silk..6 street or business suits..1 smoking jacket" and "must" use "1 tennis racket..1 pair field-glasses" and "1 golf-bag"! (ibid., p.xvi).

[48] What actually constitutes Sauer's "field" spatially (and authoritatively?) varies - while Sauer talks of "my Mexico", he more specifically outlines to Samuel Dicken that his "field" is the Northwest: "My field is northwest Mexico, and about northeast Mexico I know very little. I hope that you are going to pre-empt

extended from the United States along the West coast of Mexico, giving "new commercial life" to 1100 miles of Mexican territory and bringing cities such as Hermosillo, Mazatlán, Tepic and Guadalajara into "deserved touristic prominence".[49] Crossing from the United States into Mexico at the "friendly fence" of Nogales, the new railway was, said Terry's, of "supreme importance" for the tourist since it was:

> "now possible for him to travel in comfort through one of the least known, richest, most beautiful, and most picturesque regions of the real Old Mexico; one which offers him more of touristic value than almost any other railway on the continent."[50]

As "the only railway traversing this fascinating section", it was becoming "each day..more popular with the travelling public".[51] The "West Coast Region" was itself thus newly "discovered" as tourist resort, enabling the "casual globe trotter" to add one more "unbeaten track to his touristic scalps".[52] At the same time, it already offered clean, modern cities for the tourist's comfort, for example the "Southern Pacific Paradise" of Mazatlán: "rapidly coming into prominence as one of the most delightful... Vacation

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the latter field, and, if you do, you will have to work up the historical-geographic background as I have done for northwest Mexico." (PC, Sauer to Dicken, 28/2/36). John Leighly, however, marks Latin America as Sauer's field (Leighly, pers. comm. (V), 8/1/80). While, as we will see in Chapter Five, Sauer does seem to feel he can delimit the personality of all of Mexico, he does not (in Chapter Six) move outside Mexico with as much authority.

[49] Terry, op. cit., p.162.

[50] Ibid., p.86.

[51] Ibid., p.xxxiv.

[52] Ibid., p.86.

Resorts on the continent".[53] Recommending the Northwest as "region", Terry's thus plotted the "route" of the tourist by rail along the coast, connecting up its "progressive" cities with their "modern, finely equipped hotels" as nodes. The same cities were also connected up by the "scenic grandeur and tropical charm" of the Western Main Artery for those who wanted to travel by highway (Nogales-Sonora-Sinaloa-Nayarit-Jalisco-Guadalajara-MexicoCity).[54]

Through Terry's then we find exactly the "class of tourists... grand tours...starred attractions..grand hotels" that the geographer-traveler, according to Sauer, had to avoid. However, if the contemporary Mexican scene reveals Sauer in the company of tourists, his destination shared with the "herd", the specifics of his fieldwork do not. Rather than follow the mapped itineraries, for Sauer it was always important to "depart from the highway"[55] and he demonstrated this spatially in relation to tourists in the field.[56] While the latter, as we have seen, kept to the main cities and rail and road arteries on the west coast, Sauer's

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[53] Ibid., p.96a.

[54] Ibid., p.xxxviii.

[55] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.388.

[56] In a visual representation of Sauer's travel in northwest Mexico, we would see Sauer's field mapped as a departure from the west coast tourist route. Sauer's 1929/1930 field trip, for example, involved Sauer in "reconnaisance" of rural areas around Nogales in northwest Sonora and, further south, around Mazatlán. His more touristic contemporaries would have passed direct from Nogales to Hermosillo; from Culiacan to Mazatlán and therefore missed Sauer's trails along the way.

fieldwork was in rural regions[57] and he used main routes only for initial access to his "field". Rather than the rapid passing through of the tourist, West notes that Sauer "often visited the same places and traversed the same trails and roads season after season" - his was a more cumulative form of travel.[58] While he often took the train from Nogales down the Mexican West coast, Sauer used this as a starting point from which he travelled to more remote areas by foot, mule, horse and car. He thus literally departed from the highway on his field trips, defining his routes against the tourist, moving slowly and intensively through small sections of his "field" for weeks at a time. Any dwelling in the "field" was also defined against the tourist, Sauer preferring to camp in the open countryside or lodge in villages rather than stay in more comfortable hotels. According to West, Sauer was "always contemptuous of modern urban amenities when travelling" and thought that "travel by any means other than the best" was the way to go on (see figure 4).[59] The geographer's knowledge of an area, Sauer emphasised, came from a much baser (and therefore more authentic) experience:

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[57] His archive work was, however, in urban areas: mainly in Mexico City but also in Guadalajara and Hermosillo (see West, op. cit., pp.65 and 94).

[58] Ibid., p.12. This cumulative spatial practice of Sauer's was as much a cultural as a spatial knowledge: returning again and again to the "field", Sauer maintained the fieldworker would get "to the point where he sees the culture from the inside". Thus, persisting in the "field" and avoiding the "tour", the authority to define Mexican culture (at least materially and in the past) was his.

[59] Ibid., pp.47 and 84.

"an individual creation out of long application, involving physical discomforts and pleasures, muscular, cutaneous, and gastric..."[60]

Tourists "travelling" through a text to travel the country thus seemed to be caught in a different relationship to geography and writing than Sauer - they were travelling the beaten track, the already known. Rejecting the "guidebook" and its routes in The education of a geographer and in practice in Mexico, Sauer could maintain the status of discovery of his fieldwork - as Stratton states "there are no guidebooks for exploration"[61] - and the authority.

The opposition between traveller and tourist, claims Jonathan Culler, is not "real" but a common trope, a division that is integral to tourism itself.[62] The critique of tourism, complete with herd imagery and allegations of inauthenticity, masks yet further tourists, posing as travellers. The traveller's label posits a more active, authentic, individual experience which is used for authority but which, for Culler, is never achievable - off

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[60]. Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.397. While this appears to be the kind of fieldwork Sauer's students experienced, letters to Sauer from the "field" could also portray a leisurely pace to fieldwork. Homer Aschmann writes a "progress report" to Sauer from Central America in 1954, outlining his "side trips" in which, "like any tourist", he "poked up to Santa Marta" and made the "regular pilgrimage" (PC, Aschmann to Sauer, 18/7/54). Similarly, Parsons writes from a boat trip on the lower Amazon in 1956, documenting his views, excursions and landings as "half fieldwork and half fiesta" (PC, Parsons to Sauer, 1/9/56).

[61] Stratton, 1990, p.54.

[62] Culler, 1981, pp.130-131.

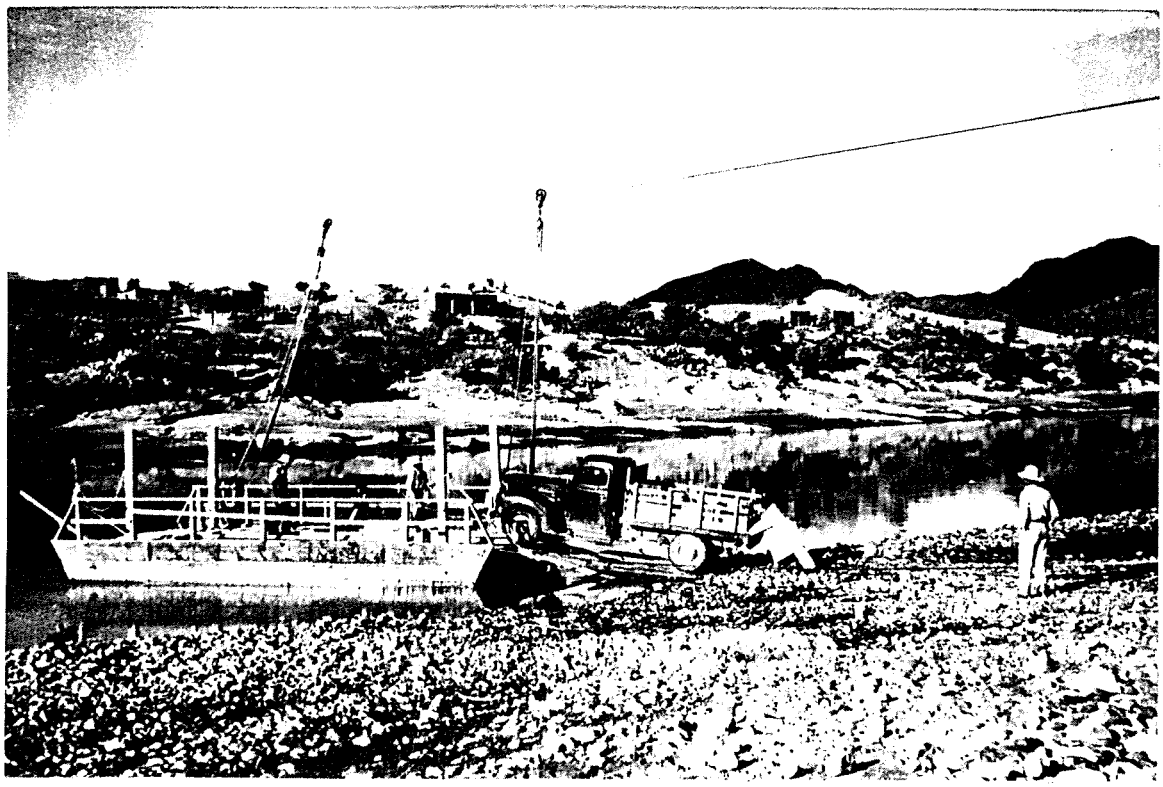

Figure 4: Off the beaten track?
Avoiding tourist trails (Yaqui River crossing,
Mexico, 1950. James J. Parsons pushing).

the beaten track is "the most beaten track of all"[63] and the "authentic" is always already mediated by markers - the relation is never pure. Echoes of Sauer's fieldworker/tourist distinction replay in Culler's examples of the trope:

> "The traveler, then, was working at something; the tourist was a pleasure-seeker. The traveler was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist was passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him."[64]

The genre, as he says, is familiar.

Like Culler, James Buzard seeks to investigate rather than repeat "travel" and "tourism" as trope and to explore its tendency to construct authenticity and to distinguish (the travelling) "self" from (the touristic) "other".[65] More particularly for Buzard, the trope is viewed as a binary opposition fundamental to modern culture, its emergence linked to industrialisation and the destruction of traditional rural communities: it was a means of expressing and confronting modernity.[66] "Travel" came to represent a claim to find (acculturation) and to leave behind (cultural escape). In opposition to the "tourist", the "traveller" claimed to

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[63] Ibid., p.135. This appears to be the case in Chapter Five where we see Sauer in the company of other antimodernists, looking for the culturally authentic in rural Mexico.

[64] Ibid., p.129.

[65] Buzard, 1993, p.3.

[66] Ibid., pp.18-19. Buzard is here writing about nineteenth-century England, but he also focuses beyond Europe to America later on in his book.

go "off the beaten track"[67] and to penetrate the authentic essence of the traditional society which had been hounded there by modernity.[68] Secondly, the "traveller" claimed to escape the modern, whereas the "tourist" was its "relentless representative":

"the tourist appears unable or unwilling to cast off the traces of a modernity which at home is all too much with us...As such the tourist is an unwelcome reminder, to self-styled 'travellers', of the modern realities that dog their fleeing footsteps."[69]

Thus "tourist" and "traveller", like city and country in the last chapter, appear as synecdoche for modern and antimodern culture. The tourist represents change, displacement and exile, the traveller tradition, belonging and a sense of "home".[70] Sauer's self-definition in opposition to the "tourist" and his charting of anti-touristic space were not, then, so much a question of geography as of modernity: a replay of Sauer's search for a

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[67] The "beaten track" is, for Buzard (ibid., p.4), the "master-trope" in the tourist/travel opposition. It denotes the ultimate touristic space of the inauthentic and is brought into play as a foil to spaces of acculturation and cultural authenticity.

[68] This desire for access and penetration was a contradictory one. The self-proclaimed traveller was aware of the transformative potential of the tourist - the tendency to remake places in his own (modern, inauthentic) image - and therefore there was a both a denial and a fear of transformative potential (Buzard, ibid., p.28): "the traveller was to seek the double goal of attaining a distinctly meaningful and lasting contact with the visited place that would none the less make no constitutive changes, leave no imprint of force behind."

[69] Ibid., p.8.

[70] It is interesting that Buzard makes the distinction between "tourist" (exile) and "brother" (belonging) - a reminder, perhaps, of Sauer's own distinction in the last chapter between himself and his "brothers in spirit" in the "backwoods" and the urban "Other".

"home".[71] The fieldworker had to avoid the "beaten track" - the cities, the main thoroughfares - and turn to the rural because Sauer required a departure from the modern in the "field". The spaces of the tour were the spaces of the modern; the geography of the tourist, a modern geography and Sauer - not just geographer but antimodernist - defined himself against both.

This unpacking of travel/tourism is extremely useful: while Culler reveals the geographer-traveller's claims to authority as constructed, Buzard helps to blur the boundary between the academic figure of the fieldworker and Sauer's antimodern home-seeking persona. However, while Culler and Buzard keep their analysis at the individual level, an application to the construction of disciplinary authority is also revealing. While all travellers may be tourists, some have the ability and authority to define themselves and their practices against this and to use the distinction as an effective form of othering. What is most important, therefore, is that Sauer maintains this division from the tourist, placing himself firmly in the boots of the fieldworker. This is not only a touristic topos working in favour of an individual, but also in support of a discipline: the fieldworker-geographer is not a tourist and, because of this, he [sic.] can speak with authority. Meanwhile, ironically, the authors of Terry's guide are claiming the same thing:

"Nearly twelve years of residence in the country, and repeated journeys from one end of it to the other, have qualified us to

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[71] "The earnest traveller", says Buzard (ibid., p.29) "could find a 'home' anywhere."

describe the things and places really worth seeing...preferring in every case to go personally to the source, secure data at first hand, and thus to be able to inspire the traveller with confidence in its accuracy..."[72]

The authority of the fieldworker-geographer (and his [sic.] discipline) was not, however, gained merely through distinction from the "tourist" but also - at a less explicit level - from a feminine (and less legitimate) Other.[73] Running parallel to Sauer's itinerary in the field is an "itinerary of silencing"[74] that blots out any reference to field worker - whether homebody or traveler-discoverer - as female. The spatiality of Sauer's geography in the field is particularly "male": the "tour" is for the "man of culture" and the explorer of the exotic is a "journeyman". Similarly, the intellectual discovery of the fieldworker is equally gendered: the "search for foundational knowledge through the trope of discovery", claims Rose, retains the masculinist assumptions of modern science (taken over into geography).[75] Thus, as the

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[72] In fact, the feminine Other could be conflated with the notion of the "tourist" since the latter acts as trope to represent inauthenticity, intrusion, superficiality and these are characteristics that are implied in the bounding of geography and fieldwork as masculinist preserve. Indeed, Buzard (op. cit., p.16) notes the gendered nature of the "tourist".

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[74] Spivak in Rose, op. cit., p.4.

[75] Modern science, according to Rose (op. cit., p.6), developed in tandem with the growing polarization of gender in the seventeenth century and emerged as an objective revelation (discovery) of an already existing order - an objectivity that only men were capable of (ibid., p.7 for a further discussion of men, objectivity and science). Many geographers, states Rose, retain on

authority of the traveller relies on the counter-figure of the tourist, so the fieldman is formed against a feminine non-field equivalent. In both cases, the identity of the fieldworker is not essential but relational: it is constructed against and requires the subversion of the Other to legitimate an authoritative stance.

Despite the critiques of Culler, Buzard and Rose, geographers like David Stoddart continue to build on Sauer's persona of the "journeyman" and to conceptualise fieldwork as discovery. Although Felix Driver has cited Conrad "in memoriam" for a geography of discovery and claimed that geographers are "condemned to make their discoveries on beaten tracks" (we are tourists all), Stoddart states that Cook's "discovery" of Australia in 1769 marked the transformation to geography as truth and that this continues to speak to a geography of the present. Our central theme, continues Stoddart - drawing in full on the masculinist assumptions of fieldwork - should be:

"sending out men versed in science and the knowledge of nature on all occasions to the remote parts of the world."[76]

Contradictory to Driver, the "days of heroic travel" for geography do not seem to be over:[77] Stoddart, like Sauer, freezes geography

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the whole the belief that the true nature of the world can be revealed via objective study - a conviction expressed through the trope of discovery. In this light, Sauer's geographer-discoverer, searching for "pebbles on the shore of a sea of truth", is symptomatic of geography as masculinist knowledge.

[76] Stoddart, 1986, op. cit., p.39. My use of emphasis.

[77] Conrad in Driver, op. cit., p.24.

in discovery and travel and maintains its status as a male preserve of science and truth. As Culler notes, such "historical explanations are excuses for what travellers always do: feel superior to other travellers."[78]

[78] Culler, op. cit., p.130.

SIGHTS

"Everything's so Goddamned pictorial it takes my breath away."[79]

It was not only the <u>being</u> of fieldwork - the sheer presence of the geographer away from his [sic.] desk - that gave Sauer's geography its authority, but the <u>seeing</u>: the clarity and contemporaneity of vision that the direct experience of the field allowed. Geography, for Sauer, was primarily knowledge gained by observation: in order to know, you had to see and Sauer thus further "othered" the "desk geographers" that he perceived as taking over the American academic scene. Reading and archive work could complement observation but only the latter had the ultimate claim to "Truth" and could truly enable the geographer to learn and "see". In reference to his own work, Sauer said:

"I still think I can learn more by being in the field than by reading. When I am fresh from the field I have a new incentive to read, and after I have read for some time I have the additional reason for getting back into the field."[80]

Sauer thus further made the distinction between the "real" geographer out in the "field" and the less authoritative and more "bookish" counterpart that "stayed at home". While this seemed to sort out the field observers from the deskworkers <u>within</u> geography, it did not, however, distinguish between geographers and <u>other</u> disciplines, equally keen on "being" and "seeing" in the field.

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[79] Dos Passos in Deplar, op. cit., p.199.

[80] Sauer in Williams, 1983, op. cit., p.9.

Sauer's own early experience of fieldwork was with the geologist, Rollin D Salisbury; his later fieldwork contemporary was Berkeley anthropologist Alfred Kroeber: how then was the geographer's field observation different?

Sauer, in his published work, both drew on and defined geography against the disciplines of geology and anthropology.[81] While Sauer's view of geography as a "genetic science"[82] shared with geology a concern for process and time ("all human time is involved in the field")[83] and a focus on the physical environment, geology, unlike Sauer, had little interest in culture.[84] Anthropology - geography's "sister discipline"[85] that had also "developed field observation as a skill"[86]- shared Sauer's enthusiasm for culture but not his focus on landscape.[87] Geography, said Sauer:

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[81] These were not the only distinctions: Sauer defined his work as archaeogeography, drawing on archaeology (West, op. cit., p.16) and as culture history, taking archives into the "field" (Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.367).

[82] Ibid., p.352.

[83] Ibid., p.365.

[84] While Sauer's "baptism" in fieldwork with Salisbury in 1910 was the study of the Upper Illinois Valley in terms of geology and physiography, Sauer later added his own chapter on settlement (culture) to complete the regional study. See West, op. cit., pp.9-10.

[85] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.357.

[86] Ibid., p.378.

[87] This comparison can be seen in the different foci of Sauer and Alfred Kroeber's (Berkeley anthropologist) notebooks for Mexico. While Sauer's gives us a sense of the landscape and of travel, Kroeber's rarely dates or locates his route. The latter concentrates instead on the name of his informants and their language and comments. Kroeber's trip focused on native languages, involving a collection of word lists; Sauer's aboriginal language

"is based on the reality of the union of physical and cultural elements in the landscape...There is a strictly geographic way of thinking about culture - namely as the impress of the works of man upon the area."[88]

Geography for Sauer thus assumed "responsibility for the study of landscape"[89] in its natural and cultural forms: its facts were "place facts",[90] its disciplinary status the science of the region (chorology) as well as a more generic "science of observation".[91] "No other subject" said Sauer in The morphology of landscape "has pre-empted the study of area":[92] his geography had found its niche and its authority.

Returning to Sauer's observation in the field, the "geographic bent" was thus defined as "seeing and thinking about what was in the landscape".[93] The unified viewpoint of the geographer matched the areal focus of the discipline: positioning himself on "vantage points" (see Figure 5), Sauer looked out for a sense of the whole. This practice of landscape observation was conceptualised by Sauer both scientifically and artistically, as rigorous objective survey

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work, however, sought to map culture in the field (see Sauer, 1935 and 1934).

[88] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.325-6.

[89] Ibid., p.316. My use of emphasis.

[90] Ibid., p.321.

[91] Sauer in West, op. cit., p.9.

[92] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.316.

[93] Stanislawski, op. cit., p.550.

Figure 5: Field vision: Sauer on a "vantage point (up valley Rio de Chametla, Rosario, Mexico).

and also as a more subjective "art of seeing".[94] Holding onto the importance of observing the cultural-physical landscape, the approach to observation could differ, evolving with a changing Sauer. The claim to authority of observation and - as I will show - its masculinist assumptions, however, remained the same.

Science...

In The survey method in geography and its objectives,[95] Sauer identified geography as a social science[96] concerned with the areal definition of life. The dual objective of geographic "field" study was to represent the natural condition of the area and show how it had been modified and utilised by its human population. Such a process, argued Sauer, required a distinctive geographical technique: the survey method. This was "the principal task in the development of geographical knowledge"[97] and would help to unify the subject by way of its common approach, thus allowing it to speak of scientific results. Essential to the survey method of the geographer (what distinguished it from other sciences) was the attempt to achieve a unified perspective. The geographer's task was then the classification and representation of this "unified viewpoint" using the map:

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[94] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit. p.104.

[95] Sauer, 1924, op. cit.

[96] Later in his life, however, Sauer was adamant that geography was not a social science. This shift came with what Sauer saw as the increasing bureaucratisation and politicisation of social science as a whole and these sentiments were voiced in his article Folkways of social science (in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.380-388).

[97] Sauer, 1924, op. cit., p.20.

"The sprightly sketchiness of observation of the geographer-traveler may retain its use in explorations and other forms of preliminary reconnaisances but intensive work needs to rely primarily on rigorous observation of unit areas..."[98]

Sauer thus recommended a landscape to survey as a unified panorama rather than the less accurate passing through of the traveler-geographer.[99] The former was a systematic, precise, quantitative, and scientific method; the latter lay in the realm of the informal and subjective. While "sketchy observation" could complement the scientific, it could not stand in its place; it had charm and appeal but no scientific currency. Geography, in fact, had given "excessive freedom to temperament" and "subjective impression" and needed to ward off the dangers of being "anti-scientific".[100] "The purpose of these suggestions", said Sauer, was "not to make field work mechanical but to increase its precision"; the choice of which landscape to observe could "remain a matter of individual judgement".[101] After this initial choice, however, the geographer proceeded objectively.

...and beyond.

The scientific and subjective elements of landscape observation were more balanced in Sauer's later publication The morphology of

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[98] Ibid., p.25.

[99] It is interesting here to note that the "traveller" denotes a less authoritative stance - a contrast to the last section in which it was the tourist that stood for a lack of authority. As Buzard notes, we must be wary of simplification of the division between travel and tourism and be ready for contradiction (op. cit., p.31).

[100] Sauer, 1924, op. cit., p.21.

[101] Ibid.

landscape.[102] While, on the one hand, Sauer wished to retain the scientific value of landscape and maintain the map as "the most precise expression of geographic knowledge",[103] he also considered the importance of a move "beyond science" to the subjective:

"The best geography has never disregarded the aesthetic qualities of landscape, to which we know of no other approach than the subjective."[104]

The task of the geographer was not, however, to observe the individual landscape in isolation, painting it like an artist, but to view it generically. Sauer thus rejected Croce's contention that "the geographer who is describing a landscape has the same task as a landscape painter":[105] "We are not" said Sauer "concerned with geography as an art".[106] However, sixteen years later in The personality of Mexico, [107] Sauer claimed for the geographer the "art of seeing" how land and life fit together in the regional perspective: a "quality of understanding" rather than the more quantitative approach of the survey. In The education of a geographer, [108] fieldwork was also defined against the scientific survey and redefined as a journey, revaluing the "subjective" and the "informal":

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[102] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.315-351.

[103] Ibid., p.316.

[104] Ibid., p.344.

[105] Ibid., p.322.

[106] Ibid., p.331.

[107] Ibid., pp.104-119.

[108] Ibid., pp.389-406.

"Beyond all that can be communicated by instruction and mastered by techniques lies a realm of individual perception and interpretation".[109]

Sauer also performed a "volte-face" in terms of his concern for scientific technique in observing the landscape, moving away from any guidelines on mapping:

"The more time is spent making maps, the less attention is likely to be left for thinking about why things are set down on the map...A mapping plan is likely to freeze attention when it should be most elastic.."[110]

This "elasticity" came, for Sauer, from a reconceptualisation of the map from field technique to "the language of geography", allowing for an "armchair travel", an imaginary voyage to the "exotic". He asked:

"Who has not journeyed by map to Tibesti or Tibet, raised the peaks of Tenerife or Trinidad on the Western horizon or sought the Northwest Passage? Who has not been with Marco Polo to Cathay, with Captain Cook to the Sandwich Islands?"[111]

Journeying by map was also the subject of Sauer's later address in The quality of geography, where the map was seen as vehicle for the mental travel of the geographer: "a wandering by the mind's eye" and a subjective experience that depended on "one's particular

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[109] Ibid., p.403. For Williams, 1983, op. cit., p.5, this "realm of individual perception" was a product of Sauer's intellectual heritage: a "mysticism of observation and contemplation", associated with German romanticism, which gave rise to "verstehen" (empathetic understanding and intuitive insight) in Sauer's work.

[110] Sauer in Kenzer, 1986, op. cit., p.6.

[111] Once again the overtly masculinist trope of discovery.

desire and yearning to wander".[112]

Although maintaining the landscape as focus of observation in the "field", Sauer thus shifted from a scientific to a more "artistic" form of visual appreciation over his academic career. For James Parsons, Sauer discarded any claim to "scientific process" fairly early on, "adopting increasingly a humanistic, historical focus in his investigations".[113] Others, however, have chosen to pick up on Sauer's scientific or artistic pronouncements on landscape in isolation and use them for a one-sided interpretation and authorisation of Sauer's geography. Donald Meinig views Sauer's call to go "beyond science" as a "testimony" to the humanistic nature of his geography, veering towards the arts.[114] David Livingstone, on the other hand, rejects a focus on Sauer's humanistic streak, claiming that, since for Sauer "all geography" was "physical geography" (i.e. a focus on the material elements of culture in the landscape), he retained his subject as "observational <u>science</u>".[115] For David Stoddart, this is where the

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[112] Sauer, 1970, op. cit., p.5.

[113] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit. However, there does seem to be some continuity in Sauer's published articles in viewing his work as a science. He spoke at different times of his involvement in "the science of prehistory" (in Leighly, 1969, op. cit. p.121), "social science as the science of man" (ibid. p.197), "phenomenological science" (ibid. p.316), "genetic science" (ibid. p.352) - "a science that has nothing to do with individuals" (ibid. p.358). He also venerated Franz Boas as a member of "the elder generation" in the social sciences who (ibid. p.383) "seemed bent on seeking a clear and comprehensive conception of the matter under study (what we call 'the truth')". Boas himself had earlier attempted to distinguish geography as a science (Boas, 1887).

[114] See Meinig, 1983, pp.314-328.

[115] Livingstone, 1992, pp.298-99.

authority of contemporary geography lies - its content no longer "intuitively and even emotionally perceived", it has evolved into objective science with direct observation at its core.[116]

This filtering out of part of Sauer's scientific/artistic approach and utilisation of Sauer's views on landscape to make wider scientific/humanistic claims for the discipline takes us away from a focus on landscape itself as authority. While Sauer's observational strategies allowed the landscape to be seen with legitimacy in different ways, the very notion of landscape involved a "way of seeing"[117] with a built-in authority and claim to Truth. For Denis Cosgrove, it is exactly the kind of filtering process discussed above that allows landscape and this "ideology of vision" to remain "part of our unexamined discourse" in geography.[118]

Using Sauer's Morphology of landscape[119] as a lynchpin, Cosgrove traces the landscape idea from its origins in renaissance landscape painting and linear perspective to the German concept of "landscaft" in geography. Sauer's discussion of Goethe and landscape as visible form, as well as chorography, cartography and landscape as an art are used to move from landscape as neutral region or area to its foundations in the visual. It is Sauer's mix of the scientific and the artistic that points the way.

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[116] Stoddart, 1986, op. cit., p.31.

[117] Cosgrove, 1985, p.46.

[118] Ibid., pp.57-8.

[119] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.315-350.

Landscape, as Cosgrove shows, emerged as a "visual term" out of renaissance humanism and its concepts of space in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Employing the technique of linear perspective, landscape painting fused with the practical sciences of surveying, map making and charting by applying Euclidian geometry as "the guarantor of certainty" in the "conception, organisation and representation" of space.[120] Landscape and its "pictorial realism" thus had its basis in scientific claims to objectivity, accuracy and authority. At the same time, linear perspective, by giving the eye absolute control over space, was also a form of appropriation:

"Visually space is rendered the property of the individual, detached observer, from whose divine location it is a dependent, appropriated object".[121]

This visual and ideological control of space in landscape painting was closely allied to its practical appropriation by the individual and the state as property or territory. Maps and surveys, sharing the same commanding "uninvolved" view as the landscape painting, were party to the consolidation of commercial estates for the urban bourgeoisie: social as well as visual power.

Taking over landscape into geography, notes Cosgrove, we "inevitably import" its visual and ideological baggage. By emphasising the observation of landscape in the "field", Sauer was therefore also adopting its "heritage": a claim to certainty as a

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[120] Ibid., p.46.

[121] Ibid., p.49.

way of knowing and an assertion of power over space. From his vantage point Sauer could - scientifically or artistically -"see" and "know" the Mexican landscape and appropriate Mexico as his field. Distanced from the scene, he could present himself as transcendental being, passive interrogator and uninvolved collector of views.[122] As such, Sauer could be drawn upon by others taking landscape into their own disciplines.[123]

However, as Rose notes, "more was involved in looking at landscape than property relations":[124] the "ideological baggage" or "way of seeing" incorporated into geography was distinctively "male". The (active) gaze of the fieldworker, for Rose, is a gendered vision which posits Nature/the landscape as (passive) feminine and looks

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[122] Mary Louise Pratt in her history of meaning-making in European travel writing (1992) identifies contradictory strategies of observation at the imperial frontier: "science" appealing to the objective and "sentiment" to the personal. This duality is personified for Clifford Geertz in the field in the figure of Malinowski, at once "Absolute Cosmopolite" appealing to the personal and "Complete Investigator..dedicated to wintry truth" (op. cit., p.74). Both strategies are similar, however, in that they posit the "seer" as passive interrogator of the scene rather than with any transformative potential (Pratt, op. cit., 1992, p.18). This can be seen in relation to Sauer in the last two chapters where he fails to see his own presence amidst culture in the field as any kind of (political) intervention.

[123] Attempting a Mexican textual landscape in his poetry, Charles Olson used Sauer's focus on form, direct observation and eye-witness accounts to provide him with a "methodology of knowing" for his writing: "I mean to know, to really know" (Olson in Ford, 1974, p.147). The authority of Sauer's landscape perspective allowed Olson to reunite "fiction" with "science" and to "incorporate the thing itself" into his poems. He wanted "evidence" and the reality of Sauer's observations gave him "the force of the word" (Ibid. p.146) that he was looking for. Displaced into poetry, Sauer's landscapes thus retained their currency as products of a legitimate "morphologic eye" (Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.393).

[124] Rose, op. cit., p.93.

out (down?) motivated by domination (science) and desire (art/pleasure).[125] This feminization of the landscape in geography, argues Rose, is akin to the masculinity of the gaze at the nude.[126] More pertinent to my argument, Rose isolates in particular the work of Sauer as an example of this Culture/Nature division, arguing that:

"Carl Sauer, one of the founding fathers of geography in the USA, based his life's work on the study of the relationship between human cultures and what he termed the 'maternal natural landscape'."[127]

The fieldworker's gaze - whether represented as that of the "objective scientist" or the "poet of landscape" - is, for Rose, a masculinist practice.[128] Thus, whether we take Sauer's scientific survey defined against the "charm and appeal" of the non-scientific or his "desire to wander" in the imaginary travel of the map, we find him implicated in a gendered gaze which, through its construction of authority, objectifies a feminine Other. At the same time, however, according to Rose, the pleasure involved in the art of seeing disrupts and contradicts the objective claim to know,

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[125] Ibid., p.68. The opposition Nature/Culture, states Rose, is fundamental to Western thought and also to geography, with its division into the physical and the cultural. It has also been focused on by feminists because it is thought to be a heavily gendered and power-ridden dualism within geography.

[126] Ibid., p.88.

[127] Ibid., p.69.

[128] Ibid., p.72.

undermining its claims to authority.[129] Thus, Sauer's gendered vision, shifting in definition, contains the seeds for its own interrogation.

Carl Sauer was not, of course, the only one engaged in this kind of "high altitude thinking".[130] As Martin Jay notes, the modern era as a whole has been dominated by the sense of sight,[131] its principal "scopic regime" the "Cartesian perspectivalism" akin to Sauer's landscape.[132] More specifically, the modern tourist and the self-proclaimed "traveller" were busy rendering Mexico up visually as landscape, capturing it pictorally and verbally. Mexico was portrayed to them as a place of great sensory power: a land to be smelled and tasted, but above all to be seen. Described as "a land of high mountains",[133] the tourist was advised to view Mexican scenery "from high places", to allow the "dilated eye and tense

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[129] Ibid., p.89. Rose notes how this ambivalence in the fieldworker's gaze - equivocating between science and aesthetic, domination and desire, distant and intimate - is often seen as a threat within geography and met with attempts to reconstitute the scientific against the "seducing" effects of the aesthetic (ibid., p.72). This fits nicely with Livingstone and Stoddart's attempts (mentioned above) to define Sauer's field observation as science. Additionally, if field observation is viewed as an art, Rose shows that it is couched in terms of "Art as the ultimate form of human expression", its pleasure untainted by the specificity of gender relations (ibid., p.99).

[130] Jay in Foster, 1988, p.10.

[131] Ibid., p.3. See also Doreen Massey, 1991, for a further discussion of the gendered nature of modern vision and the assertion that the eye that objectifies and masters is a patriarchal one.

[132] Jay in Foster, op. cit., p.4. For Jay, the modern is constituted by a plurality of scopic regimes, each with their internal tensions.

[133] Terry, op. cit., p.cxxvi.

mind" to regard the landscape[134] and to capture the view. Mexico's visual "treasures" - the historic, pictoral, monumental - were presented free for the voyager to gaze upon and Mexico "herself",[135] "drenched with mellow sunshine; drowsing under tender blue skies; flaming with color", was offered up to the traveller's eye:

"a winsome, sunlit land; artistic, intellectual, extraordinarily picturesque, and with a character and individuality peculiarly interesting to the thoughtful traveler."[136]

Sauer was therefore not alone in taking up his place on the "vantage points" of Mexico, seeking to frame the country as landscape in the photograph and the notebook; like any Mexican tourist, he was a "sight-seer", wanting to see and know.[137] The "pleasure of the sight" for the tourist and other travellers, in turn, was equally based on the mastery of the scene implicit in the landscape "way of seeing". Sauer's perspective, however, was constructed differently to the casual observer: he was the master observer, the ultimate observer[138] and therefore his views were seen to have more currency. Additionally, he had learned to "see" by a familiarity with his area - the cumulative process that stood

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[134] Ibid., p.xxxixd.

[135] Ibid. Once again the gendered nature of the view from on high: Mexico as feminine, exotic (erotic?), offering herself up to the gaze of male traveller.

[136] Ibid., p.iii.

[137] See Van den Abeele, 1980, p.11 for a discussion of the tourist the theorist (Sauer?) as "sightseers": wanting to see and know; to access the authentic.

[138] West, op. cit. p.xvi.

in contrast to the passing through of the tourist.[139]

Most importantly, Sauer claimed the landscape perspective as the preserve of geography: fieldworkers on a "vantage points", unlike tourists, had the weight of the discipline behind them.

For Michel de Certeau, this visual authority of the "overview" -the "solar Eye looking down like a God" - may be undercut by the spatial resistance of walking.[140] While on the one hand the panorama has the mastery of perspective, it misunderstands and is undermined by the migrational spatiality of "Wandersmänner" -the practices of everyday life that act themselves out below its threshold of vision. This contrast is interesting in reference to Sauer who, for John Leighly, found room for "longer and higher flights" than the pedestrian mind while never permitting his feet "to lose contact with the..surface of the earth".[141] As I have shown, Sauer's "high flights" of vision were akin to the

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[139] Sauer's authority to "see" the landscape was also one of knowing the culture. From the scientific approach - the mapping of cultural traits - and also the more subjective - the "savoring of ambiance" - he could learn "the ways and devices men have used for making a living out of their homelands" (Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.369) and come to know an area culturally. While this "ability to see the land with the eyes of its former occupants" was the "most difficult task in all human geography", it was, however, possible with time: "It is a rewarding experience to know that one has succeeded in penetrating a culture that is removed in time and alien in content from ours". Again, I shall focus more on Sauer and culture in the field in Chapter Five.

[140] De Certeau, 1984, pp.92-93. De Certeau's discussion here is based on the city but the visual mastery of the overview is related (like Cosgrove) to Renaissance painters and perspective. See also Spurr (1993) for a discussion of the politics of vision and landscape.

[141] Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.1-2.

perspectival mastery of de Certeau's "solar Eye". However, previously bringing Sauer down from his vantage point and allowing him to wander presented us with a spatial practice that was also authoritative. Rather than undercut the authority of vision from above, the mobility of Sauer's geography in the field quite literally placed it on a different terrain. Sauer, fieldworker-geographer, therefore appropriated the field both spatially and visually: from locomotion and landscape.[142]

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[142] This issue of appropriation is extremely political. While Sauer was conceptually claiming Mexico and therefore the right to represent its "personality" (see Chapter Five), others were involved in a more material appropriation of the "field". According to Deplar (op. cit., p.93), the early twentieth century in Mexico saw a phase of "archaeological Monroeism", i.e. visiting American archaeologists taking artifacts out of the country without the permission of the Mexican government. Other American intellectuals were therefore acting on their claims that Mexico was theirs. In fact, one of Sauer's students (Donald Brand) was reprimanded for taking pottery out of the country after he had been refused permission for archaeologic work in Northern Mexico (PC, Sauer to Brand, 24/12/36). Brand's response is interesting for its reclaiming of the field in the name of science and sidestepping the ethics of the issue: "Why should you wish to bar an institution that spends money in your country, digs only at sites that are in the process of being cut away by arroyos and lost forever to science, and takes out of Mexico only potsherds, common stone artifacts and broken or fractured pottery ware?" (PC, Brand to Marquina, 30/10/36). See Mary Louise Pratt's discussion of Von Humboldt's "archaeologised America" (1992, op. cit., p.132) for the way that archaeology views culture as nature (dead artifact) and therefore deterritorialises culture in the present. Brand can be criticised of this and also Sauer, with his view of the cultural landscape, allowing interaction in the present to take backstage.

RITES

The "business of becoming a geographer" for Sauer, as we have seen above, was a "job of lifelong learning"[143]- an evolutionary and contradictory fieldwork process that took him from "familiar scene" to the "ends of the earth" and from scientific to artistic observation. While Sauer claimed authority for himself and for the discipline through these different spatial and observational strategies, he also allowed them to "speak" to other would-be geographers through his changing views on method in the "field". While the young Sauer, concerned with scientific mapping and "home geography" in the United States, advised the importance of the "field" method for the "inexperienced fieldworker",[144] the later "journeyman" Sauer in Mexico disclaimed any directives for the "geographer-to-be"[145]: "I have been leaving the trail unmarked by any arrows of methodology".[146] As a forum for educating geographers, the "field" was thus conceptualised as area ("laboratory", a testing ground for theories) and then reconceptualised as trail ("rîte de passage", a testing ground for

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[143] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit. p.355.

[144] Sauer and Jones, 1915, p.520.

[145] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.392.

[146] Ibid., p.402.

scholars).[147] Either way, however, it appeared as a forum for the "male".[148] Mixing autobiography and geographical directive, Sauer thus argued from the experience of one (male) to create the conditions of authority for others (males) in the "field".

In 1915, Sauer seemed to feel that geography and geographers were in need of some direction in the "field". His Outline for fieldwork in geography[149] defined "the scope and methods of geographic field work...in order that the inexperienced fieldworker may avoid some of the difficulties that are commonly encountered"[150] and could be adapted to any region. The outline provided a kind of timetable which, when followed, would convert the inexperienced geographer into a fully fledged fieldman. The neophyte geographer was guided along a detailed trail of "field" preparations, methods and observations to the office work and report writing on the return. Emphasis was placed on organisation and accuracy: a pre-field familiarity through literature, maps, contacts and planning and an intensive study and investigation in the "field". Sauer's "hints on observation" constituted a kind of "seeing by numbers", a list that would provide the fieldworker with

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[147] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.99 notes that the "field" has evolved from being seen as "laboratory" in Boas's generation (remember Sauer's connections with Boas and Boas as geographer) - "a place of controlled observation and experiment" - to a "rite de passage" since Boas - "a place of personal and professional initiation, learning and growth".

[148] Rose (op. cit., p.69) states that fieldwork was taught as both a skilled and casual process - either way, however, geographers were initiated into the "field" as "male".

[149] Sauer and Jones, op. cit.

[150] Ibid., p.520.

the unified perspective championed in the survey method, a comprehensive set of views that could then be "collected" by camera. This was necessary for an "objective attitude" in the "field" and the "successful testing" of theories in its "laboratory".

Sauer's Outline, according to Parsons, was "really his student days" and Sauer later moved away from any concern for method to an unguided observation - "good reporting" - in the "field".[151] Sauer's students and co-fieldworkers (knowing the older Sauer) maintain that there was no structure, no technique to the "field" process and Sauer himself later stated:

"I'm not interested in a field technique; probably I'm against one as giving boys the notion that if they've got a technique they're ready to operate as field geographers...It is important to be sensitive in the field to presence or absence and this awareness can be learned in considerable measure by attention. I doubt that it can be taught per se."[152]

An outline was thus insufficient for the formation of the "field" geographer (from the boys); it was something that would happen (or not) with time in the "field". In The education of a geographer, Sauer emphasised the importance of an unstructured curiosity, a process of discovery that defied ordered technique and was more akin to a "rîte de passage".[153] At this time, the field for Sauer

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[151] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[152] Sauer in Kenzer, 1986, op. cit., p.6.

[153] Once again we see Sauer implicated in modern Western notions of travel as self-awareness, education, rite de passage (see Van den Abeele, 1980, op. cit.): a tying in to the modern as well as a travelling away from it.

was thus as much testing ground for fieldmen as it was for theories; not a playing out of instructions but a question of "survival".[154] Sauer seemed to treat the seminar the same way, expecting a curiosity and discovery from the student and offering very little guidance himself (see Figure 6):

"Of the graduate student, we ask not only proficiency but discovery, increasing independence from his teacher, growing ability to chart his own course...we direct him to the limits of the known, and encourage him to consider how he may proceed beyond them."[155]

While fieldwork and seminar as "rîte de passage" was a step away from Sauer's earlier directives in the Outline, it was also a step back to Sauer's own initiatory educational experience under Salisbury. In "those days of rough professors and respectful students", Sauer remembered being sent without guidance into the "field" in Illinois and learning not to be a "yes-man" in seminars.[156] Although the early Sauer seems to have reacted negatively to this experience, drawing up guidelines for fieldwork by way of compensation, the later Sauer mirrored his mentor and positioned his students unguided in the "field".

As recruiting officer for potential geographers, Sauer thus retained the "lessons" and contradictions of his own experiences

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[154] John Leighly's memories of being in the field with Sauer were of being completely on his own resources "seeing neither Sauer nor anyone else connected with the work" (Leighly, 1979, op. cit., p.5), while Leslie Hewes remembers a continuous set of field tasks that he was never allowed to finish (Hewes, op. cit. p.143).

[155] Sauer, 1976, p.32.

[156] Sauer, pers. comm. (V), op. cit.

Figure 6: The seminar as exploration?
(Christmas at Berkeley, 1950).

repersonifying them in the form of the "fieldman". On the one hand, the generic character of the fieldman remained unchanged a hardy general observer, with a questioning mind, an acuteness of eye and the ability to stand the physical trials of the "field".[157] On the other hand, however, the superficial identity of the fieldman varied with Sauer's rejection of "field" technique: a call not only to go out into the "field", but to go into the "field" alone, "to follow a trail of actual inquiry... wherever it takes him".[158] It was therefore later an unmethodical, independent form of "being" that defined the fieldman for Sauer and placed geographers on the inside or the outside of authority in the "field".

It is not really surprising that Sauer changed from outlining field techniques for other geographers to methodological denial: we already have a contradictory image of him in the "field", evolving over time. Sauer seemed to be able to undergo significant changes in his conceptualisation of fieldwork and yet to retain his belief in the authority of each - perhaps because he turned his back on his former ideas and reconstituted the new as truth:

"I have the idiosyncracy that once having written something, I do not refer to it again myself...I thus escape from commitment to

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[157] This was in keeping with Sauer's definition of his geography against the "deskmen" - "geographers who work in their offices through the years when their legs, heart, and eyes are good" (PC, Sauer to Kniffen, 28/9/54) - and the demonstration of its prowess in the field: "Go out and show them how a geographer works, mostly in the field. Refute the belief that geographers don't know what to see in the field and that they don't know what to do..."(PC, Sauer to Hewes, 16/5/32).

[158] PC, Sauer to Kniffen, 13/12/54.

previous opinions and conclusions...and am therefore not obliged to defend my past self."[159]

What is revealing, however, is that although Sauer chose to move on from his Outline for fieldwork in geography to a more casual, haphazard form of fieldwork, he did so only in his personal correspondence.[160] Since the Education of a geographer was only published in 1956 (forty years after the Outline), Sauer's freedom of the "field" as trail where he "just went off and followed whatever interested him" [161] took place legitimated by the Outline's emphasis on rigorous technique. While Sauer may have turned his back on the Outline, others were presumably still reading it, in the absence of any other programmatic statement on the "field". Perhaps the disjunction between published technique and "field" disorganisation was a useful one for authority - a leisurely "field" experience portrayed as structured and supporting the "field" as a legitimating term in other published work.

Finally, despite these contradictions, it should be clear from Sauer's conceptualisation of field education as the formation of the fieldman from the "boys" that there was constancy in the

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[159] Sauer in Leighly, 1976, op. cit., p.340.

[160] In general, Sauer's correspondence portrays the fieldwork experience as relatively undefined and unstructured: "let's cook up a schedule together" (PC, Sauer to Wilder, 8/11/40). The process and organisation of fieldwork seem to be much more arbitrary. In January 1946, Sauer writes to Stanislawski about his indecision regarding fieldwork plans: "I haven't made my plans for the long vacation coming up from March to September. I want to get some writing done in it somewhere. I might go with Haury into Sonora...I might buy a piece of property on Lake Chapala. I might do a lot of things." (PC, Sauer to Stanislawski, 22/1/46).

[161] Parsons pers comm

fieldworker identity and authority as "male". The notion of the fieldman instructed to view objectively (a vision, remember, that was thought only possible for the male viewer, able to separate himself from his bodily self) within his field laboratory draws upon geography's masculinist rhetoric, as does the "rîte de passage" of boy to fieldman via the trope of discovery and the "heroic" concept of survival in the "field" (aiding the formation of "stronger men").[162]

This theoretical and epistemological erasure of women in the "field" seems also to have been matched by their exclusion from the practicalities of fieldwork: Sauer himself did not have any female students in the "field". He did, however, correspond with Alfred Kroeber's student, Isabel Kelly, and appears to treat her (textually at least) on a par with other fieldworkers. Kelly is always portrayed as extremely capable, used to the "rough, mean exploring" of the "field" and close to the image of the journey(man?) geographer:

"She has followed her archaeologic trails to areas where hardly anyone else would be willing to go".[163]

She remains, however, defined in male terms: according to West, she

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[162] See Rose, op. cit. p.70 for a discussion of the "heroic" ethos in geography. Geographers are seen to become "stronger men" by challenging Nature through fieldwork and Rose likens the masculinist self-image of the fieldworker to the mythical giant Anteus who "became stronger each time he was hurled to the ground". In this context, Sauer's statement that the "Anteus quality" of fieldwork is something that is discovered by true geographers (PC, Sauer to Kniffen, op. cit., 28/9/54) gains an added potency.

[163] OC, Sauer to American Council of Learned Societies, 14/12/43.

was Sauer's "Man Friday".[164]

For Anne MacPherson, one of the first female doctorate students in geography at Berkeley, this under-representation of women in the "field" is not surprising:

"there were practically no women geographers in those days, in PhD programs at least - a total blind spot towards women by all men - continuing until maybe the 1960s."[165]

Sauer, according to MacPherson, was:

"not as prejudiced against the idea of women as some..with Sauer and U.C. geographers it was more subtle and unconscious. He liked women and respected them - no obvious put down, but they all had a blind eye to their unconscious assumption that geographers were men (boys) who would be given jobs etc. There were women T.A.s from the beginning but I think I was only the third woman PhD."[166]

More specific to the "field", she adds "some cautionary remarks about judging Sauer and women through too modern eyes: "seeing as his Mexican trips involved camping, he'd only take men."
This statement, however, only emphasises the division between "field" practices that were classed as "male" and the female, excluded from fieldwork (and geography) and left "at home".

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[164] 1979, op. cit, p.95. My use of emphasis.

[165] MacPherson, pers. comm. (L), 22/6/93.

[166] MacPherson, pers. comm. (L), 15/2/93.

CONTRADICTIONS

Beginning with the "hapless fieldman", we have seen Sauer "travel" critically and literally away from what he perceived as the American intellectual "landscape": a core of desk-bound geographers lacking a fieldwork focus. Positioning himself "off-centre" from modern trends in geography, Sauer went on to "domesticate" his travel by reconstituting the "field" as intellectual "home" (Truth) - the traditional (European) authority of the discipline. As a corollary, he constructed himself and others with legitimacy as geographers through observation and travel and, more specifically, appropriated Mexico as "known": "Mr. Sauer's field". At the same time - if only at a subtle and unconscious level - his attempts at definition, authorisation and appropriation were a reinforcement of self, others, geography, "field" and fieldwork as "male".[167] They were also, at times, an expression of his cultural - as well as academic - displacement in the modern.

This process of overcoming the "lack" of American geography and refinding authority in the "field" was not, as we have seen, without contradictions. Traveller-fieldworker-geographer, not tourist; with the combined perspectives of imaginative and scientific geography and a confused methodological directive between technique and discovery, Carl Sauer positioned himself and

[167] What is truly ironic is that Sauer, the self-proclaimed antimodernist, should draw on the modernist rhetoric of discovery and vision in order to do this.

others extremely ambivalently in the "field". Indeed, the "field" itself was shaped and reshaped to fit Sauer's experiences and the education of the geographer: at once a bounded space (familiar scene, laboratory), closed and defined, and a trail (voyage of discovery, rîte de passage), open and fluid. However, through an efficient process of "othering" (familiar not foreign; travel not tourist...) and the "idiosyncracy" of travelling forward from his "commitments" rather than looking back, Sauer presented himself as always one step ahead of the inauthentic, buttressing his version from the "field" as truth.

While different strategies were used by Sauer for authority, in combination they can be used to question it. Only by viewing Sauer's field in all its plurality and reconnecting his fieldwork directives with his own experiences do we get a sense of authority as a shifting ground that is as arbitrary as it is complex. Each facet reflects critically on the others since the claims to truth are shown as partial, their boundaries as constructs: the trail may cut across the limits of the (familiar) "field"; the aesthetic demonstrate the limits of the scientific (remember Rose's productive tension between domination and desire). This tension proves to be productive as we move on to consider the writing up of the "field", combining the fixity of authority with the mobility of its contradictions.

CHAPTER FOUR:

TEXT...TURNING TRAVELLER

"One says Mexico: one means, after all...a person with a pen...one little individual looking at a bit of sky and trees, then looking down at the page of his exercise book."[1]

"All you need for geography is a pencil and a piece of paper."[2]

For Carl Sauer, the "way to go on" was not only "a spot of travel to learn" but also "a spot of quiet to study and write".[3] In our consideration of the journeyman-geographer in the "field", we thus also need to make room for the textual: "the person with a pen". While Sauer's legitimacy as a geographer, as we have seen, came from a combination of spatial and observational practices, it also came from his writing up of the "field": authority as "author".[4] Sauer wrote for sixty-four of his eighty-five years[5] and produced a body of publications, many based on fieldwork, that stood as testimony to his authority in the "field". Writing up his geography of the "field", he was thus also writing himself into the academic "field" of geography.

Sauer's pronouncements and directives on the "field", however,

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[1] Lawrence, 1927, p.3.

[2] Stoddart, pers. comm. (I), quoting Leighly on geography.

[3] Sauer in Parsons, 1976, op. cit., p.343.

[4] For Clifford Geertz (op. cit., p.1), it is not only the physical being in the "field" that connotes authority but the authorial "being there" in the text: the way that the reader is convinced and the fieldworker's legitimacy is written in.

[5] Williams, op. cit., 1983, p.2.

fight shy of the writing process in a way they do not of its spatiality or observational practice. He pays only lip service to the process of note-taking in "field" and archive,[6] attributing articles to direct observations rather than notes, and is rarely reflexive about the writing up of ideas or notes in published form. Similarly, a kind of mystique surrounds Sauer's writing process among his contemporaries and students, denying the importance of the fieldnote. Thus Sauer (and others) "say Mexico" without showing us "the page of his exercise book" (see Figure 7).

We may draw on recent developments in anthropology, however, in an attempt to 'open up the pages' of Sauer's fieldwork. There, there has been an increasing tendency to view the foundations of the discipline as primarily textual - "from beginning to end enmeshed in writing"[7]- and this has given rise to a critical focus on the fieldnote as "the makings of anthropology".[8] On the one hand, critiques have been directed at the spatiality of the fieldnote, seen as an accomplice in the constitution of a bounded, studied and unproblematically known entity: the "field". The very definition

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[6] See the directives in Sauer's Outline for fieldwork in geography (Sauer and Jones, op. cit.).

[7] Clifford, op. cit., p.25.

[8] This textual focus in anthropology has also been criticised, however, for its neglect of the contextual. See, for example, Fox, 1991, pp.7-9 for a criticism of the reinforcement of the "artisan image" of the anthropologist as "independent craftsman", set apart from the constraints of foundations and agencies, by the notion that what anthropologists do is write. Sauer himself tended to focus on individuals rather than institutions and to label true geographers as "craftsmen". See also Chapter Six for a repositioning of Sauer in relation to the Rockefeller Foundation.

Figure 7: Text revealed? Sauer and his notebook in the field (along with daughter Elizabeth, Mexico, 1941).

of the fieldnote, states James Clifford, supports the notion of a clear division between "home" and "field" and thus "field" facts that are hermetically sealed and transported back as definitive data. This drawing of boundaries also silences much of the context of the production of writing: "Historical realities" such as the home university, transportation to the "field" and sites of translation of fieldnotes that are all allowed to "slip out of the ethnographic frame".[9] On the other hand, fieldnotes have been implicated in a transitional textual critique, concerned with the filtering process inherent in the writing up of notes and the writing in of authority. For Wolf, fieldnotes are the "first sacred text in the preparation of ethnography": the move to present the finished work as objective, scientific, Truth begins with them:

"The construction of a partial and incomplete version of a reality observed by the anthropologist begins with the writing of fieldnotes."[10]

According to Jackson, anthropology's "fieldnote tradition comes out of a naturalist explorer-geographer background": "Lewis and Clark were not that different".[11] Thus, turning to our own explorer-geographer, we also need to examine the "sacred text" of Sauer's fieldnotes. While Robert West has looked at Sauer's notebooks,[12] he uses them to chronologically connect up Sauer's field trips and

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[9] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.99.

[10] Wolf, 1992, p.87.

[11] Jackson in Sanjek, 1990, p.16.

[12] West, op. cit.

articles without saying anything about the transition from note to published work. He takes the notes at face value and does not attempt to read anything into them: they are a resource to be used and not questioned. We, however, need to unpack their use. While showing that for many of Sauer's contemporaries a focus on the fieldnotes is deemed unwarranted, I return to the notebooks to pick up the last chapter's tensions of the "field" (space/trail; objective/subjective) and use them to productively question Sauer's writing. While on the one hand Sauer textualises his authority, he also points the way for its transgression.

Papers, pipes and corncobs

"limited to earlier years in Mexico...in fading pencil and perhaps of limited value..No one has really tried to use them."[13]

There is a consensus among Sauer's contemporaries that fieldnotes were a relatively minor part of the education of the geographer. For James Parsons, Sauer relied more on his memory than on fieldnotes:

"I never saw Sauer with notes or books around him when he was writing - he just sat down and typed from memory - it seemed like it. He wrote nearly everything at work and not at home and was frequently interrupted but could pick up where he left off."[14]

Fieldnotes as an indication of Sauer's work were therefore of "limited use":

"fieldnotes, as I mentioned, are relatively few - all from an earlier time (Ozarks etc; NW Mexico), in fading pencil...

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[13] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[14] Ibid.

Fieldnotes from later years (post World War Two) hardly exist...yes, I think he kept them in his head (a phenomenal memory). Those I have seen were chiefly from archival investigations (after his early years in the Middle West - and Sonora-Sinaloa - when he did keep copious fieldnotes (of which not large numbers remain)."[15]

Other colleagues of Sauer's reinforced this notion that he relied more on his memory than on his fieldnotes. Wagner, who went into the "field" with Sauer, claimed that he never saw him take notes in the "field" nor did he see him write any up back at Berkeley.[16] David Hooson, who shared an office with Sauer in his later years, has memories of him sitting at his desk at a 1910 typewriter (which still sits on the top shelf of the office across from Hooson's desk) "typing in a cloud of dust". Hooson did not, however, remember Sauer typing from notes; in fact he stated that Sauer's note organisation and filing system were completely haphazard:

"I wanted to know what kind of filing system he had so when he was out I opened one of the drawers and found that he didn't have one at all - just a pile of papers and pipes and corncobs."[17]

Perhaps, then, there was a tension for Sauer between the "doing" and the "writing" in the "field". We have seen that observation and "field" time were precious to him: perhaps, like Jackson, Sauer felt that fieldnotes got "in the way" and interfered "with what fieldwork" was "all about - the doing".[18] However, as Parsons states, fieldnotes from the "earlier years" do exist: those from

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Wagner, pers. comm. (I), op. cit.

[17] Hooson, pers. comm. (I), 8/92.

[18] Jackson in Sanjek, op. cit., p.23.

the 1920s and 1930s were "careful", "exhaustive" and "impressive".[19] Although Sauer may have relied on memory in his later years, the early Sauer did seem to take and value comprehensive fieldnotes. In fact, as late as 1941, he wrote to Isabel Kelly of the importance of notes from the "field":

"I hope that you will guard every note you have...because your trail is not likely to be duplicated. At least I'm going to save your letters."[20]

The "young" Sauer also seemed to believe in the use of fieldnotes to write up his published works. In the Outline for field work in geography,[21] he describes the processual stages of writing: transcribing the fieldnotes under topical headings, writing the report with maps and notes on hand. Here, mediating between observation and published article, notes were an essential part of the writing process.

The assertion that the later Sauer kept "headnotes" rather than fieldnotes does not therefore negate the value of the latter for his early work in Mexico. Indeed, the contrast opens up a double line of questioning. While on the one hand I attempt to bring the spatial and transitional critiques of anthropology to Sauer's fieldnotes, I end with questioning the impact of the absence of fieldnotes on the writing process.

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[19] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[20] PC, Sauer to Kelly, 1/11/41.

[21] Sauer and Jones, op. cit.

Dwelling and telling

In opposing "writing" and "travel" in the "way to go on", Sauer seems to constitute his textuality as a sedentary process: a dwelling and telling of the "field". In some ways, the fieldnotes support this view. On the one hand, they name the site of note-taking, giving us a sense of writing placed in one "spot": on location but separate from the space of travel.[22] On the other hand, they also seem to "dwell" in the bounded space of the "field": the notebooks beginning and ending with its borders. This double dwelling of the fieldnote sets up boundaries (and authority) for the process of writing. As a site, it appears as a turning away from (and therefore unaffected by) the rest of the "field" experience - a pure form of inscription; as a space, it is separated from the non-field and therefore constructs the notion of a "field" and fieldnote (fact) that can be carried "home" (intact) for authority. This is reinforced in Sauer's Outline for fieldwork in geography, which seems also to draw the boundaries for the writing process. "Keeping notes" is regarded as a "field" method and separated from the "pre-field" preparations for fieldwork (reading and notetaking) and the transcribing of notes during office work and the writing of the report. Fieldnotes are thus placed firmly in the "field".

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[22] Some notes are written at the point of observation (the "vantage point" of the day); others later in the hotel or in a town, reflecting back on the day's experiences: "In hotel of Jose Rico... wrapped in blanket inside - grey sky outside. Attempt to reconstruct the big trip from memory" (SN13, p.5). See the end of this chapter for the implications of writing from "headnotes".

Despite their immobilisation as site and space, Sauer's notes have an "immanence",[23] a potential for mobility. Sitting in a carton in the Bancroft Library at Berkeley, they seem accustomed to travel. At least partly preserved for posterity - some notebooks unidentified by date, others with pages missing or falling apart - they appear as casualties from mobility in the field.[24] From Sauer's guidelines on fieldwork, we also get a sense of travel: the notebook pocket size and mobile, the process of writing moving about with the fieldman and his observation. While the writing of the fieldnotes is portrayed as a sedentary turning away from observation process, Sauer's sights and sites are, however, connected up in the notes as they circulate with him in the "field" and they are therefore as much a form of travel as they are of dwelling.[25]

The writing process thus has a geography that is at once "field" and trail. While, admittedly at this point, we have only considered textual travel <u>within</u> the "field", this directs us to its continuation beyond the boundaries, questioning where the "field" can truly be said to begin. Is Sauer's writing in the "field" really bounded in this way or is it a much more open,

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[23] Hutchinson, 1992, p.9.

[24] Marked with a "devuelve a Carl Sauer..." (return to Carl Sauer...), even their "illegal" travel - the fear of loss - was a possibility.

[25] The notes tend to be identified internally by date and location and organised chronologically, taken daily by Sauer with limited declared delays between events and their notation. Written in the present tense - seeing/doing/speaking - they form a narrative that is written as Sauer goes along: "jottings along the way" (West, 1982, p.61).

cross-connecting process that makes a mockery of any notion of the fieldnote? By reading Sauer's comments on note-taking in a different way, we may remobilise the writing process across the boundaries of the "field", reconceptualising writing and "field" as trail.

Although, on one level, Sauer draws boundaries for fieldnotes and the "field" in the Outline for fieldwork in geography, he also (more implicitly) hints at their permeability. As we have seen, Sauer emphasises the need for preparatory reading and note-taking before entering the "field"; he also however indicates that "such notes should be taken into the field". This "taking of documents into the field" - either literally or mentally - was an integral part of Sauer's geography. Although he prioritised observation, as we saw in the last chapter, it could always be complemented (though never superseded) by a more textual input from the archives or the library. In Foreward to historical geography Sauer emphasised "the ability to read documents in the field" to "relocate forgotten places" ; the need to look to the past (and its writings), to "warm over what others have prepared" in order to "look ahead".[26] Sauer also corresponded with Isabel Kelly, as we have seen, over the importance of taking "a working library into the field"[27] and emphasised the importance of Kelly's letters - "a valuable body of notes" - to guide his own work.[28] In this sense,

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[26] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.379.

[27] PC, Sauer to Kelly, 20/11/40.

[28] Ibid., 12/11/40.

the writing of fieldnotes blurs the boundaries, crossing from the pre-field literature to archive and eventually to Sauer's writing in the "field". Sauer's notes are thus "intertextual": drawing on others' ideas and writings and therefore neither belonging completely to the "field" as place or to Sauer as "author".[29]

Allowing the "field" to blur over a second boundary, Sauer also indicates in the Outline for fieldwork in geography the unfinished nature of fieldnotes, raising many questions that must be solved on the return "home". This open-ended nature of the fieldnote may be seen from some of Sauer's directives on writing in the field where the destination of the notes is taken into account. Loose leaf notebooks are preferred since pages can be torn out and refiled - an indication of the dislocation and transition from "field" to "home" and the mobility of the written word. An "ample margin and space between notes" should be left,[30] presumably for the reworking and reorganisation of the notes on the return, and a separate page should note tentative hypotheses and unsolved problems. Similarly,

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[29] This is in keeping with the "death of the author" and the shift from "work" to "text" outlined in Chapter One. While taking others' ideas into the "field", Sauer also set up boundaries for the travel of his own ideas and others' into his published work, claiming that he did not cite his own work to his students, look at his own work once it was written, nor, as Leighly notes (1969, op. cit., pp.7-8), reference others in his articles.

[30] Not all books were pocket-sized or loose-leaved, although several had lost pages or had them torn out. Some of the leaves were incorporated into a separate file, floating free from the time and space structure of their notebooks. As for spacing out the notes with room to write in the margins, this rarely seems to happen - the notes are often tightly packed onto a page with very little space in between.

notes should not be classified at the time of being written:[31] they are the raw material, the record unprocessed awaiting the return. Finally, the long life of the notes is kept in mind in the importance of keeping a record of names and addresses of contacts to contact once home:"to whom you may wish later to write for information".[32]

Although Sauer does not seem to have followed these directives meticulously, his Mexico fieldnotes themselves do indicate that they were a resource to be referred to in the future. Many of the notebooks have periodic lists, comments and questions that seem to be reminders for Sauer for later on. For example, on his 1935 trip notebook, Sauer writes:

"Guadalajara July 18...the Ceno Tequila - remember - was the outpost of wild Indians (why not go back to your records) who harassed the civilised Indians and the early missionaries.."[33]

and also on his 1945 trip, at the Mexican National Herbarium: "not at all evident the basis on which distinguished - see if you can find out".[34] Jotted lists in the fieldnotes seem to be there

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[31] While Sauer also (and contradictorily) states that general impressions should be written frequently before moving on and that the notes should be distinguished "carefully" between observations, inferences and information secured from others, this does not tend to happen in his notebooks. While begging the question as to how possible it would be to separate out information in this way, we find in the transition from fieldnotes to article that Sauer writes out the contributions of others and the less secure inferences and writes in only observation as authority.

[32] Sauer and Jones, op. cit., p.521.

[33] SN14, p.43.

[34] SN18, p.89.

to jog Sauer's memory, whether for direction during the "field" trip or for the writing stage at "home". Reminders may be for detail: "March 15 - out to Tequezayan - which is about the spelling as pronounced -check from Census"[35] or a note to himself for future direction in the "field": "study such a set up at Durango where there should be some good survivals".[36] More academically, Sauer often itemises references to look up on return from the "field" or in the archive.[37] Sauer's notes were thus in no way self-contained: there were connections of ideas, people and experiences across the boundaries between the notebooks (remember Sauer's fieldwork was a cumulative process) and therefore across the boundaries between "field" and non-field.

The process of taking fieldnotes therefore appears as travel rather than dwelling: a trail that begins and ends before and after the limits of the "field". This complicates the writing process, showing on the one hand Sauer's intertextuality - he writes "among, through, against, in spite of"[38]- and on the other, the importance of the non-field in the organisation and reorganisation of the fieldnotes. By cutting across the boundaries of "field" and fieldnote, the authority of "field" as space and fieldnote as fact becomes less tenable. By way of the fieldnotes, the field is

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[35] SN8, p.32.

[36] SN11, p.27.

[37] This is reminiscent of Sauer's "happy circle" from fieldwork to reading and then back to fieldwork again that we encountered in the last chapter.

[38] Clifford in Sanjek, 1990, op. cit., pp.52-53.

portable and therefore the influence of the destination of the notes, the location of the writing up process[39] becomes as crucial as the "field" in any understanding of authority and positioning. As Evans-Pritchard notes:

"I have long ago discovered that the decisive battle is fought not in the field but in the study (process and place?) afterwards."[40]

While a consideration of Sauer's "battle" outside the "field" takes place in Chapter Five, here we pick up the impetus of travel and, reconnecting "field" experience with inscription, move on to the transition from fieldnote to finished work, perhaps the most crucial part of the trail for the question of authority.

Fieldnote to fact

For Sauer, "The treasure the scholar" lay "upon the earth" was "largely the printed page".[41] While Sauer's own published works are indeed impressive, a more sustained hunt also reveals hand-written notes and, prior to any printed record, a disorganised and contradictory "field" experience. After remobilising writing as travel, watching it move, then, we also need to consider what it

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[39] Alternatively, if the field itself is the location for the writing process, we see a reconceptualisation of the field. When writing the final draft of The personality of Mexico, Sauer writes to Kelly: "I can soak in a little local atmosphere while doing stuff that I could be doing in the US" (PC, Sauer to Kelly, 6/1/40). In this sense, the field changes from observational goal to scenic backdrop. The notion that The personality of Mexico could be written in the United States is also intriguing and points the way to Mexico as the "country within" for Sauer, discussed in the next chapter.

[40] In Plath in Sanjek, 1990, op. cit., p.341.

[41] PC, Sauer to Hamilton, 18/3/43.

sheds along the way. The fieldworker in writing up notes and experiences is not only faced with repeating but with editing: as Wolf notes, there are always casualties for the sake of coherency:

"When we at last sit down at a clean desk in a quiet study and begin to assemble the vivid images and cryptic notes, searching for a coherency, we must consistently remind ourselves that life is unstable, complex and disorderly."[42]

We therefore need to ask how Sauer's fieldnotes travelled into his published articles: what was lost; what maintained? How did he get from the chaotic "field" experience to the finished work? What insights were lost and what authority gained by the clean-desk coherency of his written account?

We begin with Sauer questioning the writing up of fieldnotes in The education of a geographer[43] and attempting to "write free of the imaginings of his time".[44] Rather than reducing writing to method,[45] Sauer queries its process of inclusion and exclusion - the editing process from "field" to finish:

"Many a letter is written from the field that enlivens and enlightens the study, but no trace thereof gets into the finished report."

and asks:

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[42] Wolf, op. cit., p.129.

[43] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.389-406.

[44] Geertz, op. cit., p.50.

[45] See Clifford (in Clifford and Marcus, 1986b, p.2) for how texts have been ignored in anthropology and "writing reduced to method" (i.e. the keeping of good fieldnotes and the writing up of results), rather than questioning this process.

"Why can't a geographer...convey to the reader the feel of horizon, sky, air and land...?"[46]

The early Sauer, concerned with geography as observational science and survey, had emphasised the rigorous, systematic nature of fieldnotes, defined against such "happy illustrations" as these letters from the "field":

"Notes are to be taken not simply when some happy illustration impinges upon the consciousness of the observer but notes are to be put down so systematically that they form a definite set of quantitative data..."[47]

In keeping with his later move "beyond science", however, Sauer gave more emphasis to informal note-taking, questioning the very basis of its scientific and exclusionary counterpart. Fieldnotes could thus be both objective data and subjective reflection:[48] "I write when I want to get something off my chest".[49] With this

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[46] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.403.

[47] Sauer, 1924, op. cit., p.25.

[48] The fieldnote comes in many forms: Sanjek (op. cit., p.xii) includes text accounts, reports, impressions, letters; Jackson talks about diaries, transcripts, jottings, students' notes, notes from informants (in Sanjek, ibid., p.5). Jackson also portrays the tension between the subjective and the objective conceptions of the fieldnote - while one anthropologist interviewee claims the ultimate subjectivity of "I am a field note", another denies it: "If I felt that ethnography just reflected internal states, I wouldn't be in this game" (ibid., p.21). This tension is matched by Sauer's advice to his students on writing their reports. While Sauer insists on a detailed account of progress from Henry Bruman (PC, Sauer to Bruman, 24/3/39) - he enjoyed his "notes" but expected a more organised report - he advises Bowman to write by sitting down and communing with his "inmost self intensively" (PC, Sauer to Bowman, 23/12/38) and tells Isabel Kelly he wants an unsystematic report with her personality in it, written in out of the way places without "every tourist-archaeologist coming in" on her (PC, Sauer to Kelly, 15/5/41).

[49] PC, Sauer to Willits, 1/3/44.

plural conceptualisation of the fieldnote in mind, Sauer then went on to think about writing the horizon.

While indicating the different guises of fieldnotes, Sauer's question thus directs us to the filtering process of writing: the loss of the 'subjective'. Mary Louise Pratt, in her discussion of the relation between ethnography and travel writing, notes how the personal narrative of travel was progressively edited out -"killed by science" - in the consolidation of the authoritative ethnographic account.[50] For Pratt, there remains a contradiction between the subjective experience of the "field" and the objective scientific discourse to which the finished text is expected to conform. Sauer, with his "poetics of science", seems to rest hesitantly on the editing line; a hesitation which, for Donald Meinig, is productive. Meinig applauds Sauer's call for the inclusion of the emotive in geographic writing, but is disappointed that Sauer's "own work is not strongly evocative in this sense", its effect coming from "breadth of knowledge and mature reflection rather than from vivid descriptions".[51] Unlike Meinig, however, I read Sauer's question more as a lament: an indication that his own unpublished work was evocative but that much of this had to be lost in translation: the authority of the discipline, perhaps, required it.

If we look to Sauer's fieldnotes, we find that Sauer does indeed

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[50] Pratt in Hall and Abbas, 1986, op. cit.

[51] Meinig, op. cit., p.320.

convey a "feel of horizon, sky, air and land". Although his landscape appreciation exists on many levels in the notes, it is often evocative, picking out a "pretty little valley" or "lush green scene"[52] to elaborate upon (often romanticise). On land near Zapotlan, Colima, Sauer recounts:

"The long tree-shaded avenue through alfalfa fields...the drowsing sun-drenched plaza of the town with its high trimmed laurels and the rose-filled patio of the Hotel Diaz where the birds shout haughtily all day."[53]

He dwells on the colour and drama of the Mexican scene and veers towards the ornamental and picturesque common in writings of Mexico at the time:

"the magnificent view of the lateral baranca drowning the bay of Tequila and the mountain behind. Banana and sugar cane plantation below...all in all a topographic picture of the most romantic school such as might have been acquired by the pre-physiographic painters."[54]

Sauer finds this "gem of landscape" in the Mexican summer "soul pleasing" and "eye filling"[55]- not only an exercise in "field" description, he treats landscape also as an artistic form.

Later, at sea along the west coast of South America, Sauer's travel notes also take pleasure in the horizon:

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[52] SN12, p.3.

[53] SN8, p.34.

[54] SN14b, p.39. This quotation shows both Sauer tying into the visual appreciation of Mexico and also landscape (painting and perspective) as a way of seeing.

[55] Ibid., p.38.

"Off Cuba last night only a dark looming mass behind the lighthouse on the extremity. This morning the sea much calmer with that well-greased, leaden look that makes you think it quite opaque. Against the eastern horizon the Haitian peninsula..."[56]

Moving from the sea-view of one landscape to another, Sauer evocatively records the transition from the "absolute desert",[57] naked except for its darkly capped coastal hills to the excesses of the tropics:

"under way for the lovely crossing of the canal. Verdent lush green of the tropical forest. The formerly tilled slopes now completely covered by a very course, large bladed grass, except where clumps of bananas keep growing on their own, with surprising vegetative vigor",[58]

and, fusing imagination with observation, connects landscape and the past as he looks out from the ship:

"Where still the ghosts of Cubao?...strange to get one's first view of the last island sun by white men at such a distance that we cannot see the changes wrought thus and could still look for the smoke coming up from the villages of the Amah, watching the white man sail by on his great missels. Fine cumulous clouds building up in a sky of light, luminous blue."[59]

This, then, is the kind of vivid description that Meinig misses out on (as do we all) by focusing solely on Sauer's published work.

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[56] SN21, p.1.

[57] Ibid., p.33.

[58] Ibid., p.1.

[59] Ibid., p.1. This is rather a romantic view of the "Indian's" first contact with the "white man", in awe of his "great missels". While Sauer wrote about the destruction of the Iberian conquest and the decimation of the "Indian" population, this did tend to be couched in a rather romantic-tragic rhetoric. This resurfaces in Sauer's comments on the "Indian" populations he interacts with in the "field" in Mexico and in South America (Chapter Five and Chapter Six): the traces of a "noble savage".

This is also the subject of Sauer's lament; material sacrificed presumably because, as with the travel/tourist division, the geographer had to come down on one side of the barrier for authority: to include this would be taking "science" too far. We are thus led on to question what else is not included from the fieldnotes in the finished articles: what else do we not get a "sense" of? For Porter, "The ethnographer on his field trip always has a story":[60] the narrative of the "field" experience exists (silenced) alongside the formal article based on the "field". Focusing on the "departures" rather than the "crossroads" between Sauer's fieldnotes and articles, we find that much of the fieldwork "story" is indeed edited out of his published work. This "discarded" material provides us with a sense of selection: what must be erased in order to boost the authority of the author-fieldworker in the text. It also allows us to write back in "moments" that reveal more about Sauer's life, work and thoughts - "a message to the self reading from the self writing"[61]- and begins to tell a different tale. Therefore, in keeping with the tension between dwelling and travel in fieldwork and fieldnote, we turn to Sauer's writing up of the "field" of Mexico as both bounded area (personality) and trail. While the "story" behind the former - The personality of Mexico[62] - will be dealt with in the next chapter on culture, here we focus on the latter in The road to Cíbola.[63] For

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[60] Porter, op. cit., p.246.

[61] Geertz, op. cit., p.78.

[62] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.104-118.

[63] Ibid., pp.53-103.

John Leighly, this article represents only part of Sauer's published Mexican work and he advises that "The reader who would follow Sauer along other Mexican trails ...should look to Sauer's longer works on Mexico".[64] However, since comprehensive fieldnotes and correspondence also exist for this period, we may look to Sauer's unpublished writings of the same time to find our other Mexican trail: Sauer's own road to Cíbola.

Arrant swindlers and amazing dunderheads

In 1931, Sauer wrote with some excitement to John Leighly of his work in the archives in Mexico City:

"I have some very old chronicles never published which will enable me to carry out a minor project I have had in mind for some time, a reexamination of the explorations of the northwest of Mexico - "Roads to Cíbola Reexamined". That will be fun, to swat Fray Marcos, reroute Cabeza de Vaca, Coronado and Ybarra."[65]

The next year he published The road to Cíbola which, true to his word, attempted a thorough debunking of the route of the Spanish explorers, falsely represented in their accounts. However, while Sauer used these chronicles for his re-reading of the conquistadors, it was from direct observation - from taking archives into a well-travelled "field" - that he drew his main line of critique.[66] In the article, Sauer claims the "advantage of

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[64] Ibid., p.7.

[65] PC, Sauer to Leighly, undated (probably 1931).

[66] Sauer attributes the article generally to "fieldwork directed to other ends", a "by-product of five field seasons spent in Arizona, Sonora, Sinaloa, Nayarit and Colima" (in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.54). While "fieldwork" here could refer to both field and archive, it is from the former that Sauer tends to draw on for his argument.

knowing the country" and this distinguishes him from other "commentators" on the explorations:

"I had occasion to cover, by car, on horseback, and afoot, virtually all the country between the Gila River on the north and the Rio Grande de Santiago at the south. I have seen all but a very few miles of the route herein examined, and I have been over a good deal of it a number of times and at different seasons of the year."[67]

Travelling the road and familiarity with the terrain thus allows Sauer to reconstruct the scene at the time of the conquest. He pieces together the routes by the distances and watering places, physical features and settlements mentioned, matching up text with relief. This first-hand knowledge is then used by Sauer for a more critical re-reading - with the help of geography, he reinterprets the historical evidence, questioning the feasibility of the claimed exploration routes. In discussing why the Spaniards under Guzman turned away from Cíbola, Sauer reads the accounts against the terrain and contradicts them:

"The common statement in contemporary accounts, and quoted by historians, that they turned inland because they were blocked by mountains along the coast, has no foundation in fact. These are no more than isolated hills ..."[68]

Measured against his own knowledge of the field, selected explorers are approved of or discredited by Sauer according to their standards of observation and negotiation of the terrain. Sauer approves of Francisco Cortes who initiated the northwestern discoveries since "at first trial" he found the best route from

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., p.62.

plateau to coastal lowlands of the Northwest. His failure to continue exploration of the route was not "geographical misapprehension" but historical accident and misfortune.[69] Similarly, Baltasar Obregon receives Sauer's praise for his fair visual memory which makes his landscapes readily recognised.[70] Others, however, are not regarded as favourably and are chastised for their misuse of the responsibility to observe and the falsified nature of their accounts: terrain, distances and directions are wrong and they are "fools". Sauer charges Fray Marcos with "dishonesty" and "falsehood", his crime one of geographical treason: a gross inaccuracy of observation:

> "The expedition was avowedly one of geographic exploration ...Brother Mark was instructed to take careful observations, and appears to have been chosen for the task because of his familiarity with geographic observation...The paucity and confusion of data as to terrain, direction, and distances,...make this easily the worst geographic document on this frontier and indicate that Brother Mark was an amazing dunderhead or that he indulged in deliberate obfuscation...If we ascribe to the theory that he was an arrant swindler, it is perhaps more charitable to leave him in that role, rather than have him also a fool who had no business to wander about in strange places."[71]

While denying the validity of the routes, Sauer also denies the autonomy of the explorers, maintaining that they must have had "Indian" guides. Where the explorers made detours, Sauer suspects guides who took them on routes avoiding the main areas of "Indian" settlement; where the routes are direct, Sauer attributes this to "expert guidance". Sauer's criticism also aims at the writing

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[69] Ibid., p.57.

[70] Ibid., p.94.

[71] Ibid., pp.82-83.

process of the accounts: he criticises the memory of Cabeza de Vaca and replaces it with his own experience:

"It is more likely that there is a slip in Cabeza de Vaca's memory as to the number of journeys to the place of their detention by the flood...I had occasion to spend a Christmas nearby at Sarahuaripa, watching the slow passage of a cyclonic storm and the still slower subsidence of the rivers."[72]

Similarly the chronicle of Baltasar Obregon documenting the travels of Francisco de Ibarra is thought based on "bad memory" and "badly muddled": a "lurid tale" written to impress rather than for accuracy.[73]

What is interesting about this article is the extent to which it draws on the rhetoric of "field" authority that was discussed in the last chapter. Sauer makes himself manifest as author in the text through a spatial and observational "signature",[74] drawing on sites and sights of the "field" as proof of "being there" and therefore of authority. Sauer has "<u>been</u> over" and "<u>seen</u>" Mexico and he is therefore in a position to judge: it <u>is</u> his "business to wander about in strange places". The conquistadors themselves are even evaluated on the same terms, appraised for their ability as geographers, scrutinised as if they were fieldmen. However, Sauer never once turns the critical eye on himself or allows the trail - "a link connecting the distant past with the modern present"[75]- to continue into his own travel in the "field". As we have seen, over

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[72] Ibid., p.71.

[73] Ibid., p.92.

[74] Geertz, op. cit., p.10.

[75] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.53.

five field trips, Sauer himself pursued a route of exploration and discovery into northwest Mexico and down the coast. How were his observations and accounts limited by his travel; guided by others; distorted by memory? These are questions that can only be answered from the fieldnotes and correspondence - the silenced contributor to Sauer's article.[76]

Vantage points and question marks

"Locomotion should be slow, the slower the better; and should be often interrupted by leisurely halts to sit on vantage points and stop at question marks."[77]

As we saw in the last chapter, Sauer gained a double authority as geographer from his slow "locomotion" and "vantage point" observation in the "field". While the fieldnotes provide a similar sense of a seeing and a travelling eye that stops to take the high ground (authority) - the points from which Sauer asserts a privileged view - we also get an insight into its limitations and the "question marks" (uncertainty) of the "field". Indeed, locomotion appears not so much as authoritative complement to observation but actively undercuts its legitimacy. The authority of being and seeing, played out on paper in The road to Cíbola, is

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[76] Since Sauer's fieldnotes vary in their comprehensiveness, it is not easy to match up notes with published articles for comparison. However, since Sauer attributes The road to Cibola to several fieldwork sessions, a number of the notebooks may be used to get a general picture of the "story" of the field. More specifically, Sauer wrote a series of letters from the field to Leighly in 1931 which give a vivid picture of his experience. The road to Cibola, according to West, was very much a product of this 1931 field excursion (1979, op. cit., p.70).

[77] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., preface.

therefore less certain in the "field". After dealing briefly with Sauer's "vantage points" and "question marks" in the notes, I will go on to consider the hazards of "field" travel.

In keeping with the championing of direct observation as priveleged truth, the notes position Sauer on a "vantage point" both literally and intellectually in the "field".[78] The "seat" from which Sauer speaks is very often one of altitude - "we on the highest point for miles"[79] - with Sauer looking down on his subject matter. Sauer's views are therefore frequently

panoramic, the unified viewpoint of the survey technique and the detached authority of seeing as landscape - "pleasant at a distance".[80] At the same time, Sauer positions himself at an advantage in relation to the map, the archive and the past, with his perspective as more accurate. The map fails to effectively document distances and place locations, while the documents taken into the "field" are seen as wanting with respect to Sauer's interpretation. With one eye on the chronicles of the Spanish conquistador explorations, Sauer looks out to the landscape and

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[78] Sauer's priveleged seeing is part of an overall sense in the notes of "being there". Sauer's views are located in time and space, promoting a form of experiential authority. Speaking in the present tense in the notebooks, Sauer undermines the immediacy of his observations - "In the evening at Madera..." (SN11, p.5), "a Sunday that began long before daybreak" (SN8, p.33). His views gain added legitimacy from his positioning in space "where I sit..."(SN12, p.24), "as one sits on these hills, one is struck by...", "Now we are sitting and looking into...". With this positioning comes the ease of observation and a clarity of vision: things are "easily discernible" (SN14b, p.49).

[79] SN12, p.20.

[80] SN11, p.21.

contests:

"The prospecting of the mineralised zone should have occurred to the Spanish as soon as they got up into this area."[81]

"Who would have not gone to prospect that?"[82]

In a letter to Leighly in 1931, Sauer laments the limited view of one of his predecessors in the "field": "if only he had climbed a couple of hills around Hermosillo" he would have seen "real erosion".[83] While maintaining the importance of the "vantage point" to Sauer in observation, this also gives us an indication of the limits to seeing in the "field" and the arbitrary nature of the process. Despite Sauer's portrayal of authority in his observation in the fieldnotes, there is also frequent reference to his "question marks". Often Sauer follows an observation with uncertainty ("not proven" "can't tell yet"; "I think I have discovered..."), qualification ("There appears to be.." "I should judge...") or admission of mistaken vision ("an error in yesterday's observation").[84] He frequently questions what he sees and is unsure of his interpretations:

"Here, possibly, is a record of the early inhabitants of the country. It is nothing young but whether a thousand years or several thousand years old, who can tell?"[85]

Views are often recorded as "impressions", conjectural or

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[81] SN14b, p.48.

[82] Ibid., p.65.

[83] PC, Sauer to Leighly, 15/11/31.

[84] SN12, pp.7 and 30; SN7, p.4.

[85] SN14b, p.40.

contradictory, leaving Sauer to "gather up some of the observations that remain through the confusion".[86] Sauer notes the constraints of time on what he can see in the "field", restricting him "within the limits of observation of the day".[87] Similarly, the weather and his distance from his chosen scene are also acknowledged as distortions of the observational process.

Observation becomes even more complicated when Sauer descends from his "vantage point" and travels. Much of Sauer's observation is while he is in motion - "things seen along the road"[88]- and we get a sense of mobility in the notebook entries. The documented itineraries give us the bare spatial bones to Sauer's locomotion while a more extensive travelogue mobilises us with him:

"This morning out to the southwest - road deeply sunk...Hence into the wide terrace-flanked valley..."

"Twelve miles out..No houses until the last three miles. Broad smooth apron of volcanic stuff, involving however steady climb.."[89]

In fact, along with Sauer we move "out.. along.. across.. over.. into.. north.. south.. miles out.. down valley.. in search of.. en route to.. upstream.. down river.." finding we are "crossing.. descending.. leading.. steaming forth.. heading.. drifting down.. walking west.. strolling by.. coming upon.. coming from.. riding down.. walking one league from.. passing over.. bearing east.. driving back" while we are "on the road to.. on the street.. back

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[86] SN11, p.27.

[87] Ibid., p.63.

[88] SN8, p.29.

[89] Ibid.

over the old dust highway.." taking the "easy route" on "good horses" "afoot" "on the bus" "driving" ..."on the road once more". Not only is Sauer's vision mobile in the "field", therefore, but it moves in a multitude of ways, speeds and directions along paths of different denomination, all of which must affect his ability to "see". In addition, his travel is limited by constraints of weather, time, guidance, information, hardship and access, affecting the sites - and therefore also the sights - that can be covered in the "field". Sauer's notes are full of instances of travel impasses due to the waterlogging of the roads or transport difficulties due to illness:

"We left yesterday expecting to take the Saric road. First we lost it but returned, coasting down...we got stuck. Hearing of worse ahead..."[90]

"I'm not going to sit on a horse after my intestinal experience and soak for hours in the rain. If I can get through in a car, I think I must make the attempt, not with any enthusiasm..."[91]

Often unacknowledged, Sauer's travel and its hazards thus severely influence and restrict what he may see and record.

One of Sauer's worst Mexican trips in terms of travel hardship was in his Guggenheim-funded year (1931) from which he returned and wrote The road to Cíbola. We get this impression not so much from the notebooks but from Sauer's letters to John Leighly from the "field", particularly graphic in their account of his experience. Sauer begins one of his letters:

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[90] SN12, p.7.

[91] SN11, p.29.

"We're through with Sinaloa. This end of the trip has been most disappointing of all and there is no fooling away more time here"[92]

and goes on to write extremely negatively about the "field":

"Further north we had cold nights. Here the nights are heartless and the days a furnace heat. We've eaten so many beans and tortillas that Hewes eyeballs have turned yellow. The whole coast is full of typhoid, dysentery, and malaria...we've eaten quinine and smothered ourselves in mosquito nets until we're sick of it. We've charged our water...with soda until we don't like water. We've lived in, eaten, drunk and breathed filth until we've decided to shake the bacillus-laden dust of Sinaloa from our feet and get some good American food at Navajoa..This country at present is just infernal and we're quitting it, I think with no great detriment to science."[93]

In his report to the Foundation on his return, Sauer also outlines the difficulties of travel and the obstruction of his efforts by conditions on the west coast.[94] The southern area, reports Sauer, was "out of the question because of rain and floods", the physical conditions the worst he had "ever encountered". Sauer was kicked by a mule and had to abandon a trip to the Sierra Madre and was unable to exert himself for weeks; Hewes, his "field" assistant, was ill with jaundice.

Even Sauer's archive work was fraught with difficulty.[95] In

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[92] PC, Sauer to Leighly, 5/11/31.

[93] Ibid.

[94] This is a less graphic account and written to a different audience - foundation rather than friend and colleague. It may perhaps stand as an edited version of Sauer's letters to Leighly - a more formal report that tones down the hardship of the "field" and claims the productivity of the trip.

[95] The difficulty of the physical climate of the field is matched by the political climate in Mexico City where Sauer works in the archives. The politicians and the military men are rioting in "barbaric splendour" and "the upper class Mexican says 'How long, lad, how long?'". Sauer foresees the "abyss" rather than the "dawn of a new day" as a result of the political activity. The

Guadalajara he had hoped to get records of surveys of lands in the Northwest but these were "non-extant in the old archives for the section of interest" to his studies. He found only "scattered notes" on the economic background of the Northwest during the mission period and a later stop at Franciscan archives found that they had been "plundered". In Mexico City Sauer had a similar negative result: "the old land records for the Northwest are also lacking there". Unprepared to "give up his geographic objective" (itself, as we have seen above, fraught with difficulties) for the sake of the limitations of the archives, Sauer resolves to be content with "scattered notes on the country at various periods and places". This is certainly not the calm, clear observer, the taker of documents into the "field" that is presented so authoritatively in The road to Cíbola. Taking Robert West's statement that the article was "very much a product" of Sauer's 1931 field trip quite literally, it is hard to imagine that Sauer's work would not have been affected by such adverse conditions. While on the one hand Sauer writes from what seems an absolute "vantage point" in the article, the alternative "story" of his own fieldwork with its geographic and archive silences gives us a less authoritative picture. In fact, Sauer himself admitted that his work had

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"proletariat" are speaking out against the "capitalist and the foreigner" and denouncing "Yankee imperialism". Although Sauer dismisses this as "the wildest nonsense", he is aware that: "When the house of cards collapses they will cry out against us. We are to blame for pretty nearly everything and the press is constantly feeding the fire of ill will. Revolutionary rumors of various sorts are afloat and dates of occurrence are predicted...There is a feeling of crisis approaching and we have some interesting weeks ahead." (Sauer to Leighly, undated (probably 1931), op. cit.).

"suffered somewhat as a consequence" of the hardship in the "field".[96] What is interesting, however, is that Sauer attempts to redeem The road to Cíbola from the casualties of the trip. In spite of the Mexican sickness and "filth" of his letter to Leighly and the documenting of difficulties to the Foundation, Sauer manages to maintain the productivity of the trip in his report and to emphasise the thoroughness of travel, providing the basis for The road to Cíbola:

"We did cover however the territory involved, and it will not be necessary to return to Sonora or Sinaloa. ...Since returning I have completed a sixty page study on the Road to Cíbola..."[97]

Similarly, despite the inadequacy of the archives, he does seem to feel he has the material for The road to Cíbola[98] and makes a wider claim for material that can be "worked up seriatim ... for years to come":

"I have the notes, views and sketches in hand, together with the documentary material to complete the series of historical geographic studies for this section."[99]

This is indicative of the filtering process we began with: a transition from Sauer's experience in the "field" to his letters to

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[96] OC, Sauer to Rockefeller Foundation (grant proposal), 1931.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Although Sauer seems confident of the material for The road to Cibola, i.e. the old Spanish chronicles are there, this does not take into account issues of translation, legibility, editing. Sauer criticises Hewes' ability to read the documents in his letter to Leighly - "I wonder if old documents are a sort of intelligence test?" (PC, Sauer to Leighly, 15/9/31) - and we must remember that Sauer himself only began to learn Spanish on his crossing of the border in 1928.

[99] OC, Sauer to Rockefeller Foundation (grant proposal), op. cit.

Leighly and to the Foundation, each stage editing out a little of the hardship of the "field" which is finally silenced for authority in the published article itself.

Compound eyes

If Sauer was silent about his own "field" experience in his articles, the participation of others in the field was equally hidden. Despite his criticism of the lack of autonomy of the conquistadors and their not relying on first-hand observation, Sauer himself relied on guides for his own fieldwork (see Figure 8) and the "seeing eyes" of students in the field when he was in Berkeley. Sauer's fieldnotes refer frequently to informants: whether an impersonal "they" or "he" or "guide".[100] Information comes from a wide range of characters - groups of "old fellows", "Indians" - or a disembodied voice in the field: "it is said..", "it is thought...", "it is believed", reduced finally to the "word".[101] When he is not in the "field", Sauer has a network of

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[100] This depersonalising of informants is interesting for the debate on the superorganic: whether Sauer takes individuals into account in the "field" or just sees them as "cultural messengers". Interacting in the "field", Sauer pictures cultures as distinctive wholes physically and rarely names those that he communicates with as individuals. Some, for example in the Mennonite communities in Mexico (see next chapter) are given names and histories but most are reduced to just informant status.

[101] Sauer's correspondence with his students in the "field" equally emphasises the role of the informant. Robert Barlow (PC, Barlow to Sauer, 9/12/41) writes to Sauer of the importance of a joint effort in the "field" with local people with the ethnographic and linguistic background that he does not have. Similarly, Robert Bowman (PC, Bowman to Sauer 21/1/39) and Homer Aschmann (PC, Aschmann to Sauer, 18/7/54) are both directed in the "field" by local informants. Different fieldworkers do however have different types of interaction. Bruman seems to mix with the local elite, socialising with the "true cosmopolites" of the "field". He is given "the run of the place" in the Archivo General and the

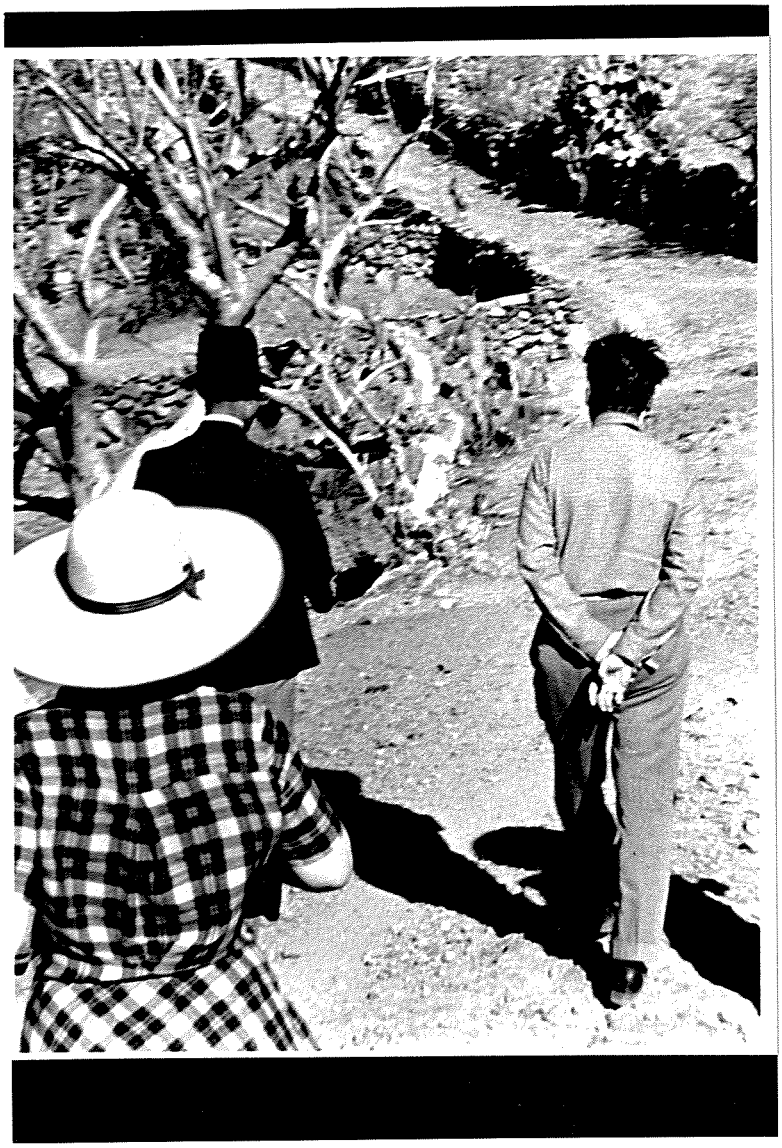

Figure 8: Solitary trail? Seeing eyes: Sauer, guide and Mrs. Sauer (Zacatecas. Mexico, 1941).

support workers - a host of seeing eyes - on the lookout on his behalf. Sauer writes to his student Robert Barlow in Mexico City: "While you are on the Yopi trail see if you can pick up anything further on Pinome"?[102] and to Donald Brand (another student) for his opinion on Cabeza de Vaca's route and location from the "field".[103] Isabel Kelly appears to be Sauer's main Mexican eyes (his "mental companion"), recommending local contacts and checking his theories in the field and preparing the way for his fieldwork.[104] Sauer's being and seeing in the "field" was therefore partly vicarious through his students and one step removed from his own presence in the "field", although this was not acknowledged in his work. Similarly, while Sauer may have rejected the guidebook in Mexico, he did not reject Mexican guides and therefore his trail of "discovery" in the "field" and his writing up of notes was as much a joint process as a solitary one. Sauer's

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Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico City and feels "at home" with his host family (PC, Bruman to Sauer, 24/7/38). Homer Aschmann travels about with the lorry of the Provision de Aguas carrying potable water into the peripheral areas and comes into contact with "Indians" in La Guajira who refuse to speak Spanish - you have to know their language to do business with them (PC, Aschmann to Sauer, 9/8/54). James Parsons writes to Sauer from Colombia in 1946 of how he passes for a "profesor" of California which has increased his interaction, picking up stories on Indian graves and their location: "They pick up the ball from there and the adjectives flow freely" (PC, Parsons to Sauer, 11/9/46). There are limitations, however, to who can class as an informant: "I didn't know that one ever talked to Mexican women" (PC, Stanislawski to Sauer, 6/4/40).

[102] PC, Sauer to Brand, 22/11/43.

[103] PC, Sauer to Brand, 20/6/38.

[104] This is perhaps because Mexico became her permanent address rather than a place to travel:"it is a swell country; I like the people and I like the country, and I can hardly remember having lived in Berkeley...I feel one of the local populace." (PC, Kelly to Sauer, 2/2/35).

authority as independent journeyman and sole author of the fieldnote is therefore a little displaced.

Total recall?

"We have to think of the ancient orator..as moving in imagination through his memory building whilst he is making his speech, drawing from the memorised places the images he has placed on them."[105]

It is quite ironic that Sauer should criticise the memory of the conquistadors since, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, he himself was renowned for his tendency to rely on "headnotes". While not wishing to challenge the capacity of Sauer's memory nor deify writing as the true means of recording, remembered observations must be seen to especially problematise authority from the "field". Headnotes, says Ottenberg are "kinder - and more dangerous" than fieldnotes, "all too easy to revise to suit some current theory".[106] The mind is not a passive receptacle for headnotes, waiting to spill them out in pure form onto the written page: it is an intervening agent in the writing process, its contents continually in flux. The "field" thus cannot be perfectly maintained in the head, unaffected by travel and interaction and the context of "home"; moving through his "memorised places" Sauer would also be changing his mind. The unstable and unreliable nature of the headnote must then detract from any claims to accuracy in Sauer's work. Looking back on former fieldnote silences, Sauer himself seemed to realise the difficulties of his own headnote method which, sometimes forgotten, provided him with

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[105] Hutchinson, op. cit., p.28.

[106] In Wolf, op. cit., p.88.

no basis for comparison on his return : "I didn't record the land as I saw it. Mea culpa."[107]

In a sense, we have come full circle, beginning and ending with Sauer's "memory building". We have, however, achieved a certain "movement" in Sauer's textuality that has allowed us to question his authority along the way.[108] Firstly, writing has been set in motion from the "field" and from Sauer as "author". Since the fieldnotes can be seen to "cross" the boundaries of the "field", they cannot retain their authority as facts untainted by Sauer's relation to other texts or to the "home" context. Secondly, Sauer's published work has turned "kinetic" - been read differently, "explosively" - through a critical comparison with his fieldnotes and the filtering movement necessary for authority has been exposed. Like Hutchinson, I have attempted to think about Sauer's textuality as mobility so that its "experiential dimensions" - the processes of writing and remembering rather than the traces of the written product - can be revealed. The alternative - writing as dwelling - allows writing to be "cut off from the subjectivities and circumstances involved in its making".[109] Maintaining the play between Sauer's published work and fieldnotes and the connection with the circumstances of their making, we move on to Sauer's The personality of Mexico and an alternative form of textual dwelling in the "field".

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[107] SN11, p.22.

[108] Hutchinson, op. cit., p.4.

[109] Ibid., p.30.

CHAPTER FIVE:

NOT WANTED ON THE VOYAGE?[1]

"The same mountains and deserts, pine forests, oak woodlands, scrub, and grasslands extend north and south; the difference is the people and their ways. On this side, change has been accelerating and innovation has become the dominant order of living. On the other side, ways of past experience and acceptance have been retained in gradual modifications."[2]

In 1941, almost ten years after writing up Mexico as trail in The road to Cíbola, Sauer put his authoritative stamp on the country as bounded culture area, spatially and observationally known as The personality of Mexico (see Figure 9).[3] Mexico for Sauer was a country of continuity rather than change, its character rooted in its past; it was a land and life maintaining its distinction against the United States and a cultural mix of "barbaric" north and "civilised south",[4] its basic traits more or less unaltered over time. Reading the border singularly, Sauer thus fixed the whole of Mexico into a cultural "personality" that was temporally, spatially and essentially defined.

From what we have been told of Sauer as historicist with a superorganic view of culture, this personality statement comes as no surprise. As Parsons notes, Sauer was "almost completely

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[1] Findley, 1984, title.

[2] Sauer in Jackson, op. cit., p.13.

[3] Looked at closely, this "personality" appears a little one-sided: with an emphasis on the northwest and the southwest, it appears akin to Mexico as trail.

[4] In this sense, Sauer was writing up Mexico as two culture areas - the North and the South - but it was the tension of the whole that constituted the "personality" of the country.

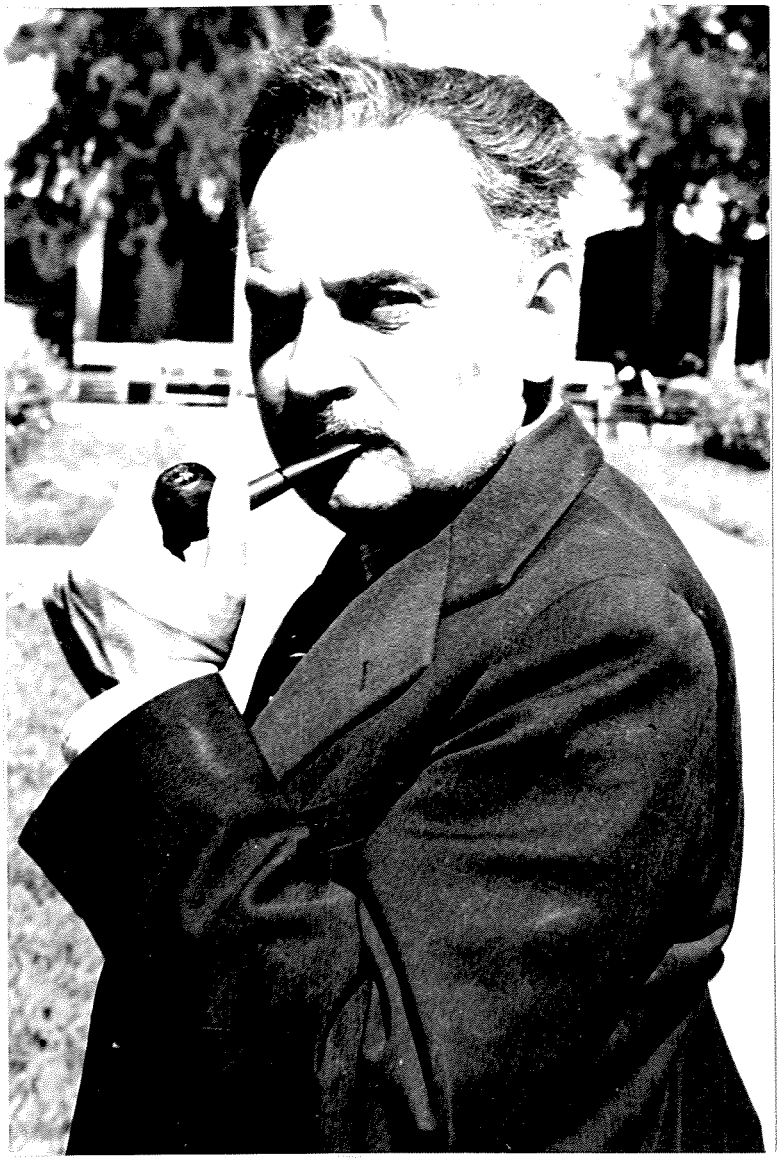

Figure 9: Sauer, Mexico and its personality: about to write up, 1941.

involved in the past" in Mexico, as were "all of his students without exception" who worked in that" field",[5] and he therefore was not interested in the Mexican present. Additionally, for Duncan, Sauer's "personality" is in keeping with the "drowning of living detail", the homogeneity assumption of the superorganic (see the Introduction) and even justified since it focuses on the "less complex"[6] rural Mexican past. However, while Sauer may have been interested only in the past academically, the conditions of his fieldwork were contemporary: The personality of Mexico as the product of fifteen years fieldwork, like The road to Cíbola, had a "story" to tell. Similarly, while Sauer may have published Mexico "at a distance" as modal national type, bounded and defined, he was caught up in a web of complex cultural interaction in the "field". Thus, taking contemporary culture from Sauer's subtext and bringing it to the fore, we can rethink Sauer, the border and the superorganic view of culture.

A cultural reading of the border for Sauer was not solely a textual, academic affair located in the past but also a personal, practical and very much contemporary dilemma. "Steaming forth" across the dividing line between Mexico and the United States - "the greatest cultural boundary in the world" - was integral to his self-definition against the modern and the constitution of an

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[5] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[6] Duncan, op. cit. p.194 and Geertz in Duncan, p.197. This is a strange statement given what we know of Sauer's views on American culture as homogeneous, uncomplicated and characterised by standardisation, in opposition to the rural areas in which he worked. Duncan's assumption of homogeneity for Sauer's Mexican "field" area is, as we shall see, misplaced.

antimodern cultural "home".[7] Like other "bewildered witnesses" of change in the United States, Sauer looked across the border to peasant communities in Mexico - akin to the "simple folk" of his past - as cultural and emotional compensation. As antimodernists, they went to Mexico to "feel the soil" and to escape the "gray commercialism" and "nervous cities" of the United States and looked for their lost sense of authenticity and tradition in rural areas.[8] Thus Sauer's stepping away from the beaten trail in the "field" was not only legitimation for the geographer but personal aversion to the culturally modern; the trail of the journeyman not only one of discovery but rediscovery of the cultural past; the "field" a cultural as well as an academic home.[9] Sauer thus had a vested interest in defining Mexico as continuity rather than change.

This return to Sauer's antimodernism further problematises the question of authority in the "field". While in Chapter Two we saw how Sauer's own fieldwork experiences were tied into his directives for the "field"; how his identity as a geographer was used to create the "rules" for the subjectification of others, here we see the "field" connected to Sauer's life experiences as a whole and to

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[7] SN11, p.3.

[8] In practice, then, the Mexico/United States border was also conceptualised as continuity/change. Mexico was seen by the antimodernists as "closer to a parental Europe" (Robinson, op. cit., p.147) and "in the thick of history" (Deplar, op. cit., p.25), its native population providing a connection with the "America" of the past (ibid., p.91). Constituted as such, Mexico provided a welcome escape from a modern United States that seemed to be characterised only by change: it was a "barrier against the blighting southward progress of Anglo-Saxondom" (ibid., p.38).

[9] See Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit. for a discussion of the interrelation of conceptualisations of fieldwork and culture.

his cultural identity. This chapter thus further reintegrates the personal and the academic and blurs the boundaries between Sauer as authoritative fieldworker-geographer and as displaced antimodern man.

Ordering forth Mexico as antimodern alternative, allowing Sauer to cross over the border and "start again", we need to ask to what extent contemporary cultures were "wanted on the voyage". If Sauer was allowed to distance himself from the strictures of American culture and "escape", did this (paradoxically) involve the (temporal? essential? spatial?) localisation of others in the field as his antimodern (and idyllic?) "home"? Rather than concentrate solely on the fixity of Sauer's conceptualisation of culture (keeping within the bounds of traditional debate on Sauer and the superorganic), we also need to address the anxiety of his cultural interaction. Although theoretically Sauer's "personality" of Mexico may be dismissed as a "dead stereotype", in praxis it may be read more ambivalently.

For this notion of ambivalence - a tension between fixity and anxiety - I turn to the work of Homi K. Bhabha. For Bhabha, colonial discourse is dependent on the concept of fixity in the ideological construction of otherness as portrayed in its "major discursive strategy": the stereotype. The stereotype marks the other as different; it puts it in its place. This process is, however, paradoxical: it is characterised by an ambivalence of asserting fixity on the one hand (the in place, the known) and anxiety over its instability (the need for repetition) on the

other. The stereotype is therefore never fully fixed. The point of intervention in colonial discourse, Bhabha suggests, is not to identify stereotypes as positive or negative but to understand this productively ambivalent process of subjectification made possible through the stereotype; to engage with its effectivity and to displace (not dismiss) it; to reveal its limitations and thus transgress the boundaries of colonial discourse. This, for Bhabha, is reading "across the border", being aware of they multiple possibilities of enunciation across the divide. Thus, like Bhabha, I choose to "read across the border":[10] to show the complexities of and limitations to Sauer's distancing from the modern and the fixing of culture as antimodern; the problem of "travelling" cultures that do not necessarily "hold still for their portraits".[11]

This chapter is then partly an attempt to get away from the stale debate on Sauer and the "superorganic". I am aware that the questions I am asking here are not directly in line with the "traditional" focus on individual agent versus cultural whole, but I feel that they provide some rejuvenation while paying attention to the superorganic. Firstly, they put Sauer back into culture so that we can view him in relation to his own ideas: Sauer as well as others as agent versus messenger for a cultural whole. Secondly, rather than accept Sauer's portrayal of cultural whole as finished product, these questions attempt to open up the processes of its

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[10] Bhabha, 1983. This not only opens up an alternative line of questioning for Sauer and culture but also reintroduces the "rhetoric of empire" (which we have encountered in other chapters) via the stereotype.

[11] Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., pp.101-110.

constitution. Once these are shown as ambivalent and the stereotype as never completely fixed, agency can then come into play in terms of room to travel away from the cultural whole. At issue is Sauer's identity as much as his ability to define (with authority) that of other cultures. Turning to Sauer's correspondence and fieldnotes allows for this more ambivalent view of Sauer and "personality". Interacting with Indian, Mennonite and urban Mexican communities in the "field", Sauer's self-fashioning involves anything but the "homogeneity" that Duncan attributes to his "work...in the rural regions of Mexico".

Man and nature[12]

This is the title of an elementary education textbook written by Sauer which focused on "America before the days of the white man": a movement region by region through North America with "Indian" life as the organising concept. The book demonstrates Sauer's concern with the "Indian" base to American history and with the importance of recognition of other cultures. Additionally, adopted by various "Indian" tribes in the United States and Canada, it stands as testimony to the "germinal potential" (see Conclusion) of Sauer's work. What it does not do, however, is show how much "man and nature" were part of Sauer's image of antimodern "home" as well as his respect for native culture.

Writing on his foray into "Indian" cultures in Mexico, Sauer

[12] The focus on "man and nature" here is inspired by George Lovell's colloquium "Carl Sauer and the crisis of representation" at the University of British Columbia, 3/3/93.

said:

"By chance and by choice I have turned away from commercialised areas and dominant civilisations to conservative and primitive areas. I have found pleasure in "backward" lands."[13]

Sauer turned to Mexico's "Indian" population by both "chance and choice". On the one hand, crossing into Mexico for discovery, he found that he "couldn't get very far on Spanish towns, missions, agriculture without knowing about the Indians": "the whole structure rested on an Indian base". Therefore, "without having intended to do anything of the sort", he became an "Indian geographer".[14] On the other hand, despite this "unplanned" movement "back in culture and in time",[15] Sauer's identification with the "Indian" in Mexico was part of the conscious turning towards the premodern of his work and life.

In keeping with the Indian as antimodern (and) base, Sauer "roots" (and writes) The personality of Mexico in the Indian culture of a "deep, rich past". While he is aware that an "invasion by the modern, Western world is under way", its impact for him is only partial, insufficient to "dominate or replace native culture".[16]

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[13] Sauer in Jackson, op. cit., p.15.

[14] Sauer, pers. comm. (V), op. cit.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.105. Sauer goes on to say: "the conquest will remain partial...The American motorcar now does duty in remotest villages; but it is loaded with the immemorial goods and persons native to the land...It and other machines, however, are being adapted to native ways and native needs". This mix of the machinery of the modern and native needs resurfaces in Sauer's encounter with Mexican poverty below.

Sauer thus passes over the modern and focuses instead on the geographies of the prehistoric and the sixteenth century, maintaining that these are still "the most important things to know about Mexico".[17]

Sauer's fieldnotes and correspondence, however, show a more urgent concern with the "modern invasion" of Mexico. For someone who declares confidence in the resilience of native culture, Sauer seems paradoxically alarmed at the threat of its disappearance. Rather than dismissing modern change as inconsequential, we therefore see Sauer grappling with transformations in the "field" and attempting to preserve Indian culture on several levels.[18] On the one hand, as James Parsons states, this tendency of Sauer's to be "always for the Indians" puts him "well out ahead of his time".[19] Both American and "Mexican" forces were in part aimed at "Indian" assimilation and Sauer, true to his culture history, argued in practice for "Indian" distinction.[20] However, on the

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[17] Ibid.

[18] This, then, is another element to the importance of time in the field for Sauer and another side to the "hapless fieldman".

[19] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

[20] As we saw in Chapter One, Sauer's culture history involved the championing of the plurality of cultures and the bringing in of the "simple folk" of "backward lands". While early on this involved a focus on rural communities in the United States, it was later broadened out to native peoples in Mexico. Sauer's work involved both a reconstruction of demographic conditions at the time of Columbus and also a critique of colonial conquest and the destruction of native populations. For Sauer, the corollary of discovery was the loss of cultural diversity (this becomes interesting when we consider Sauer's own fieldwork as "discovery" and its impact on cultural representation): "The course of colonial empire began with the disregard of native rights and persons" (Sauer, 1968, p.55). This concern for "Indian" culture filters

other hand, Sauer was a product of his time in viewing Mexico as an escape from the modern which tended to define the terms of his "Indian" preservation. His antimodernism fuelled a sense of "Indian" peoples as "endangered authenticities":[21] a desire to fix culture purely in the past and a view of change as loss, which in turn was associated with Mexico as a somewhat idyllic "home".[22] More ambivalently, Sauer's fieldwork off the beaten trail that allowed him to posit an antimodern "retreat" also provided him with the experience of the anti-idyll.

Hiding places; blank spaces

"Through a moving window
I see a glimpse of burros
a Pepsi Cola stand,
an old Indian sitting
smiling toothless by a hut..."[23]

Sauer would have been horrified at Corso's image of cultural extinction in the Pepsi Cola "Indian". While Sauer's published article excused Mexican "Indians" politely from the modern, he and they were racing against its "materialistic monism" in his

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into Sauer's interaction in the field.

[21] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.5.

[22] Stanislawski (op. cit., p.554) has contradicted the view that Sauer had a romantic picture of native life ("no Rousseau he") and Sauer himself (in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.146) criticises the "romantic view of colonisation" and calls for a focus on the "dark obverse to the picture, which we have regarded scarcely at all". While this may be true for Sauer's published writing (although Sauer's picture of colonisation is certainly more romantic than, for example, Michael Taussig's (1987) who in no way takes "pleasure in backward lands"), it is less certain once we make these stand against Sauer's antimodernism and the "story" of his fieldnotes.

[23] Corso in Robinson, op. cit., p.250.

correspondence.[24] Sauer showed dismay at the "fading primitive groups", natives who were going "faster than ever" leaving him no time to find their "hiding places". At the same time, it seemed to him that the modern age was intent on sweeping "the furniture of ideas" of other cultures into its "rubbish heap" and not even concerned to "save attic space" for those things that "were valid for other kinds of men".[25] Amidst the universalism of the "folkways of social science", the concern with the cultural record of "primitives" was "out the window".[26] Both the "primitives" and their cultural baggage were thus casualties of the modern for Sauer and in danger of extinction. The modern age was "an age of clean sweeps - in many cases sweeps clean off the map".[27] "Indian" cultures were not finding their way through the modern, for Sauer, but were being erased by it.

In opposition to the threat of the modern, Sauer attempts to write "Indian" cultures back in. Aware of the "dozens of blank spaces" that are still to be "discovered", he exclaims to Paul Kirchoff in anger at his dismissal of "Indian" groups from a map of Meso America:

"I'm pained that my Indians of Colima, Jalisco and Culiacán got pushed off as atypical. Damn it, I more or less discovered these, and they were good high culture folk...I fought and bled for these people and you drop them in with such folk as the Cahita and Tepehuan..I'd like to see you walk over the ruins of some of the

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[24] PC, Sauer to Willits, 27/9/45.

[25] Ibid.

[26] PC, Sauer to Kroeber, 6/5/48.

[27] PC, Barlow to Sauer, 8/10/42.

towns that were ruined in the conquest."[28]

More actively, in the field Sauer searches for "pottery and Indians" - both, presumably, to be found and preserved. In "the heart of Indian Mexico" in Oaxaca in 1945, Sauer shows concern at the loss of "Indian" crafts and the need for protection against exploitation. While some "Indians" are holding out against the modern, others are disappearing fast:

"The Zapotecs are doing pretty well because somehow their culture was mercantile; they were and are good traders...The others seem to me to be like the Andean Indians, meat for every hard slicker, because they are not money minded...they are very moral in the community sense and they have special abilities: they are good husbandmen and they have a lot of craft skill..."[29]

The "Indians" for Sauer are "gallant little people" (see Figure 10), maintaining "in spite of everything a dignity and savor of life" that he does not want to see destroyed. They are not "simply conservers of old traditions" and "their inventiveness in their craft is high" but the "white man's market asks for monstrosities" and Sauer feels that in a few years their distinctiveness will be erased. The key for Sauer is a sense of cultural pride, a "self-respect" for Indian cultures that allows them to see themselves as "different" and to resist the "standardising tendencies..flowing out from the urban centres".[30] Interacting with a group of

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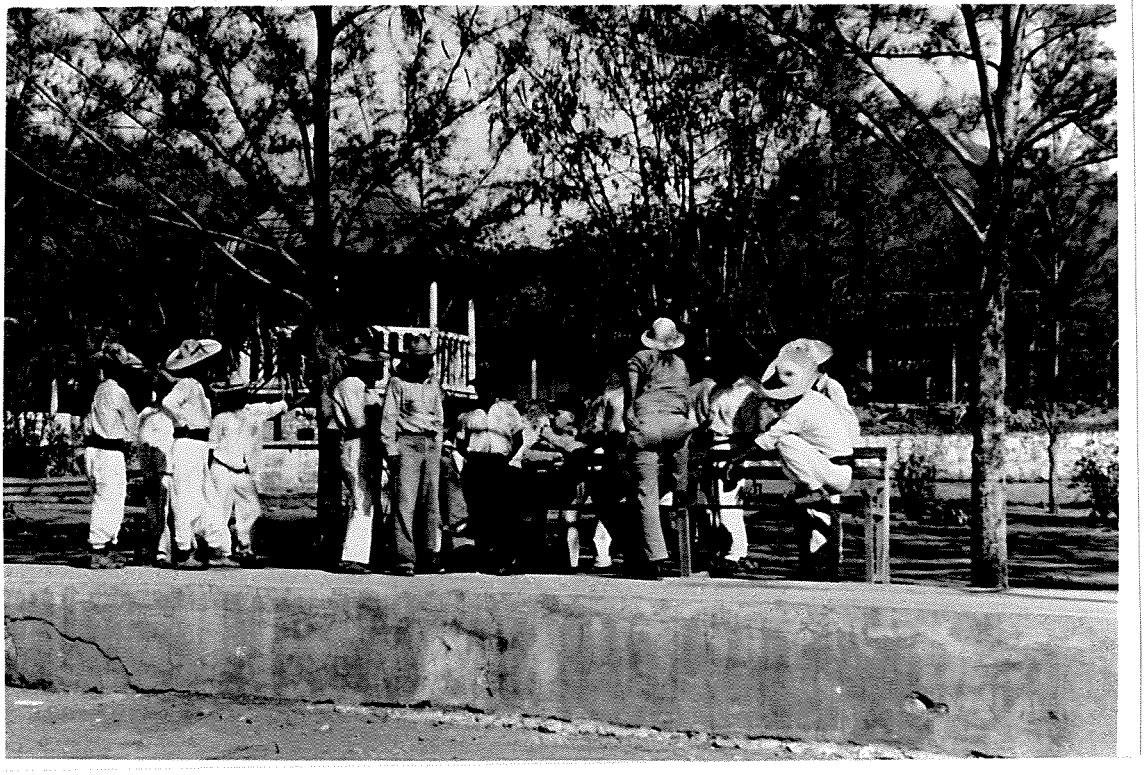
[28] PC, Sauer to Kirchhoff, 24/11/53. While Sauer here is progressively arguing for the mapping of "Indian" cultures, he also seems to be appropriating them for his own authority: they are <u>his</u> Indians that he "fought and bled" for and - reminiscent of Malinowski's "It's me who's going to create them for the world" (in Jackson in Sanjek, op. cit., p.15) - that he discovered.

[29] PC, Sauer to Willits, 12/2/45.

[30] Ibid.

Figure 10: "Gallant little people"? Sauer and "Indians in Mexico, 1941.



Zapotecan "Indians", he notes a parallel decay in "Indian" language - a "tongue-tiedness, almost sulkiness" - and makes a speech on how ashamed "Indians" are in Mexico "to admit any knowledge of Indian things, how desconfiado".[31] Sauer thus reiterates a sense of change as loss of "Indian" craft, tradition and language, drawing on a kind of "noble savage" image of the dignity of the "humble Indians" that should sustain them through the modern.[32]

If essentialising and patronising at times - placing "Indian" communities as the "little people" of the past - Sauer's antimodern perspective gave him a more favourable outlook on the "Indians" than many. For both American tourists to Mexico and, at times, the Mexican government, the "Indian" population ("red degenerates") was ripe for cultural "improvement". For the readers of Terry's guide to Mexico[33], there was hope in the increasing number of "Indians" speaking Spanish each year and the merging of their identity with

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[31] SN8, p.33.

[32] This is a very sanitised picture of "Indian" existence in Mexico, reducing conflict to a question of craft and sullenness. The "Indian" battle for cultural survival was also a much less artifactual process - a violence of language and a "white terror..brutal exploitation ..systematic slaughter" (Freeman in Deplar, op. cit., p.72) that Sauer's apolitical stance and focus on material culture allows him to preclude. Alternatively, attributing a dignity to Mexico's "Indian" population for Sauer was also far from the "red degenerate" image and a means of positive evaluation in comparison to the modern United States. From the International Congress for the "Indian" in Patzcuaro (Mexico) in 1940, Sauer's student Stanislawski writes: "The most impressive group in the whole Congreso is that of the American Indians. They are full of dignity, good manners and perfect poise. They make the rest of us look like bad-mannered upstarts" (PC, Stanislawski to Sauer, 29/4/40).

[33] Terry, op. cit.

that of their Mexican neighbours:

"The national life of the Mexican Indians has almost vanished; old tribal habits and customs are being superseded by the more civilised ways of the superior Mexican, and a faint ambition is replacing the sodden lethargy which for so long characterised them."[34]

Similarly, in 1930 President Ortiz Rubio had declared the importance of developing Mexico as a modern state, taking its place among the civilised nations of the world, and renounced the "indigenismo"[35] policy of the Revolution that had focused so extensively on "Indian" culture. "Indian" communities found themselves subject to land-hungry "whites" disatisfied with the truncation of revolutionary land redistribution - literally pushing them off the map as well as out of the conception of the modern Mexican state.[36] Sauer himself reflected in the "field" on the "objectives of Mexican nationalism" and posed them as threat to the "Indian": "their liking is for whiteness".[37] Thus Sauer's preservationist views - if only a textual rather than a political reservation - were certainly more progressive for "Indian" futures than their forced assimilation.

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[34] Ibid., p.lxi.

[35] See Deplar, op. cit., p.91. "Indigenismo" was the policy of the Mexican government towards its native peoples during the Revolution in the early twentieth century. It involved a commitment to the moral and economic elevation of the "Indian" and a recognition of his [sic.] centrality to the national experience.

[36] Near Chihuahua in 1933, Sauer was told by a missionary with the Tarahumara "Indians" of their powerless condition, unable to resist incursions by "whites" and forced into the worst barrancas: "only a reservation" would protect them (SN11, p.18). This intercultural conflict is important for the way Sauer chooses to conceptualise the Mexicans as threat.

[37] Ibid., p.35.

There were other views of "Indian" Mexico, however, that Sauer was more in tune with. As we have seen, there was a flow of antimodernists to Mexico who focused on "Indian" communities as authentic and harmonious alternative to the Depression-ridden United States. Disillusioned with the "ills" of their own society, they looked to "Indian" Mexico for an antidote. This "Indian"/United States comparison came through in literary images of village life, for example Stuart Chase's Mexico: a study of two Americas and Carleton Beals' Mexican maze (both in 1931) as well as in anthropological studies of Indian communities, such as the well-known study by Robert Redfield of Tepoztlán.[38] Both types of study were criticised for their romantic primitivism, singing "lyrical paeans of praise about the skies and the golden sunlight" and keeping quiet about the "brutal exploitation of the 'noble and happy' Indians".[39] While much of Sauer's published work, as we saw above, could never be accused of silence about "Indian" exploitation, Sauer does tend in places towards a rather romantic image and, in connection with this, towards a conception of Indian Mexico as idyll. He refuses to believe his student Isabel Kelly that Chametla is not the "obscure Utopia" that he thought and that it has been transformed into the "lousy gringo-Mexican country

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[38] See Deplar, op. cit. pp69-72 and 113-117. Redfield's study (1924) was of a Mexican village (Tepoztlan): a picture of folk life compared to the urban United States. It was later contradicted by Oscar Lewis (1943) who visited the same village and returned with a more negative picture, criticising Redfield for his "sheer Rousseauan romanticism" (ibid., p.124).

[39] Freeman in Deplar, op. cit. p.72.

which the Culiacán Valley is".[40] For Sauer, the choice once more appears as preservation or decay: "If it isn't as I have said, it's been ruined by progress".[41] More specifically, like the poet Witter Bynner, Sauer looked to "Indian" Mexico as a primitive location for retirement: Lake Chapala where "the air [was] full of sun and birds".[42] Sauer's push for the preservation of Indian communities was therefore at least part motivated by his need for Mexico as antimodern "home", dreaming, as he said:

"of my own land on the lake shore and my own vine and fig trees...What a spot that is and as yet an unspoiled lot of fisher folk. I think it is my chosen spot to retreat from the world - if it doesn't get overwhelmed by civilisation."[43]

Presents-becoming-futures[44]

"What's the length and breadth, what's the height and the depths between you and me?"[45]

D.H. Lawrence, writing of his Mexican experience in 1927, located the country's "Indian" population in an "other dimension"[46] with "no bridge, no canal of connection"[47] to the "white man"; no reconciliation possible between the premodern and the modern, past

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[40] PC, Sauer to Kelly, 5/3/35.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Deplar, op. cit. p.207.

[43] PC, Sauer to Kelly, 20/4/45.

[44] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., pp.5 and 15.

[45] Lawrence, op. cit., p.14.

[46] Ibid., p.14.

[47] Lawrence in Fussell, 1980, p.158.

and future. While as we have seen Sauer tended to oppose "Indian" cultures against the modern, at times fixing them in the traditional, he also maintained that he was "not interested in the Indians as museum pieces" and saw them also as "active cultures" with the potential to survive and develop.[48] Through his "field" experience he became keenly aware of the practicality of modern technology for "Indian" communities and the importance of "Indian" paths through the modern.[49] While mentally Sauer may have pictured Mexico as antimodern escape and retirement idyll, in practice in the "field" such romanticism was dispelled. Off the beaten trail was not only the chance to retreat from civilisation but also meant hardship and the underside of "Indian" life. In 1931, on a particularly severe "field" trip, Sauer wrote to Leighly[50] of Mexico as a "sick country" far from the "gorgeous primitivism" of his more Rousseauist moments. With the "dust" and "filth" of Sinaloa foremost in his mind, Sauer went on to question any antimodernist escape to "Indian" Mexico. Shocked by the conditions he observed in the "field", Sauer let loose a diatribe to Leighly against Stuart Chase who was known to have compared the machine civilisation of the United States with "Indian" Mexico and found

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[48] PC, Sauer to Willits, 12/2/45.

[49] For Clifford, 1988, op. cit. marginal cultures do not have to vanish on entering the modern world but can be allowed to invent their own futures, to make their own paths through it. While Sauer tends to cling to the notion of the "Indian" populations as "endangered" and the importance of preservation versus the modern, he does seem to allow for at least a technical change and Indian participation in the (agricultural) development of their land.

[50] PC, Sauer to Leighly, 5/11/31.

Mexican villages to be self-sufficient and "wantless":[51]

"If Mr know-it-all Stuart Chase were anchored in one of these villages where the people have nothing to eat, foul water to drink, no medecine and no money with which to buy any, I think he'd be a little more inclined to hand our machine age its due. I'm for as much of it as I can get. These people crawl off and die or get well like sick animals. Children going blind for lack of treatment, people with hunger because the crops die out and they haven't simple means of irrigation, these and other blessings of the primitive life are daily sights."[52]

Disillusioned, Sauer finished his letter to Leighly by "swatting mosqitoes" in his hotel "listening to the welcome ching of the south-bound train" in the station reminding him that there was "a link with civilisation".

In 1941, ten years later, Sauer was given the chance to air his opinions on both the importance of cultural preservation and bringing "civilisation" to Mexico's "Indian" communities. Moving into Sauer's "field" of Northwest Mexico, the Rockefeller Foundation had established an agricultural research centre near Mexico City and become involved in plant breeding and irrigation in Sonora and Sinaloa - the beginnings of the "Green Revolution" bringing modern agricultural technology to Mexico.[53] Sauer's advice was solicited as a "renowned scholar with extensive experience in Mexico" and he replied with the championing of

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[51] Deplar, op. cit., p.70. However, as Deplar notes, Stuart Chase was in this respect misread: he did recognise that rural Mexico was not a utopia and needed electricity, scientific agriculture and other modern technology but many missed this, including, it seems, Carl Sauer.

[52] PC, Sauer to Leighly, 5/11/31, op. cit.

[53] See Wright, 1984 (mimeo, unpaginated).

peasant (Indian) cultural practices and techniques - a "bottom up" strategy for modern intervention. Sauer shifted his views on "Indian" cultural preservation into agricultural preservation[54] and defied any standardisation by the Foundation: "Unless the Americans understand that, they'd better keep out of this country entirely."[55] Indigenous knowledge would point the way for any "modernisation", the peasants identifying the problems themselves. While denying that Mexico's problems were cultural, i.e. requiring the cultural conquest of the modern, Sauer did see the need for economic aid and support for agricultural change. Unfortunately, despite his attempts to reconcile his preference for marginal cultures with the need for modern, Sauer was read by the Foundation as obstructive:[56] viewed as fixing Mexico in the antimodern and preventing any opportunity for modern improvement and his opinion virtually ignored:

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[54] The two, as Wright points out (ibid.), are connected. Cultural differences influence the way plants are selected, planted, cultivated etc as well as patterns of land distribution, labour, income and consumption.

[55] It is interesting here that Sauer does not include himself as a transformative force in Mexico: his presence is not included in the Americans that must keep out of the country. For Spurr (op. cit., p.50), this is characteristic of the colonial rhetorical mode of "aestheticisation" where access to and preservation of the authentic are seen as unconnected. In this way, Sauer can also posit Mexico as antimodern "home", unaffected by his own uninvolved presence (again the distancing of the vantage point). This theme resurfaces in Sauer's positioning in South America where he places himself apart from those carrying the "academic torch" to the continent.

[56] Sauer's relation to the Rockefeller Foundation will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter. While here Sauer feels that he has the authority to advise and is ignored, in South America we see how Sauer's comments are taken as authority when he himself has doubts.

"to..Sauer, Mexico is a kind of glorified ant hill which [he is] in the process of studying. [He resents] any effort to 'improve' the ants. [He much prefers] to study them as they now are."[57]

The statement of the Foundation really misses the ambivalence of Sauer's position. Although he did reject the "improvement" of modernising "Indian" agriculture, he also saw the need for support and change. On a personal level, he wanted "Indian" Mexico as retreat from civilisation but was at the same time prepared to give the machine age its due. Ironically, probably considered "backward" in his reluctance to embrace modern "improvement", Sauer's view of the "Indian" as germinal base is now agriculturally the vogue.[58]

Gang der Kultur über die Erde[59]

"Wann wird die Odysee wohl enden,
Und wann erreichen wir den Port?
Und wann entgurten wir unsere Lenden
Zum letzten mal, für immerfort?"[60]

In 1933, blocked by a "road out of commission" in "Indian country" near Chihuahua,[61] Sauer turned instead to a settlement of Mennonites; two years later, he visited them again. The first trip

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[57] Jennings, 1988, p.55.

[58] See Pawluk, Sandor and Tabor, 1992 for a discussion of the contemporary role of indigenous knowledge in agricultural development.

[59] Translated: the spread of culture over the world. From Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.296.

[60] Senn in Loewen, 1980, p.250. Translation: "When will the Odyssey end completely, and when will we reach the port? And when will we recover our lands, for the final time, forever?"

[61] West, 1979, op. cit., p.74.

was almost a chance encounter: according to Robert West, it represented nothing more than "speaking German and...observing" the land; the second a return to see "old friends".[62] James Parsons, one of Sauer's closest colleagues, was not even aware of his contact with the Mennonites ("he never published anything"): both visits are acknowledged and then forgotten.

Sauer, however, found the Mennonite cause more engaging: he was inspired to write more extensively and prosaically in his notes on these two encounters than on any other cultural interaction in Mexico. It is a crucial oversight by West since perhaps here more than anywhere else in Sauer's notebooks do we get a sense of the personal: cultural self-fashioning in the "field".[63] Encountering the Mennonites near Chihuahua, Sauer attempted to re-encounter his antimodernism and, at the same time, his sense of "home". As with Mexico's "Indian" communities, this "return" proved highly ambivalent for Sauer and involved a further questioning of antimodern idyll; a tension between cultural preservation and decay (dwelling and travel). Among the Mennonites, however, Sauer's primary concern was not so much with a <u>temporal</u> fixing of culture - they isolated themselves voluntarily from the modern - but with an essentialising as "<u>German</u>".

<u>Die Stillen im Lande</u>[64]

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[62] Ibid., p.84.

[63] Perhaps this is why it has been overlooked by West. Although he gives a sense of Sauer as individual, he keeps his focus on Sauer as fieldworker and does not refer to Sauer's personal life beyond.

[64] Sawatsky, 1971, p.2. Translated: "the unobtrusive ones".

In a sense, like Sauer, the Mennonites were antimodernists, travelling in order to stay the same, defining themselves against "Caesar", the State.[65] Formed as a religious sect in the Low Countries in the sixteenth century,[66] theirs was a history of exile in an attempt to keep apart. They sought a "Privelegium" from the governments of their host countries - an exemption from military and civil service, the freedom of religion and the right to educate themselves [67]- and moved on whenever this was threatened. Once settled, they isolated themselves by being "in the world but not of the world",[68] living off an agrarian base in rural habitats, founding spatially and culturally distinct colonies.[69] Those interacting with Sauer in Chihuahua were the most mobile of the sect - they had a tradition of exile from Germany, through Russia and Canada to Mexico - and were therefore also the most conservative: "wanderers" who had carried their past with them.[70] Under pressure from the Canadian government,[71] they had

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[65] See Yoder in Loewen (op. cit., pp.7-16) for a discussion of how the Mennonites related to God (the Lord) and the State (Caesar). It is interesting to note that Sauer conceptualises his own position in these terms in his discussion of keeping academics (things that are God's) away from politics (things that are Caesar's).

[66] The Mennonites were ideological descendants of an Anabaptist wing of the Protestant Reformation and had their origins as a sect in the Low Countries under Menno Simon (Sawatsky, op.cit., p.1).

[67] Ibid., p.5. In this sense the Mennonites appear as the epitome of antimodernism: <u>legally</u> they have the right to deny the modern.

[68] Yoder in Loewen, op. cit., p.274.

[69] At the heart of the Mennonite colonies were the "Gemeinde": the church and secular communities that acted as institutions with their own Elders and lay ministers.

[70] Sawatsky, op. cit., p.249.

Figure 11: Seeking Mennonite country:
Sauer and Sawatsky (Manitoba, Canada, 1968).

transferred their villages whole to Mexico and prepared to be "die Stillen im Lande".

Sauer's cultural encounter was thus once more with the rural community of his antimodernist sympathies. For Sawatsky (see Figure 11), "life in a Mennonite village" portrayed "an almost other-worldly quality of rustic unhurriedness" to the outside observer - at a distance, at least, the rural idyll.[72] However, as with Sauer's disillusionment with "Indian" poverty, his identification with the antimodern via the Mennonites was only partial. Although the Mennonites appeared as the quintessential simple "Volk" - they were "prairie farmers",[73] provincial, "wholly rural"[74]- they were also "ignorant peasants".[75] Sauer criticised them for their extreme of antimodernism; their "mulish conservatism" which separated them from the Mexican scene. In restricting their educational focus to "the life hereafter" and "farming", they cut themselves off from knowledge of the Mexican (physical and political) climate and located in an area that was

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[71] Ibid., p.21. The pressures were various in Canada: a redrawing of provincial boundaries weakening Mennonnite self-government; a draft during the War going against their pacifist sympathies (and a resentment when they refused) and the introduction of "worldly" subjects, for example geography and history, into their schools, representing an intervention into their separate education system.

[72] Ibid., p.289.

[73] SN11, p.33.

[74] Sauer in Sawatsky, op. cit., p.vii.

[75] SN14b, p.78.

agriculturally unproductive and politically unsettled.[76] After a series of bad harvests and raids by the local "agraristas",[77] they then found themselves reconsidering exile.[78] Sauer was disappointed in their lack of awareness: they did not live up to "the wisdom of the primitive peasant rooted to his ancestral lands",[79] an integral part of his antimodernism and his notion of "Volk"; nor did they mirror his fieldworker's familiarity with the Mexican scene - the responsibility of taking documents into the field. Their very mobility severed them from a true connection with the land - they had "the farmer's love for working in the dirt" but not "for his particular piece of dirt" -and, "nomadic", lacked the rootedness of the "Heimat".[80] What is more, they had blundered into Sauer's field almost as "tourists", "dumb" and unprepared. Transferring from the "dark smooth soil" in Canada, the Mennonites assumed that the Mexican equivalent "that looked somewhat like it" was as fertile and fell into an agricultural "mess by their ignorance".[81] Sauer was struck by the irony of a separatism that rejected "book-

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[76] Ibid., p.79.

[77] The agraristas were former peons under hacienda owners who had been promised land in the revolution - "The land belongs to him who tills it!" - and resented Mennonite incursion on Mexican land. See Sawatsky, op. cit., p.67.

[78] SN14b, p.81.

[79] Sauer in Thomas, op. cit., p.57.

[80] SN11, p.23. Although Sawatsky's book <u>They sought a country</u> has been translated as seeking a "Heimat", in the former romantic sense of the word (see Chapter One) this was not the case. Heimat inherently meant a rootedness in one soil and therefore Sawatsky's Mennonites "standing about as at home", the new "Heimat" exchanged for the old, were a paradox.

[81] SN14b, p.78.

learning" and only resulted in disruption:

"The pragmatic justification of education could be applied to them with a vengeance. As it is they have sunk three and a half million into a venture from which all who can will flee..."[82]

On a subtextual level, perhaps more importantly, he appeared embittered at a rural idyll (and an environmental stewardship?) turned sour.

Homecoming?

"It is in culture that we can seek out the range of meanings and ideas conveyed by the phrases belonging to or in a place, being at home in a place."[83]

While Sauer is dismayed at the impending exile of the Mennonites - their spatial upheaval - his main concern is with what he sees as their cultural decay. The issue of preservation for Sauer hinges not so much on the antimodernism of the Mennonites but on their "German" identity. This question is quite literally "closer to home" since, travelling in the "field" in Mexico, Sauer seems to feel he has found something of the German community of his youth. While their status as "Volk" rooted in soil and "Heimat" is lacking, the Mennonites as "German" represent an alternative "dwelling" for Sauer - a "return" - amidst travel. More than the generic identification with "simple cultures", then, contact with the Mennonites is a significant moment of Sauer's self-fashioning in the "field".

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[82] Ibid., p.81.

[83] Carter, 1992, op. cit., p.101.

One of Sauer's "first sights" of the Mennonites "brings tears" to his eyes:

"Mexicans lulling in the shade, Germans driving wagons loading and unloading...Yard swarms with flaxen youngsters all sizes to full grown. Youngest in cradle being rocked by barefoot mother pushing cradle with her toes..."[84]

The Mennonites are thus immediately defined as Germans by Sauer: in appearance they are a "rather large and blonde race", larger and more plentiful than the Mexicans.[85] Sauer later makes contact in German, breaking the ice by "saying n'Tag to several Mennonites all of whom proceeded to shake hands and talk in passably good high German".[86] Importing poetic German names for their colonies in Mexico (Wilhelm, Roscutal), the Mennonites provide Sauer with a miniature German terrain to travel through: "First stop at Hamburg".[87] However, despite these German "markers", Sauer is contradicted by a German (not Mennonite) "tienda" owner - an ex-Wurtenberger - who has "seen the entire local Mennonite history" and, while acknowledging their antimodernism, denies that they are "real Germans":

"they drift like sheep and act together only to prevent change. They ride no wagons, wear no neckties or ornaments. They know nothing of German literature or music...Stille Nacht and Goethe unknown to them..."[88]

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[84] SN11, p.9.

[85] Ibid., p.7.

[86] Ibid., p.33.

[87] Ibid., p.10. Noticing the map of the settlement colonies in Mexico on the schoolroom wall, Sauer offers a supplemental map of Germany.

[88] Ibid., p.8.

After further contact with the Mennonites, Sauer becomes conscious of a community that is hybrid: both familiar and strange,[89] to him what seems as a "pure product gone crazy".[90] To his "high German enquiry a young blonde 6 footer" replies "in Spanish" and Sauer begins to realise that the Mennonites have the "physique" of Germans, occasionally the language, "but no more".[91] Essentialising culturally on the basis of physical traits,[92] Sauer finds himself disillusioned by closer contact, the Mennonites "white" but "not quite" German, reflecting back a distorted image of the known.[93]

Given what we know of the Mennonites, this is to be expected. Their "cultural baggage" may be partly German but their very rejection of education outside the Bible and farming would make

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[89] See Clifford in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.97.

[90] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.5.

[91] SN11, p.9.

[92] For Mary Louise Pratt (1992, op. cit., p.153), the reliance on one trait from a distance to speak for a cultural whole was common in travel writing articulating the imperial frontier: "One needed only to see a person at rest to bear witness, if one chose, to the trait of idleness. One needed only to see dirt to bear witness to the trait of uncleanliness. This essentialising discursive power is impervious until those who are seen are also listened to." Travellers see what they want to see.

[93] This is an allusion to Bhabha's concept of mimicry which itself ties into the earlier discussion of anxiety over the fixing of culture. For Bhabha, the cultural other cannot be fixed with the gaze but returns it displaced in a form of resemblance and menace which does and does not authorise the observer - mimicry. While I am arguing here that Sauer attempts to constitute the Mennonites as same rather than other, Bhabha's concept remains interesting for the way Sauer cannot have his German identity confirmed/ returned to him. See Bhabha, 1983, op. cit.).

"Goethe" irrelevant to them: they would have defined themselves against German society as well as being a part of it. Multiply displaced since the sixteenth century - travelling through Russia and Canada - they were hardly newly arrived from Germany. However, rather than accepting the Mennonites as hybrid, Sauer sees their lack of "literature and music" as symbolising a German culture in decay:

> "But here it goes badly...Halting German, dim ideas, mild faces -is this a dying people? You have the feeling of having been with your own people turned simple and faltering, of a people who have lost all of their German Kulturgütes excepting a single language..."[94]

For Sauer, then, the Mennonites are disintegrating as communities because of their lack of German traits. They are threatened from within, their culture weak and empty, and he laments the loss of the true German within them. Not only have they failed in their ability to keep the peasant's contact with the soil - their "windmills are silent"[95]- but they have also failed to preserve the German past. This appears not as an academic matter for Sauer but as extremely personal. Carrying German "cultural baggage" between countries and displaced from a sense of belonging, he had a strong emotional investment in (mis)reading the Mennonites as "German". Partly expecting a German cultural essence - a purity - he appears disappointed by a false sense of "home".

Despite his disappointment, two years later Sauer seems to reclaim the Mennonites as German, or at least to have forgotten his

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[94] SN11, p.9.

[95] Ibid.

disillusion with their decline. The Mennonites are still men of the margins, showing up "on the fringe of settlement in various parts of the world" but, rather than ecological disaster, they are portrayed as "peculiarly effective as pioneer settlers". Their "mulish conservatism" is now still "extreme" but also important since it has helped them to preserve. Sauer seems to concentrate on the more Germanic traits of the Mennonites and, with distance from the field, constitutes them still as "home":

"They speak an old Low German dialect, they retain ways that have been lost elsewhere, their very village organisation takes one back a couple of hundred years in German life. Physically they are amazingly pure Nordic stock, blond, tall and rangy. Repeatedly I have spent a little time in these Mexican communities and have the feeling of being suddenly dropped back into eighteenth century German rural life..."[96]

In lieu of a satisfying identification in the field, Sauer thus settles for a more textual homecoming. As James Clifford states in a discussion of cultural dwelling: "perhaps there is no return for anyone to a native land - only fieldnotes" (and letters?) "for its reinvention"?[97]

Aliens

"That is the way you [Mennonite] colonists are. You regard the [Mexicans] as being beneath you..But you are strangers here, are our guests, for this land is ours."[98]

Sauer's encounter with the Mennonites is interesting not only for

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[96] OC, Sauer to Moe, 23/3/37.

[97] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.173.

[98] Dyck in Sawatsky, op. cit., p.324.

what it says about German culture but also about "Mexicans" - whether from the point of view of the Mennonites or Sauer himself.[99] As with Sauer's notes on "Indian" communities in the field, the Mexican population enters in around the fringes as an external - and alien - force. In the case of the Mennonites, Sauer is concerned by the threat of Mexican nationalism and its pressure for assimilation. While on Sauer's first visit to the Mennonites in 1933 the Mexican government is supportive of the colonies' separatism, maintaining their right to self-educate (legislated in 1921), on his second visit two years later the situation has deteriorated. The government wants their schools to be operated by federal "maestros" and their own schoolteachers are forbidden to function. The Mennonites are also given a working order that it is not healthy for them to live separately: they must disseminate, intermarry and "castellanizar" - the "fin patriotico" of the Mexican government.[100] For Sauer, this appears as an external corollary to the internal dissolution of Mennonite "German" culture. Indeed, the government is actively attacking their linguistic and physical distinction: the two traits that for Sauer are the most Germanic. The Mennonites' reaction is mobility: "thus the emigration commences".[101] Sauer thus feels that he is

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[99] This is difficult terrain as with the definition of "Indian" above: Sauer defines Mexico as "mestizo" in The personality of Mexico which makes the distinction of "Mexican" and "Indian" difficult. It is not always certain who Sauer is referring to, but he does tend to distinguish between "Indian" and "Mexican" in his notes.

[100] SN14b, p.68. Translated: "castellanizar" means to become Spanish-speaking and "fin patriotico" means "patriotic goal".

[101] Ibid.

witnessing "the beginning of the decline of the Mennonite colonisation" - a spatial as well as a cultural "decay". What is particularly interesting, however, is the way he chooses to conceptualise the exodus:

> "The humble Mennonites have not established a sufficient gulf between them and the natives to take this with equanimity. They came to keep apart and thought it would be easier to do so in an alien than in a kindred culture, and now that they have the open threat of the design of the alien culture upon their souls and bodies, it gives them the jitters. If there is no land where they can build the Reich Mennos then far better back among the Canadians. If they are to be subject to cultural absorption then at least let it come from worthier hands than the present."[102]

The Mexicans are thus unworthy - they are not "kindred" to the blonde race of the Mennonites (the Anglo Saxon of the Canadians): ironically they are made "alien" in their own homeland. This is obviously the view of the Mennonites, but Sauer himself hints at a similar cultural comparison in his letter to Moe. Here he describes the Mennonites as distinct from the masses: "islands of Saxon peasants in a sea of brown-skinned Mexicans", German colonists "in the backwoods of the world".[103]

Fatherland?

If the above quotation allows us to find the "Mexican" on the margins of the "German", it also takes us from an "eighteenth century" past to a "modern" Germany of the 1930s. In the company of antimodernists and displaced "Germans", we almost pass over the rhetoric of "Reich" and "Nordic stock" and miss the contemporary

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[102] Ibid.

[103] OC, Sauer to Moe, op. cit.

significance of Sauer's cultural remarks.[104] While it is true that the Mennonite connection with Germany was temporally and culturally distant and Sauer himself only lived in Germany for three years as a child, their rhetoric in exile was having political currency at "home" (Germany). While not attempting to implicate Sauer in the Germany of the 1930s, a repositioning helps to show that what may have been framed as antimodern debate in Mexico was more modern in the German "fatherland". This is a particularly important point because, although frequent reference is made to the German (philosophical) heritage of Sauer's cultural geography, none is made to the political context in which this "heritage" developed.[105]

While Sauer was drawing on imagery of land, soil, folk and home to define the Mennonites at the local level, the National Socialists were using the same rhetoric to essentialise the German nation

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[104] I could only find very few hints in Sauer's notes and correspondence on contemporary Germany, for example in relation to the Mennonites, shut off from the world: "Hitler (abwarten) we've been told things before but if he has been doing the things they say, it's a shame" (SN11, p.34) and Sauer later writing to Donald Brand about a German geographer - Karl Josef Pelzer - who had left the "distasteful political situation" in Germany and was interested in working on the Mennonites (PC, Sauer to Brand, 15/4/36). While the letter says little in itself, it serves as a reminder that any discussion of Mennonites, Sauer and German identity in Mexico needs to be repositioned.

[105] See Kenzer, 1987, op. cit., pp.40-69 and Speth in Kenzer (ibid., pp.11-39): both focus on Sauer's connection with Goethe and document his connection with German Romanticism but fail to provide the context for the development of these currents of German thought or the use of romantic notions in political ideology. See Woodruff Smith, 1991, for an excellent and politically aware alternative: in his study of Politics and the sciences of culture in Germany, he puts questions of philosophical influence in the background and concentrates instead on the political ideology of "culture" in German scientific discourse.

under the Third Reich. They found inspiration in the anti-materialist "volkish" movement of the nineteenth century, associating themselves explicitly with the German heritage that had formed at least part of Sauer's "Weltanschauung" at an early age. However, rather than inform a generic identification with peasant peoples, the "Volk" under the National Socialists came to take on a specifically national and racial connotation.[106] Humankind was seen as divided into a hierarchy of mutually exclusive and irreconcilable racial categories with the German "Aryan" (Nordic?) race at its apex, convinced of its own superiority. At the same time, images of land and soil were used to locate the Aryans naturally in the German "Heimat", in harmony with the natural world: rooted in the cultural landscape, they were there to stay.[107] These images of racial purity and permanence, according to Mark Bassin, "formed the essence and rationale for the National Socialist movement": legitimately "at home" in German soil, the Aryan "Volk" could provide a justification for the Nazis persecuting the "Other" in both domestic and foreign policy - it defined their non-Aryan enemy on the European stage.[108]

Thus the very question of German identity was at issue - politically charged - and increasingly crucial as the Nazi party

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[106] As Bassin (op. cit., p.117) notes, the notion of the "Volk" crossed over with the development of racism as a science at the end of the nineteenth century which stressed the primary importance of inherited genetic qualities and the immutability of races making environmental factors irrelevant.

[107] Ibid., pp.122-123.

[108] Ibid., p.123.

under Hitler took Germany into the Second World War. The image of the Volk was joined by other legitimating concepts such as Ratzel's "Lebensraum",[109] which, stating that as part of nature humankind (as Volk) must search for living space (colonisation), provided the password for Nazi expansionism. As Woodruff Smith shows, the romantic imagery of "Bauer, Volk and Kultur" fed into German imperialism with "a real and terrible effect".[110]

Nazi Germany seems far away from Sauer and the Mennonites in Chihuahua - perhaps this is the point - but it is not so distant as it appears. The "Völkerwanderungen" and imperialism of Ratzel's Lebensraum is not so far from viewing the Mennonites as "German colonists" in the Mexican "backwoods of the world". Indeed, Ratzel, the "grandfather of German Geopolitik"[111] and "one of the best known academic imperialists of the turn of the century",[112] was

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[109] In what is almost a mirror image of Sauer's culture history, Smith describes the focus on the peasant as the foundation of culture - "Bauer, Volk and Kultur" - in the works of the German geographer Ratzel in the nineteenth century (op. cit., p.129). The peasantry were essential to the notion of the German "Volk" for Ratzel, their preservation crucial. On the one hand, this connected Ratzel to the literary Romanticism of the time and the tendency to idyllise the rural, viewing "country life through deeply rose-tinted spectacles" (ibid.). More importantly, however, it fed into Ratzel's later diffusionist theory and his belief in "migrationist colonialism" - the German peasant-emigrant taking the national spirit with him to "foreign lands"; a rationale of German colonialism in the 1870s (ibid., p150). Maintaining the importance of "the group, the nation, the Volk, the state", Ratzel later added the concept of "Lebensraum" - intended as a purely scientific idea - to his diffusionist corpus (ibid., p.220).

[110] Ibid., p.232.

[111] Bassin, op. cit., p.116.

[112] Smith, op. cit., p.122.

also, according to James Duncan, "considered by Sauer to be the father of [his?] cultural geography".[113]

Temporally, Sauer's visits to the Mennonites were in synchrony with the rise to power of the Nazis, although he and they constituted contemporary Germany as a world apart. Like Malinowski in the field among the Trobrianders, Sauer must have been overcome at times "by a terrible melancholy" at "things..going on back there";[114] must have further questioned his German identity and ideas in the face of the rise of the Aryan race; worried about the separation of academics and politics as geography turned to geopolitics. Or perhaps the point is that he did not see, or chose not to:[115] compass set firmly "south by southwest",[116] perhaps he

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[113] Duncan, op. cit., p.186. Sauer's intellectual debt to Ratzel has been frequently emphasised, in particular by Sauer himself. Peter Jackson notes that Sauer's work was "heavily influenced by the German cultural and historical sciences (Geisteswissenschaften)" and that it was from the German classics, for example Ratzel, that Sauer "derived his perspective on culture and landscape"(op. cit., p.12). Similarly, James Duncan states that: "Sauer acknowledged his intellectual debt to the German cultural geographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially Ratzel.." (op. cit. p.186). Sauer's focus on culture area and diffusion was in part attributed to Ratzel and, in interview, Sauer talked of how his introduction to Ratzel through Lowie had given him "an opening on the geography of the life of primitive peoples" that he "might not have gotten into" without this "accidental connection" (Sauer, pers. comm. (V), op. cit.). Sauer goes on to situate Ratzel as journalist-turned-geographer in the United States and as a potential "father of ecology" if he had continued longer. It is interesting that this summary takes us away from Ratzel in Germany and from Ratzel as political journalist as well as geographer (Smith, op. cit., p.136).

[114] In Geertz, op. cit., p.74.

[115] We need to remember that Sauer's experience as a German-American during World War One in the Midwest was not a positive one, so that his identification with a German past might be a reaction to his implication by others in the German present. In his notes Sauer talks about his "black boyhood year" which may be

turned his back on modern political Germany and looked to the Mennonites for a German identity from the past. Perhaps that is why he was so disappointed.[117]

The Other Mexico

If Sauer's antimodernist perspective was responsible for a partial fixing of "Indian" and Mennonite communities as cultural home, it also gave him a critical outlook on the "rest" of Mexico. "Mexicans", as we have seen, seemed to be constituted by Sauer in opposition to both "Indians" and Mennonites: Mexicanisation was a threat to the "true" premodern personality of the country. What we find in Sauer's notebooks and correspondence, therefore, is a division between a "historical" and a more "contemporary" Mexico, the former associated (as seen above) with the cultural spaces of the rural and the latter with the more urbane. While Sauer identifies with the peasant cultures of rural Mexico, he rejects their modernising urban counterpart, often epitomised in the form of Mexico City.

In opposition to the "Indian" and Mennonite communities, harbingers (at least partially) of the "folk" ideal (idyll?), Sauer portrayed Mexico City as corrupt and unclean. It was, said Sauer "a sort of punchluck Paris with much ostentation and equal poverty and dirt"

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a reference to the difficulties of the earlier War.

[116] Mathewson in Kenzer, op. cit.

[117] Sauer appears here as Paul Carter's (1992, op. cit., p.100) "self-styled custodian of... culture" standing "in relation to the living (both here and there) as a ghost": neither finding the identity he is looking for in the German home (lost and left behind) nor in the Mennonite alternative.

and he liked "the smaller Mexican towns much better and also the country people."[118] Mexico City was full of "politicians" and "military men" - the "slickers" of the modern -and it was here, in contact with the corrupt, said Sauer, that his "suspicion of institutions became hardened into an aversion".[119] Writing to Joseph Willits of the Rockefeller Foundation, Sauer saw politics and academics too closely tied in Mexico City:

"Of any endowment placed in the hands of any Mexican organisation, I should be sceptical. Mexican politicians can't leave plum trees alone",[120]

and risked the "sweeping generalisation" that his "Mexican friends" were basically dishonest.[121] They had, maintained Sauer, "lived so long in Mexico City that frankness [had] been suppressed in them" and he went on to state:

"If I want a straight from the shoulder judgement about somebody or something there, I can get it from Spanish refugees, ex-Germans or ex-Austrians, but I can think of only one Mexican in Mexico City who doesn't immediately pull the blind across his mind."[122]

Virtually all of Mexico City's population, save its (European) immigrants was thus written off (generalised/essentialised) as untrustworthy. In addition to dishonesty, Mexican cities were charged by Sauer as prone to a "type of lechery". Sauer located the "white meat complex that exposes any white woman to risk in Mexico" in the cities. While he has seen this theme revoltingly

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[118] PC, Sauer to Leighly, op. cit., 15/11/31.

[119] PC, Sauer to Willits, 25/2/43.

[120] Ibid.

[121] PC, Sauer to Willits, 3/8/42.

[122] Ibid.

expressed in "contemporary Mexican literature", he maintains that it is unheard of in the "unilluminated provinces" where the main problems are bouts of banditry and agrarian unrest.[123] In spite of this comment, rural areas are rarely seen as politically unstable by Sauer in his notes, the cities tending to provide the backdrop for political unrest, for example on "a muggy Sunday in Ameca":

"Town was full of armed agraristas, federal government having sent a thousand rifles to them in the last two weeks. Undoubtedly connected with the expulsion of the Callistas from power and recalls the return of the latter in 1923."[124]

The Mexican as dirty, dishonest, lecherous and politically unstable was a familiar refrain in American images of its southern neighbour.[125] While some, as we have seen, conceptualised Mexico romantically, focusing on its "Indian" communities, others preferred the "greaser" personality for a more negative portrayal. Cecil Robinson notes that some American literature of the 1930s continued to show disgust at the "stock image" of the Mexican: violent, lazy, politically disruptive, unhygienic and drunk.[126] Sauer's own "sweeping generalisation", although perhaps not so extreme, certainly seems to draw in part on these negative Mexican traits of the time. However, what is interesting in Sauer's case is that these traits are not so much part of a United States/Mexico opposition, defining the distinction between countries, but a

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[123] PC, Sauer to Kelly, 8/9/38.

[124] SN14b, p.36.

[125] See Cortes in Coatsworth and Rico, 1989, pp.91-119 and Robinson, op. cit., pp.33-68 and 164-210.

[126] Robinson, op. cit., p.173.

rural/urban one. Sauer channels negative traits into the urban - makes them territorially distinct - and thus uses them to support the alter-image of rural premodern Mexico. By associating the negative rhetoric of the "greaser" with the cities, Sauer is able to portray his "other" Mexico as distinct.

The negative Mexican image thus acts as a foil for a more "folkish" rural counterpart that Sauer can then identify with as "home". Mexico's cities are not only taking on the negative characteristics of the Mexican but also, and more importantly, of the modern. The crucial distinction for Sauer appears to be, as always, between the "Volk" of the rural space and the slickers of the modern urban and Mexico's personality - written up as the former, written off as the latter - is moulded to fit this refrain. In Mexican culture we thus see a replay of Sauer's experience of modernisation spatially displaced onto cultures of the city and the country. Pushing the modern and the political into the cities allows Sauer to resituate himself and his work in the antimodern and the apolitical.

Sauer's ability to portray Mexico as a premodern personality was not only aided by this rejection of Mexican cities but also of Mexicans <u>in</u> cities in the United States. Ironically, parallel to Sauer's passage to antimodern Mexico, Mexicans were moving into the United States for the modern,[127] attracted by the very urban

[127] This was obviously a very different kind of mobility to Sauer's. See Clifford in Grossberg, op. cit. for a discussion of the privileged connotations of the label "traveller" and the difficulties of applying it to groups such as Mexican immigrants moving out of economic hardship to the United States.

landscapes Sauer was trying to escape.[128] Mexicanisation was not only a process of self-fashioning within Mexico itself (that Sauer avoided) but in the immigrant neighbourhoods of Californian cities where other "Mexicos" were being defined and delimited.[129]

This period, as Clifford notes, was one of in which American cities developed as spaces of "cultural connections and dissolutions" with "local authenticities" meeting and merging in "transient urban and suburban settings".[130] Thus, while attempting to keep the personality of Mexico apart from the modern, it was being defined through it in the cities of Sauer's university state. Sauer, with his turning away from the Californian urban scene - "too complicated" - was able to silence/ignore Mexico as <u>change</u> across the border and root it as <u>continuity</u> in the "field".[131]

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[128] Diego Rivera in Deplar, op. cit., p.202 talking about California: "the splendid beauty of your factories...the charm of your native houses, the lustre of your metals, the clarity of your glass".

[129] In the 1920s, there was a large outflow of Mexicans to the United States, almost doubling its Mexican population and causing a "presence" in California that inspired racist ferment. See Deplar, op. cit., p16.

[130] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.4.

[131] One question which arises from this separation out of Mexican and American culture is what Sauer would have thought of the Chicano movement: the culture of the "borderlands" coming into prominence academically and politically today. For Clifford (in Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.109), the border is a place of "hybridity and struggle" and implies the "subversion of all binarisms": would this have entered into Sauer's imagined geography or would he have erased it in the same way that he turned his back on cities and on the modern? In some ways, Sauer could have contributed to the Chicano movement. Robinson notes that the United States needs a "real history" and literature that includes its Hispanic Southwest and does not just begin with the Mayflower; it needs to balance its German and British elements with its Spanish (op. cit., p.334). Robinson's citation of Chapman that

Borderlands

"How can a life on a border be other than restless?"[132]

While Sauer may have published Mexico as a singular personality, in the "field" this disintegrates into a set of multiple associations and disassociations, a complexity that is to be expected given Sauer's own self-fashioning: a "restless" identity drawing on (or defining against) the United States, Germany and Mexico. Positioned ambivalently in the "field" amidst culture as antimodernist, Sauer cannot be said to either fully escape the modern or fix others as its antithesis. While with the "Indian" communities Sauer's focus on the antimodern takes him into the modern, with the Mennonites he only obscures the modern. In both cases, he approximates but does not achieve his antimodern goal.

By reconnecting with his antimodernism, Sauer's pronouncements on culture in the "field" become not only about Mexico but also about Sauer himself: we increasingly get the sense that we are dealing with the "country within". For Adams and Morris, Mexico has always been the "sounding board" for American sensibilities, becoming a different country for each visitor;[133] for Cortes, it is metaphor,

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"Our Weimar is ready, perhaps, but Goethe is lagging" (ibid., p.332) seems almost an invitation to an alternative application of Sauer's work on the Hispanic culture of the Southwest. This would provide a nice counterpoint to Sauer's regimental reading of the United States/Mexico border at the beginning of this chapter.

[132] Greene, 1939, p.10.

[133] See Adams, 1990, pxi. Adams' statement that Mexico has always been "invasion-prone", passive and awaiting definition from outside is however extremely problematic, connoting a politics of subordination that allows Mexico to be (justifiably) entered and

boosting the image of the US as a whole.[134] More specifically (and pertinently for Sauer), Robinson labels Mexico as a critique of and "compensation" for the United States, "much resorted to by American writers" opposing their own society.[135] Similarly Deplar points out the tendency to constitute the United States as lack and Mexico as fulfilment: Mexico represents "vaguely from afar" something the American traveller "lacks and craves" and "more deeply and vaguely" seems to be his.[136] In a sense, then, like the Mennonites, Sauer appropriates Mexico on his own terms as homeland, marginalising Mexicans from this image by associating them with the modern. As with his appropriation of the "field" as authority, Sauer thus also claims Mexico culturally by conjuring up the rural landscape as "home" and the rural cultures as "folk". As David Spurr notes, the act of appropriation is often concealed by cultural memory and a notion of the past:

"not acknowledged as itself, but as a spiritual return, a nostos, summoned not only by historical vision but by the nature of the land itself."[137]

The "field" is thus imagined as familiar terrain, homeland, if only ambivalently.

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controlled (ibid., p.xiv).

[134] Cortes in Rico and Coatsworth, op. cit., p.95.

[135] Robinson, op. cit., pp.70 and 165.

[136] Deplar, op. cit., p.197.

[137] Spurr, op. cit., p.90.

CHAPTER SIX:

SOUTH AMERICA...INNOCENT ABROAD?[1]

"Soon after coming to Berkeley as head of the geography department in 1923, Carl Sauer chose Mexico and the American Southwest as his field laboratory. Although he had often wanted to visit South America, his only extended trip to the southern continent was that financed by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1942."[2]

"he will imagine he has no politics and will consider that a virtue."[3]

In 1942, the year after The personality of Mexico was published, Sauer wrote that he felt he could understand the problems of Mexico and was ready to use this as a comparative base for elsewhere.[4] His opportunity arose in the form of an offer from Joseph Willits of the Rockefeller Foundation: did Sauer want to spend a year or half a year studying what he would in South America while involved in a project assessing its social sciences?[5] Sauer replied affirmatively: he would visit all the countries of the west coast, reporting to the Foundation on interesting men and ideas in the social sciences and making his own observations and recommendations along the way.[6] He was thus set to continue his trail from Mexico

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[1] "Innocent abroad" is the label on Sauer's notebook for his trip to Europe with his wife but is used more critically here.

[2] West, 1982, op. cit., p.1.

[3] Pratt, 1986, op. cit., p.218.

[4] OC, Sauer to Moe, 22/10/40.

[5] PC, Willits to Sauer, 21/4/41.

[6] West, 1982, op. cit., p.97 states Sauer's own objectives on the trip as carrying out observations on the relationship of climate and soils to land use and the stimulation of studies by local workers in agricultural geography and culture history. While in this chapter I am more concerned - as usual - with Sauer's

to the south.

Leaving Berkeley by train on December 17, 1942, Sauer (accompanied by his son and assistant, Jonathan) was at sea for twenty days, calling at various ports along the way. He arrived in Santiago on January 18 and spent two months in Chile, eight days in Bolivia, forty-five days in Peru and one month in Ecuador and Colombia respectively. On the first of July, he flew to Mexico and returned to Berkeley by train.

This travel south from Mexico into South America provides a vehicle for a rich consideration of Sauer in relation to the preceding chapters. On the one level, we see a replaying of Sauer's cultural-academic positioning from Chapter One - the geographer looking for cultural particulars and endorsing intellectual freedom and an apolitical stance. This, however, proves paradoxical within the institutional context of the Rockefeller Foundation which appears more as counterweight to Sauer than supportive funding body: not just in the sense of an institution versus an individual, but also the modern versus the antimodern. Although this paradox is in part mediated by the introduction of Joseph Willits, the "face" to the Foundation - a fellow antimodernist that allows Sauer to attempt a by-pass of institutional constraints - it is further complicated by the move from Mexico to South America and the contemporary political climate. Leaving behind the familiar territory of the Mexican "field", Sauer experiences a crisis of

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hidden agenda, Sauer's reports to Willits are extremely rich and may be read informatively in a variety of ways.

authority on new ground and, caught up in the all-too-present moment of the Second World War, finds it harder than ever to look to a depoliticised past. While, despite these doubts, Sauer manages to reinstate (and take refuge in?) a sense of cultural diversity and apolitical "home", I attempt a further destabilisation by repositioning him amidst the universal and the political. Indeed, by blurring the boundary between Sauer and the Foundation, I lead into the conclusion with the question how far the view of Sauer as antimodern man of the margins can be said to hold.

Particulars and paradox

Sitting on the plateau of New Mexico in 1940, "looking out at the little green valleys and the juniper-covered rock", Carl Sauer had written to Henry Allan Moe of the Guggenheim Foundation of his hostility for "New York, L.A." indeed for "the common values of civilisation." Sauer's "mood" instead, he said, was for Latin America: "a big part of the world" that showed "less tendency to march under one ideology". Rejecting the universalising drive of the modern - "call it 'personality' of a land, genre de vie, volk and raum, pluralism of cultures": Sauer claimed to start with the particular.[7] At the same time, he turned his back on the political: cultural personalities were, for him, "far more important" than "all the words" about politics or international relations.[8] It seems that Sauer, almost twenty years on from his move to Berkeley

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[7] OC, Sauer to Moe, 22/10/40, op. cit. True to fieldworker form, Sauer continues to reflect from a "vantage point".

[8] Ibid.

and with twelve years of Mexican fieldwork behind him, was still singing the same antimodern tune.

It is ironic, then, that given Sauer's championing of the particular over the universal, his further move into Latin America two years later should be funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. In his correspondence, Sauer often found himself at odds with this institution, especially over matters concerning cultural diversity. Writing to Stacy May of the Foundation in 1938, Sauer set out what he considered to be the major dilemma of the social sciences at the time, polarising their universalising trend and his own time and place specific form of particularism.[9] He aligned the Foundation's interests with the former and seemed to conclude that his views and theirs were diametrically opposed:

"This dilemma...of not being able to make ourselves understood to each other. I am not sure that it doesn't go back to two quite different cosmologies, that it may not be the conflict between the one god and the pluralist world. Some such gulf does separate the people in the social sciences. On the one side are the universalising thinkers, on the other side the particularists. The one group deals with formal logic and the workings of the mind, the other is concerned with the logic of events which are forever conditioned by a framework of time and place. It is Milton against Goethe, perhaps St. Paul against the Greeks."[10]

Sauer rejected the programmatic strand of the social sciences and, by implication, the normative interests of the Foundation; his

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[9] This theme was elaborated on in Sauer's later article Dominant folkways in the social sciences (in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., pp.380-388) where he continued to oppose the universalists with the particularists. This opposition is destabilised when Sauer's own form of universalism is brought to light later on in this chapter.

[10] OC, Sauer to May, 30/7/37. Once again, we see Sauer making use of religious terminology as part of his antimodern rhetoric.

solution: an inevitable divorce - "I suspect that we shall have to go our own way as we know it."[11] This, it must be said, sits uneasily with the partnership of 1942.

Further irony arises from the fact that Sauer should undermine international relations and politics in his letter to Moe and then travel in association with the Rockefeller Foundation. It is true that some have underlined the purely philanthropic nature of the Foundation's work, presenting it as a disinterested body with an open attitude to knowledge. Raymond Fosdick, for example, summarises the Foundation's role as:

"to support the institutions or groups where able men were working fruitfully and intelligently on significant issues"[12]

and insists that this was its only aim: "it was interested in no device" and "had no nostrum to sell". Others, however, are less generous in their appraisal of the Foundation, tying it into American cultural hegemony. Edward Berman takes a critical approach to Rockefeller rhetoric and actions and concludes that the Foundation is highly political, a "silent partner" of United States foreign policy interests and state capitalism: "the fat boy in the philanthropic canoe".[13]

In fact, in some ways, it seems paradoxical that Sauer - the

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Fosdick, 1952, p.221.

[13] Berman, 1983, p.2.

intellectually free traveller[14]- should want to be part of a Rockefeller research project at all. In his correspondence, Sauer's notion of the trail rather than the bounded "field" of academic study contrasts with the more methodical and circumscribed expectations of the Foundation. While Sauer argues:

"I think...that the Foundation should support persons of high ability and originality in what they want to do, whatever that may be",[15]

the Foundation expects a "more specific definition of scope and implications of activities".[16] In this sense, the academic "field" is bounded by the limitations of the Foundation: their scholars are not free to follow the trail.

Rereading Sauer's letter to Moe [17] against this contradictory

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[14] See the Introduction for the discussion of Sauer as reluctant to bound the academic "field" of geography and also Chapter Three for Sauer's emphasis on intellectual freedom in the Mexican "field".

[15] OC, Sauer to Berrien, 28/2/43. William Berrien was the Assistant Director of the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation at that time.

[16] OC, Berrien to Sauer, 7/1/44.

[17] While this chapter is concerned with the relationship between Sauer and the Rockefeller Foundation and how this speaks to Sauer's antimodernism, an equally interesting line of pursuit would be Sauer's relations with Henry Moe and the Guggenheim Foundation. The latter funded some of Sauer's work in the "field" in Mexico and Sauer in turn was on the Board of the Foundation from 1934 in an advisory capacity re: its work and policies and scholar selection process. Moe, like Willits, stood as a "face" to his institution for Sauer and corresponded with Sauer on similar themes, for example the separation of academics and politics. Finally, while in this chapter I concentrate on Sauer's letters to Willits and how they betray his antimodern leanings, Sauer's reports to the Guggenheim Foundation on potential scholars are equally revealing.

background thus leaves us with the Rockefeller funded trip to South America as paradox: Sauer the self-styled apolitical, academically free cultural particularist jarring with a political research body and champion of the universal; turning his back on New York and interacting with one of its symbols at the same time. If the Foundation and the paradox appear new, the story is familiar: it is, it seems, "the old themes and causes relived"[18]- Sauer the antimodernist fighting the cultural and academic trends of the modern. How, then, was an alliance between Sauer and Foundation - antimodern and modern - possible?

The face

While Sauer often clashed with the Rockefeller Foundation as a body, the institution had a "face" that he could relate to: that of Joseph Willits. Willits was the Director of the Social Sciences Division at the time of the South America trip, Sauer's closest contact in the institution, one of his main correspondents, his advocate and his friend. Sauer's interaction with Willits was thus much more symbiotic in nature.

With Willits as mediator, the stark opposition between Sauer and the Foundation becomes increasingly destabilised: "Rockefeller" comes to denote not only institution but individual. While the Foundation, as we have seen, drew boundaries and reminded Sauer of his place, Willits sought to decrease the dictates and set Sauer along the trail. For Willits, it was Sauer's ideology, rather than that of the Foundation, that seemed to hold currency:

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[18] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.15.

"If anybody is the patron, it is COS - who lets us share his ideas. Sharing dollars...is small business...pray let me continue to share your ideas."[19]

Thus, perhaps from sharing Sauer's "ideas" on intellectual freedom, Willits' offer for the South America trip was (or at least appeared to be) relatively open-ended: "Do you want to go? If so, when? How much will it cost?...the itinerary is yours to decide".[20] Empowered by Willits and placed in a position of authority, Sauer makes his claims for the trip[21] and advises Willits against any mixing of academics with politics: the Latin Americans, he says, "will not respect us if we dissemble political ends under academic mantles".[22] Willits in turn allows Sauer to present himself - if misguidedly - as disassociated researcher and distances him from the Foundation on the trip:

"your study tour comes first - and any information for us is incidental. Our point of view is about this: you and the others are not travelling as representatives of the Rockefeller Foundation or even under its auspices, but as scholars on leave from their universities making their own scholarly studies and investigations."[23]

While in his professional correspondence - as evident in the above quotations - Willits spoke often for himself and the Foundation ("our point of view..."; "let us share your ideas"), he identified

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[19] PC, Willits to Sauer, 8/2/41.

[20] PC, Willits to Sauer, 21/4/41.

[21] For example, that he wants his son Jonathan to accompany him; that he wants one of his students, Robert Barlow, to be his researcher in preparation for the trip and so on.

[22] PC, Sauer to Willits, 23/9/40.

[23] PC, Willits to Sauer, 20/9/41.

more personally with Sauer at a different level.

Although one of the Directors of a modern institution in New York, Willits shared with Sauer his sense of rural beginnings and, more importantly, his antimodernist leaning:

"I wish you could see this spot, beloved of the Willits family. Out of my office window is the barn (this spot was the hen roost when the Hayes family lived here). I can look at as fine a view as a man with the blood of farmers in his veins and some early training as a geographer and as ornithologist could wish."[24]

There was thus an additional bond between Sauer in South America and Willits in the United States that allowed them - at least imaginatively - to by-pass the more urbane image of the Foundation:

"I too love the country as you do. You indicate yours by wandering around the old spots in Latin America; I make my little daily contribution travelling an hour and a half...in order to sleep in the woods and hear woodcocks."[25]

Sauer's association with Willits was not, however, simply an avoidance strategy, distancing himself from Rockefeller rhetoric, but a stepping stone to an engagement with Foundation policy. In his personal notebook for the trip, Sauer reveals that he is relying on Willits to work against the "block" of the Foundation and to push through the importance of cultural particularity against its universalising trend:

"I wonder if I can make him see that these things - all of which are only partly social sciences - are good to do...the factual equipment of the s.s. appears usually quite meagre and stereotyped, though his thinking apparatus may be excellent. The organisation of the RF may be a block - but Willits if anyone can get around that. Wish I had comment on the dozen letters I have sent in thus

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[24] PC, Willits to Sauer, 9/9/42.

[25] PC, Willits to Sauer, 10/4/45.

far...I am fighting something and I don't know what, perhaps the concept of the s.s. as normative without being aware that your norm is what you desire. The low curiosity of the s.s. as compared to the natural scientist is certainly mixed up in my attitude. Unable to be a philosopher and sceptical of persuasion by words, I'm still trying to write always an apology for culture history."[26]

The trip, for Sauer, thus aims to collect cultural facts and to persuade Willits and the Foundation of the casualties of a normative approach. The letters are not, then, as Robert West has written, Sauer's "first impressions" or "andean reflections"[27] but planned comments with a transformative end in mind. Aiming his argument at (and through) Willits, the weakest link in the Foundation's chain, Sauer has an agenda of his own.

Putting the contradictions of Sauer's institutional context to one side temporarily allows for a further exploration of the complexity of the trip. Not only did Sauer have to negotiate his position vis-a-vis the Rockefeller Foundation, but he also had to maintain his cultural agenda and apolitical stance in a new spatial (cultural) and temporal (political) context: South America in wartime. As shown below, Sauer's positioning became even more ambivalent as a result.

New space: a crisis of cultural confidence

In only his second report to Willits from South America - still at sea - Sauer began his cultural "offensive": airing his views on particularity and providing a framework within which his letters

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[26] SN21, p.21.

[27] West, 1982, op. cit., p.25.

should be read. Sauer was, he said, concerned about the way the social sciences and the Foundation regarded culture and disappointed by their lack of curiosity:

"I don't think that there has been enough concern with the attitudes or values of the numerous peoples of the world. One of the things we most need is curiosity about other people and some competence to look at the world through their eyes...I do insist that there is too much in each of the social sciences that is egocentric, in terms of culture, and that it isn't that kind of a world..."[28]

The "great mistake" for Sauer was the notion that "the data of culture" could "be universalized as well as the data of the physical sciences".[29]

However, despite such a strong textual advance on Foundation cultural policy - advising a move towards the "numerous peoples of the world" - Sauer found himself doubting his <u>own</u> ability to move outside Mexico:

"As a physical geographer, I might, with sufficient preparation, undertake to study land forms or climate anywhere in the world; but as a cultural geographer, I cannot easily pass from one part of the world to another as a serious scholar. In one lifetime I may bridge the gap between my native culture and another, but hardly to many others."[30]

Travelling to South America, it seems, presented itself to Sauer as

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[28] Sauer in West, ibid., p.15. This statement of Sauer's seems extremely progressive for his time: a push for the equality of other ways of life over the cultural imperialism of the modernising Western world. Despite the critique aimed at Sauer in this chapter and the limitations (as we shall see later) of his attempts to reintroduce other cultures, this progressive side should not be overlooked.

[29] Ibid., p.17.

[30] Ibid., p.19.

a crisis of cultural authority. While - as we have seen in Chapter Three - through spatial and observational practices and sheer endurance Sauer considered himself a voice of authority in the Mexican "field", he did not feel that he could enter South American space for the first time with the same legitimacy. Ironically for Sauer, wanting to introduce cultural diversity against the universal, he found himself trapped by the particular time and space of his "field". In opposition to his authority in Mexico, Sauer thus articulated his self-doubt in the form of a reverse persona: the tourist, this time, rather than the fieldworker and a problematic vision rather than the clarity of observation in the "field". Scribbled (perhaps aptly) on the inside of Sauer's South American notebook, we find a less authoritative Sauerian stance: "You can't answer anything but you can ask a lot of questions."[31]

Not grand: tour

Mexico, as we saw in Chapter Three, was Sauer's "field", his realm of authority within which he was always the legitimate worker and never the tourist. Sauer in South America, however, presents us with an image that is much less grand. According to James Parsons, Sauer's foray was a "reconnaissance" that he "obviously enjoyed" but was "in no sense fieldwork".[32] It seems that moving south in 1942 was for Sauer a repositioning towards a less authentic, less authoritative stance. The geographer, we must remember, could not be a "world tourist" travelling through many cultures and "knowing

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[31] SN21, p.29.

[32] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

only casually and doubtfully related things about any of them".[33] While in the "field" in Mexico Sauer had the authority of cumulative years of dwelling and travelling in the same territory, the trail in South America was taking him into new space and a terrain of uncertainty: thus, the South American experience, wrote Sauer in his reports to Willits, was a only a "tour".[34]

In a complete contrast to his positioning in Mexico, Sauer thus went on to claim the status of tourist for both himself and his son Jonathan. The Sauers, he wrote, were "rank tourists" in comparison to the more sedentary and therefore more authoritative presence of other academics in the area. The latter had the cumulative knowledge and the endurance that the Sauers - who would "flit along north by the end of the month" - did not have: this was not his, but <u>their</u> "field".[35] In Chile, Sauer thus associated himself with the dwelling space of the tour rather than the hardship of the field: "I almost fancied myself back at the Murray Hill Hotel".[36]

This self-positioning as tourist was not, however, completely continuous for Sauer. Although he never identified himself as

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[33] Sauer in Leighly, 1969, op. cit., p.362.

[34] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.123.

[35] Ibid., p.79. Sauer, as we saw above, passed very quickly through certain countries, spending only a number of days in some.

[36] Ibid., p.61. Sauer's association with the tour is textualised differently to Mexico in his South America notebook. We are shown the process of getting there rather than beginning with the entrance to the "field". Perhaps, then, the traveller-geographer becomes fieldworker through the bounded fact-notes of the "field" whereas the traveller-tourist writes up his experience in the open-ended narrative of the travelogue?

fieldworker in South America, he did turn the tourist critique on others instead of on himself. If he was not particularly thorough in covering new territory, Sauer felt that at least he came with the desire to learn and conserve: the true danger lay in the "academic tourists" who came to exploit but who would try to "pass as students".[37] Sauer was less interested, he said, in:

"carrying the academic torch to Latin America than in the chance for...the cultural discovery of a continent (partial over-statement)."[38]

While the rhetoric of the tour was indicative of Sauer's self-doubt outside of his "field" of authority in Mexico, it did, therefore, have its limits.[39]

Scratching and sketching

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[37] Ibid., p.19.

[38] Ibid. As in Chapter Three, the notion of Sauer as discoverer needs to be considered critically, bearing in mind once again Paul Carter's discussion of the colonising nature of the rhetoric of discovery (1987). Sauer's notion of South America as "new" and "exciting", awaiting his exploration, is continued in his rhetoric throughout the letters, in particular in the form of an ecological and archaeological imaginary. Sauer presents himself in places as collector of scientific facts,"describing culture and society as though they were fully observable though somewhat ungainly bugs" (Geertz, op. cit., p.139) and reducing culture to "stocks" and "breeds" waiting to be found, classified and collected. He also presents himself in places as archaeogeographer, rescuer of the pure past, thus devaluing indigenous cultures who are seen to be sitting on cultural/academic treasures they do not fully comprehend. Sauer's authority is thus boosted at others' expense.

[39] It may be that the notion of his trip as "tour" helped Sauer to further disassociate himself in an official capacity from the Foundation: considering himself a more idle traveller, he was therefore institutionally free. This may also have been helpful to the Foundation in terms of the information produced by Sauer's visit: the non-aligned stance resulting in a greater acceptance in South America and thus greater fruits on Sauer's return.

Supplementary to the notion of the tour, Sauer's disatisfaction with his authority in South America was also expressed in a rhetoric of scratching and sketching. Early on in the trip, Sauer writes to Willits: "I've already been scratching places that I was sure we'd get into when we started"[40]- an admission, perhaps, of limited insight into different cultures which, unlike Mexico, have not been studied cumulatively. Similarly, in Cuzco, Peru, Sauer realises the superficiality of his knowledge of the region:

"Strange, that having read almost everything on the City of the Sun, I lacked so largely the appreciation of the convergence of nature and culture that exists here. We came here thinking the record was complete, and leave knowing that most still remains to be done."[41]

In addition, for Sauer, South America presents itself as a problem of mapping and drawing cultures: Lima, says Sauer,
"is pretty complicated", "hard for an outsider to figure out" and "quite beyond" him "to diagram it";[42] his "picture" of Peru is "sketchy" and he has "difficulty in drawing a sketch of Bolivia".[43] Unlike his earlier turning away from the urban San Francisco scene as "too complicated",[44] Sauer's incomprehension of South American space is from an inability, rather than an unwillingness, to map.

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[40] Sauer in West, 1982, p.30. Sauer here is using scratching to symbolise a limited insight into another culture. See Pratt, 1985, for a different use in her paper Scratches on the face of the country where she argues that cultures are reduced to their imprint on the landscape in imperial discourse and thus deterritorialised.

[41] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.75.

[42] Ibid., p.86.

[43] Ibid., pp.92 and 72.

[44] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

Without the security of the science of observation of the field, Sauer has to come down (at least partly) from his vantage point and admit (if reluctantly) that his vision is unclear.[45]

As with the rhetoric of the tour, however, Sauer remains ambiguous. With some security - perhaps from Mexico as basis for comparison[46]- Sauer accompanies his doubts with cultural synopses. In Callao, Sauer finds cultural "pallor common": the people "soft spoken" and "much given to the use of their arms in speech",[47] whereas the Chilotes, on hearsay, are "very moral and industrious", owning their land and feeding themselves.[48] Sauer sets up a hierarchy of cultures, his most frequent comparison being that between Mexico and Chile in which the Chileans are the seen as the "extreme of race" and their language "vile":

"With the wisdom of my three days' experience in Chile, I'd rather be a Mexican; that is partly because I think the Mexican enjoys life more...These Chilenos are dapper and disciplined, but they are not lusty, like my Mexicans. (I see I'm getting in deeper and deeper, so here goes off the deep end.) They dress carefully, they run their trains on time, they don't bay at the moon..."[49]

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[45] Although Sauer's views lack clarity, however, this does not mean that he does not still aspire to the "vantage point view". In opposition to the "vantage points" in Sauer's Mexican notebooks, Sauer's vision is often unclear in his South American notes. Sauer is more speculative and imaginative, uncertain of what he sees from the ship and also mists often obscuring his view.

[46] This notion of Mexico as secure basis for authority is, of course, itself spurious: as we saw in Chapters Three and Four, Sauer's created authority in the "field" was not without its loopholes.

[47] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.122.

[48] Ibid., p.53.

[49] Ibid., p.27.

Thus, despite his lack of descriptive authority on new ground, Sauer attempts a cultural commentary.

Although Sauer's self-doubt is not absolute, its expression as tourist "scratching" at culture feeds into a wider anxiety in the letters as to the Foundation's use of his ideas. Sauer reiterates to Willits that he is "just the impressionist now, watching the faces, the gaits, the gestures, the remarks that are passed...":[50] he cannot be a serious scholar in unknown space and limited time:

"I'm just giving you my mixed reactions as they come along. It is impossible to come here, a complete stranger, and size up the intellectual currents properly in a few days."[51]

When Willits writes to Sauer that he has shown the letters to his acquaintances, Sauer fills his response with qualifiers and draws in full on the imagery of his hasty touristic passage through South America and his inadequacy as a painter of culture:

"I am very pleased to get your letter, and pleased no end to hear that you have found things worthwhile in my observation. I hope that these friends of yours who have seen my letters will not get the idea that Sauer makes rash and sweeping generalisations wherever he alights in his hasty passage through Andean lands. There is, I think, some value to first impressions, if they are understood as being only such. The business of appraising the worth of individuals is mostly beyond the possibilities of such a reconnaissance trip. Sometimes I think that even the matter of making notations on the intellectual atmosphere of a place is pretty presumptuous. In apology, I can say that I think I do have a comparative basis out of my long Mexican experience, and that I should have some ability to understand not only what is being said but what is being meant. It is all pretty sketchy, however, and I do not have too much confidence in the sketches I have tried to draw...It all seems pretty futile at times, but I know of nothing else to do than expose these impressions, with almost constant

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., p.37.

misgivings, as recording my reconnaissance."[52]

Sauer's cultural impressions, as we have seen above, are indeed "sweeping generalisations" - in more ways than one, as I will show - and, as we shall see later in politicising Sauer, his caution against the interpretation of his sketches as fact is extremely prophetic. Here, however, we turn to a second round of self-doubt: from Sauer's spatial-cultural dilemma to his temporal-political - the separation of academics and politics contemporary with World War Two.

Now time: a crisis of political abstinence

Sauer's early reports to Willits were not only a forum for his cultural agenda but also for his views on the separation of academics from politics. The realm of the scholar, wrote Sauer, had to be divorced from that of the state - the worlds of Caesar and God could not be allowed to meet:

"My view of the scholar's obligations is that he should 'render unto Caesar the things that be Caesar's but that his primary concern be not with them."[53]

The primary concern of the scholar was a non-aligned search for Truth, itself "neither a belligerent nor a tribal god". There was a need for "detached observers" to take "the long view and the cool view", scholars who could be objective and stand away from the

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[52] Ibid., p.85.

[53] PC, Sauer to Willits, op. cit., 23/9/40. This is reminiscent of the Mennonites and their rejection of Caesar, the state.

"thick of the strife".[54]

Here, Sauer was not speaking generically, simply reliving his old apolitical theme, but had a specific subtext to his commentary: the political moment of the Second World War. The United States had just entered the War and were battling in the Pacific as Sauer sailed slowly through on "The Imperial"[55] on his way to South America. Therefore, for Sauer, it was not only imperative that he return to his apolitical refrain but that he also insist on his own distance from the contemporary "strife". The world of the present, wrote Sauer, was not "exciting" for him; the events were not "tangible", the "business" too unreal for him to think with awareness of the United States at war.[56] Couching the political context in euphemism, he refused to think of it head-on:

"The warm Pacific is swishing by my porthole and it is time to go up and see if there are any signs of lower life on the deep, or perchance, and we hope not, of that higher form that is rumoured as being about on unpacific business."[57]

and, writing to Willits from South America, he claims escape: "We are far out of your world."[58]

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[54] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., pp.13-14.

[55] This ship is quite ironically named considering Sauer's denial of the political nature of his travel.

[56] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., pp.9-10.

[57] Ibid., p.15.

[58] Ibid., p.33. Sauer turns instead to his book, The golden bough: its consideration the whole world and human time perhaps allowing him to escape the here and now of the North Pacific. The notion of fieldworkers taking refuge in literature is not novel - see Geertz discussion of Malinowski, op. cit., p.74.

However, if the desire to divide academics even more firmly from politics was there, there was also an increasing doubt as to its possibility. While in Mexico - as we saw in the last chapter - Sauer took to the rural past as refuge from the politics of the "field", in South America he was being specifically asked to focus on the contemporary. Additionally, as we saw above, Sauer's position as authoritative academic was tenuous amidst new space: a destabilisation that perhaps made him feel the threat of the political was even closer at hand. Whatever the reason, Sauer was certainly doubtful at times of his ability to remain a "detached observer". In places in the reports to Willits, he battles with his position on the trip: the difficulty of being "a diplomat first and a scientist second". Perhaps, writes Sauer, "the whole business is impossible" given "the nature of the emotionally charged situation".[59]

These doubts, like the lack of cultural confidence above, will also prove prophetic. Here, however, it is interesting to focus on how, despite (or is it <u>because</u> of?) such doubts, Sauer went on to push for cultural particularity and an apolitical stance via his reports on South America.

<u>"I listened and learned"</u>[60]

Sauer, as we saw earlier, was concerned about the lack of cultural curiosity in the social sciences in the United States and the

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[59] Ibid., pp.13-14.

[60] Ibid., p.41.

tendency towards an "egocentric" perspective. He thus positioned himself in opposition as "cultural discoverer" of South America rather than representative of American intellectual dominance carrying the "academic torch" to the south. As part of this positioning, Sauer used his reports to Willits as a vehicle for reinstating "Indian" cultures against "white dominance" and protecting academic traditions - for Sauer, very much a part of cultural particularity - against American intellectual inroads.

Passing through the countries along the west coast of South America, Sauer frequently gave articulation in his reports to the cause of "Indian" populations holding out against "white" culture. As in Mexico, Sauer shows himself concerned with native resistance versus the modern: aware (even ashamed) of the atrocities of the past, he places hope in preservation in the future. In Cuzco in the Peruvian Highlands, Sauer feels:

"...a little like the apostle Paul must have felt about the Macedonian Christians. This is the heart of Quechua country, this is the seat of Incaland; the Indian has taken and is taking a terrible beating from the white man and the latter's civilisation",

but maintains that:

"...they are badly bent but not broken...Cuzco may yet be occidentalised, but I'm betting against it. The white man has had his will of the Indian of the altiplano for 400 years, and much of it has been and is shocking. But here... 400 years are not enough to give assurance that the white man has the requisite staying power."[61]

Down on the Peruvian coast, Sauer later "discovers" a pocket of

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[61] Ibid., p.77.

"Indians" - "scarcely cross-bred" - which he has never heard of and he feels has never been studied: here is a "going culture", an "authentic culture" that has to be maintained.[62] Similarly, in Bolivia, Sauer finds four fifths of the population to be "pure Indian": vital, confident and far from being "deculturated":

"...the personality is not dragged out of these people; your eye is caught by the interesting and alert faces. There is meaning in the persistence of beautifully woven costumes; these people will not hide themselves in the white man's shoddy or cast-off clothing."[63]

Finally, in Ecuador - to his preservationist delight - Sauer spots "Indians...on every road" and writes to Willits of their accessibility: "I can go round the corner from my room and bring you an Indian with his hair in a braid in three minutes".[64]

Faced with such cultural persistence, Sauer pushes for the academic study of "Indian" populations, criticising what he sees as purist intellectuals who are not interested in such issues and impressing the value of those that are, for example Don Ricardo Donoso, Director of the National Library and Archives in Santiago, who:

"Came to Chile at 19 to do engineering...got interested in the Arancanians - lived with them..made love to their girls...proud of the fact that he really lived with the Indians..His ethnologic interest was by direct and close association with the Indians."[65]

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[62] Ibid., p.125.

[63] Ibid., p.72.

[64] Ibid., p.106. There are, of course, problems with Sauer's focus on the dignity, purity and authenticity of "Indian" cultures. As in Mexico, the questions of romanticisation - the "noble savage" - and essentialisation are crucial but, since they were explored in the last chapter, are here left relatively undeveloped.

[65] SN21, p12.

Sauer is concerned about countries like Bolivia with a "largely unstudied....culture" where the "Indian" has not yet been "discovered" intellectually: the "literate Bolivian", he claims, has not yet learned to articulate "his homeland". At the same time, however, given what he sees as the "unspoiled" nature of "Indian" culture, Sauer finds himself "not even sure that the Americans or anyone else should move in on them":[66]

> "Here lies appeal and risk. The appeal is that of a largely unstudied country and culture, of an economically largely undeveloped land. The risk is in such persons as the university president who is building a modern skyscraper..."[67]

This notion of "Americans" moving in was not only an issue for Sauer in relation to "Indian" populations but a threat to South American cultural variety as a whole. In his recommendations in his reports to Willits, Sauer continually criticises a strategy of American academic imperialism which would wipe out local ways of thinking and reduce diversity: the answer, he says, is not "by us".[68] Sauer thus advises Willits to support local intellectual development in situ rather than an overdominance by, or a transplanting to, the United States. The locals, Sauer feels, have an insider perspective and a preparation for the conditions and

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[66] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.108. It is typical of Sauer's self-positioning that he does not include himself here as an American moving in on other cultures. Sauer sees himself as passing through with no transformative potential and therefore the fact that he has "been having the time of his life...from grandee to pigtailed Indian" does not, for him, sit uncomfortably with his critique of American intervention.

[67] Ibid p72

[68] Ibid., p.81.

kind of work that is necessary: "We can't all", he reminds Willits, "graduate from Harvard or Chicago and sit in the seats of the elect".[69] In fact, Sauer is critical of American-led efforts to date in South America, in particular the Andean Institute which, he feels, "muffed its opportunity ...woefully ...because it was thinking of jobs for Americans and benefits to American institutions":[70]

"These fellows have come down supplied with money for field work, automobiles, living conditions, demonstrating that the US is the land of incredible wealth. They have done almost nothing in picking up potential native archaeologists or ethnologists and giving them a year's experience, and they have hardly blocked out or tied into a feasible local program of investigation. It has been a great year of the American youngsters, but that is about all...None of these things seem to me to be a workable bridge to the future. Nor does it seem to me that there is a very good answer in general in bringing the natives single or in groups to the United States."[71]

Similarly, in Chiloé, Sauer is critical of American agricultural interests that are threatening the local:

"The littler agricultural group imitates the bigger one. I fear that if you get enough Cornell and California trained agriculturalists down here in South America you will wipe out the thousands of years of plant breeding."[72]

For Sauer, the United States is far better off using its plane space to send down academic aid - "editions of good American reference books and less-than-the-latest microscope" - than the

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[69] Ibid., p.108.

[70] Ibid., p.87.

[71] Ibid., p.81.

[72] Ibid., p.53. Agricultural history went on to be Sauer's main interest in the Mexican "field" in the late 1940s.

ethnocentric propaganda it is already sending.[73]

Fruitful soil

If South America provided some satisfaction for Sauer's cultural curiosity, it also seemed to relieve his academic fears of a political takeover. Although frequently disheartened, feeling that there were few guarantees of intellectual integrity anywhere, Sauer comes to read South America in places as ideal academic space. The University of Concepción in Chile, Sauer writes to Willits, offers "complete intellectual freedom" and (overcoming Sauer's earlier dilemma of being a diplomat first and a scientist second) represents "one spot where a scientist could work without ever thinking of politics". There, no-one seemed to ask "about politics, creed or race because these things did not matter": this was, for Sauer, "the best research atmosphere" he had seen.[74] Elsewhere in Chile, Sauer finds individual academics like Don Ricardo Donoso - "as disinterested as any man should be" - one of the intellectuals of the old school, preferable to the youngsters who are increasingly interested in politics and heading for government jobs.[75] Later, Quito in Ecuador is defined by Sauer as "the most interesting center...in the west of South America",[76] a prime intellectual space because it ignores academic boundaries and political affiliation and follows the trail.

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[73] Ibid., p.123.

[74] Ibid., p.50.

[75] Ibid., p.34.

[76] Ibid., p.105.

Even more to their credit in Sauer's mind, Concepción and Quito seem to hold out against American academic imperialism and retain a sense of distinction. Sauer writes of Concepción that:

"there is fruitful soil...There are biologists who work with anthropology. There is Atenea, which touches intellectually on all Latin America. There is an awareness of problems of culture history. There are good scientific habits and a research atmosphere"[77]

and, most pertinently, that "there is an awareness of a particular land and its people". Similarly, the "cult" of American academics is out of place in Quito and this particularity, for Sauer, has appeal:

"two young holders of fellowships in social sciences from the US...practitioners of a strange cult, which the natives did not understand, and the meaning of which was in reality lost when practised in the midst of a culture completely foreign to the young disciples."[78]

Perhaps encouraged by his discoveries in Concepción and Quito, Sauer went on to reinforce the boundary between academics and politics in his final report to Willits. Written from Berkeley ("turning over in my mind the past few days"), Sauer's "summary statement" maintained the importance of "disinterested and free intellectual exchange". It also, however - perhaps boosted by the new-found intellectual freedom of South America - defined the Rockefeller "mission" in favour of "common intellectual interests" and positioned the Foundation apolitically:

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[77] Ibid., p.52. Atenea is perhaps the title of an academic journal.

[78] Ibid., p.105.

"The Rockefeller Foundation holds a position of advantage over any other organisation. It is not constrained by political ends as are Government agencies. It is not restricted by charter as is, to date, the Guggenheim Foundation. It has, moreover, an enviable reputation throughout Latin America. It is not suspect of ulterior motives..."[79]

Thus, through his journey in South America, Sauer returned not only with the discovery of an apolitical academic "home" (Concepción, Quito) but also having purged the Foundation of any political affiliation.

Sauer, it seems - at least in his reports - felt satisfied with mapping South America as culturally diverse and intellectually free and positioning himself, by association, as particularist and non-aligned.[80] The boundaries, however, cannot be so clearly defined. If Sauer managed to overcome his cultural and political doubts - his fear of "rash generalization" and the impossibility of the "detached observer" - they can be recaptured as prophesy and used to re-read Sauer's cultural commentary and his positioning on the trip. In this way, Sauer is made to cross the divide and is brought closer to the universal, political and intellectually directed climate of the Foundation than his initial self-positioning allows.

Mister universal?

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[79] Ibid., p.127.

[80] In fact, however, Sauer's notion of the culturally diverse was itself highly political - the notion of the importance of the "Indian" cause, of the battle of the local versus the United States - and therefore Sauer was politicising himself, mixing academics and politics, at the same time that he was declaring (and finding hope in) parts of South American academia politically free.

Offering up his cultural-academic comments in his reports, Sauer wrote to Willits:

"You will see that my mind works along descriptive-comparative lines, not along the lines of what is in the strict sense generalization."[81]

Sauer, as we have seen, considered himself simply the "impressionist", presenting the particulars of South American space - the cultural and academic facts - as they came his way. However, bringing together Sauer's recommendations - the "Indian" cause, the local intellectual, the "free" university - we begin to get a sense of an underlying generalization, one particular spatial trope recurring again and again: the capital/province division, a close relative of the by now overfamiliar city/country refrain.

In his reports, Sauer becomes quickly frustrated with the capital cities of South America: La Paz is dismissed as "go-getter" and "professional" with "the skyscraper... a proper symbol of what is in the making"[82] and Lima, "urban and urbane" - "another capital that is growing furiously" - is similarly chastised.[83] Santiago in Chile is also for Sauer a "smug little metropolis" to which he will only give a limited amount of time: "I'll give it the once over and then we'll see the provinces".[84] Sauer's rhetoric even precedes his travel at times, his spaces of the imagination biasing him

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[81] Ibid., p.47.

[82] Ibid., pp.67-8.

[83] Ibid., p.86.

[84] Ibid., p.25.

against the cities:

"I keep imagining that I am seeing the Mexico of the glittering days of Díaz. However, we have barely arrived, and I should have no opinions as yet."[85]

By way of contrast, Sauer claims that the provinces are more readable - "in a short time I can get more out of the provincial picture than from the capitals".[86] Sauer advises Willits to mark Popayan in "with a red X" on his map "for the best of Hispanic provincialism".[87] Similarly, Sucre is superior to La Paz in Bolivia, Medellín to Bogotá in Colombia and Cuzco in Peru to Lima - the provinces continually triumph over the capitals.

Sauer's reports thus begin to fit into a wider pattern. The "Indian" populations are associated with the provinces, providing a cultural (and premodern) alternative to the cities. In the same way, provincial intellectual efforts are championed over the capitals: the prized University of Concepción "at the farthest end of the civilised world" and "a far cry from...metropolitan Santiago".[88] Concepción is also appealing for its "Indian" country to the south and "Frontera" of German farmers close by: the cultural mix (remember Mexico) should be familiar. It is Sauer's

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[85] Ibid., p.68. The "days of Díaz" refer to a period of Mexican history under Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) when the focus was very much outwards towards the United States, emphasising good economic relations, American investment and also an American presence in Mexico (See Deplar, op. cit., p.1).

[86] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.88.

[87] Ibid., p.114.

[88] Ibid., p.52.

passage to the premodern continued.

In a resurfacing of Sauer's antimodern rhetoric and spaces, then, the modern and political cities are rejected in favour of the provinces where the authentic cultures and the true craftsmen - the "academic folk"[89]- can be found. What we find, therefore, is that Sauer, although presenting his findings as particularity - in opposition to the universal orientation of the Foundation -is in fact falling back on his <u>own</u> universal theme. As in Mexico, the city and country trope (read: modern displacement) enters into Sauer's work and allows him to position himself on the antimodern edge. The boundary between Mexico and South America, it seems, disappeared, all becomes a question of urbanity: where the particularist now?

> "The urbanity of the capital, Mexico, Santiago, Lima, Bogotá, but if you do run across someone who can tell the difference between a piece of work and a flourish he's not likely to belong to the urbanity. I may be extreme on the subject, but I do know my Mexico and the rest are much like it."[90]

Perhaps in the face of the difficulties of moving authoritatively from Mexico to South America - the problem of <u>how</u> to speak about new cultures and new spaces - a return to the known was the only, if unconscious, alternative. On the other hand, as I have been arguing all along, Sauer's work was never separate from his own "passage to premodernity" and, in this sense, South America becomes another form of cultural and academic antimodern "home". It is

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[89] Ibid., p.97.

[90] Ibid., p.117.

perhaps for this reason that, although Isabel Kelly wrote to Sauer:

"Please come back to Mexico. Don't be a dodo and bite on S. America; better return here, where you know the terrain, the people and the history: and where you can do a real job without having to start from scratch. What's the point in building up such a background as you have if you're not going to put it to constructive use?"[91],

for him, South America had appeal. It was not, I think, just a question of authority.

Repositioning: departure, journey, return

Sauer's "provincial enthusiasm" in South America, as in Mexico, not only allowed him to claim a form of cultural and academic "home" but also to push politics into the cities and declare himself as politically "free". "I may once more tell you", he wrote to Willits, "that I don't like the capitals": there the "political slickers, the good time charleys, the hangers-on" - "the gravy train", Sauer felt, rolled "merrily in the political centers".[92] This self-positioning, combined with the earlier sense of separation from the Foundation and the presentation of the Foundation as working without "political ends", allowed Sauer to set himself up firmly amidst an apolitical context interested only in research.

We do, however, have to return to Sauer's earlier doubts: the impossibility of an innocent positioning in such an "emotionally charged" situation. To begin with, the Rockefeller Foundation was

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[91] PC, Kelly to Sauer, 20/7/40.

[92] Ibid., p.123.

not so distanced from Government work (politics, the state: Caesar) as Sauer supposed. During the War, American geopolitical concerns with hemispheric defense had turned foreign policy towards South America to further the Allied cause, and Roosevelt's "Good Neighbour Policy" sought to develop close economic and cultural ties with the continent. As part of the "Good Neighbour Policy", Roosevelt had formed an Office of Coordination of Inter-American Affairs, of which Nelson Rockefeller was the head. Thus the Rockefeller Foundation, moving south to assess its continental neighbour, was part of this strategic effort. In fact, while Sauer describes those funded by the Foundation in South America in 1942 as a "curiously assorted lot", there was a very definite theme to selection if the contemporary political climate is taken into consideration. Of the three others, one was a historian working on the background of the Monroe Doctrine (the United States declaration of hegemony over the Western hemisphere); the second a geographer working on the acculturation of Japanese immigrants in Latin America (Pearl Harbour was bombed by the Japanese on December 7, 1942) and the third an anthropologist working on the Negro in Brazil (at a time when the "Negro" was being integrated into the wartime workforce of the United States). With this context in mind, Sauer's opinion of the Foundation as without "political ends" becomes tenuous at best.[93]

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[93] This political background to Sauer's South America trip is relegated by West to footnotes. However, as can be seen here, by allowing it to stand against the nature of the trip, we come to a different reading of Sauer from that presented by himself and the Foundation.

If the above begins to connect the Rockefeller Foundation with United States foreign policy, it does not fully reposition Sauer, i.e. associate him with the politics of both Foundation and Government in turn. At the outset, by way of implication, Sauer's exploration of the social sciences can be seen as integral to the United States' cultural-political relations with Latin America discussed above. However - beyond this - a second reading of the early correspondence with the Foundation shows in what ways the latter provided the political framework for Sauer's trip to South America and allows us to reconceptualise Sauer as privileged (directed?) traveller rather than wanderer from the wayside. While, as we have seen, correspondence with Willits emphasised the apolitical, non-aligned nature of Sauer's travel, the Foundation was in fact ever-present in issues of access, financial fluidity and mobility and, most importantly, in the aftermath of the trip. Here - in the absence of Willits and in spite of his own self-positioning - Sauer is reconnected with the Foundation as institution and reassociated with Government, Washington and the modern. Thus, through departure, journey and return, Sauer's politicization is also spatialised.

Departure

In keeping with his independent stance, Sauer's correspondence from Foundation officials truncated Rockefeller involvement in the South America trip. Sauer was informed that his funds would begin on October 1, 1942, that his conditions were accepted and that beyond that there was "nothing the Rockefeller Foundation" could "do in an

official capacity to facilitate" his trip.[94] On the 18 December 1941, however, Sauer was issued a "pax romana" by the Catholic University of America in Washington DC: a letter which gave him introduction to key Catholic academics and universities in the Andean countries who would best give him information on the state of the social sciences.[95] This, it seems, was only part of the administrative baggage that the Foundation provided for Sauer prior to departure on his trip. Further investigation shows that visas were secured for Sauer from the United States-based Consul-Generals for the destination countries in addition to documents for freedom of mobility from internal authorities. The Minister for External Relations in Colombia marked Sauer and his son Jonathan with a "RECOMENDAR DE MANERA ESPECIAL" (a special recommendation) and requested:

"a las autoridades extranjeros de los lugares por donde tuvieron que pasar los mencionados senores Sauer, les presten todos los auxilios y facilidades de los que ellos tuvieren necissidad en el transcurso de su viaje, a fin de que puedan llevar a cabo su cometido."[96]

Representatives of the Foundation also supplied Sauer with contacts in the countries he was to visit and compiled a list of people who knew of his impending trip.[97] In this sense, Sauer was already well

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[94] OC, Paine to Sauer, 22/10/41.

[95] OC, Catholic University of America to Sauer, 19/12/41.

[96] OC, Ecuador Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores to Sauer, 25/5/42. Translation: "that the foriegn authorities of the places through which the aforementioned Sauers have to pass allow them all the help and facilities that they require in the process of their travel so that they can bring their task to fruition."

[97] OC, Kittridge to Sauer, 5/12/41. Sauer did seem to contact most of these people on the trip.

under the umbrella of the Foundation before he even left the United States. Thus, while Sauer maintains an air of mystery and uncertainty prior to his trip:

"My friends the Mexicans like to use the word 'pendiente', which is a little more earthy than 'the lap of the gods'. I am going ahead, 'pendiente'",[98]

he was in fact "going ahead" in the lap of the Foundation as well as that of the gods.

Journey

In his notebook for the South American trip, Sauer complains about the difficulty and hardship of travel: he finds he is always negotiating for a way around bottlenecks that obstruct his ease of movement. Sauer's itinerary appears to be affected by the road conditions and the delays in South America and he continually has to make arrangements and decisions about travel:

"Trying to find ways of going north. The situation reported as follows - no berth on railway train until March 9, no place on plane until March 9, no place on boat until March 11 (+ 150% for de luxe suite)..This is transportation in Chile..."[99]

Sauer is not, however, alone in his attempts to overcome such difficulties - the "magical name" of the Rockefeller Foundation is always at hand. One of Sauer's reports to Willits, which West calls "transportation problems in northern Peru", is an excellent example of this facilitated travel of the Sauers.[100] Trying to

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[98] PC, Sauer to Willits, 9/5/41.

[99] SN21, p.31.

[100] Sauer in West, 1982, op. cit., p.95.

"bridge the gap" between Peru and Ecuador, in the shadow of the war between these two countries, Sauer writes "we were the first people since the war who had even thought of getting across this border.[101] Sauer's connections, however, "smooth the way".[102] In Tumbes, Sauer has a recommendation to the United States Attache and is "passed along a line of officials and given every facility".[103] Later, he dines with the boss of International Petroleum (an old schoolmate from Chicago) and then retraces his steps to Talara where a known Canadian official finds him emergency lodging. Sauer and son then take up two places on a plane to Guayaquil, Ecuador, made vacant by officials flying with the President (Prado) of Peru. Finally, in Guayaquil, Sauer reuses the Rockefeller name to get money from the bank: "change in our pockets...we can begin to circulate about town".[104]

Thus, although Sauer positions himself individually in South America - he is, it is true, "there" - he is accompanied from a distance institutionally by the Foundation. However, in finding the whole situation "miraculous" and reconstituting his privilege as chance, Sauer further silences this guiding Rockefeller hand.

Return

The Sauer letters, according to West, made an immediate hit among

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[101] Ibid., p.96.

[102] Ibid., p.93.

[103] Ibid., p.96.

[104] Ibid., p.95.

the Rockefeller personnel in New York and were circulated among its key figures. Walter Steward, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, regarded them as having "spice, flavour and discrimination", while Willits himself commented on their "sagacious wisdom and scholarly awareness" and wrote to Sauer of their public success:

"At the long table in the Rockefeller Foundation restaurant today the subject of discussion was "Carl Sauer's letters" from Latin America. This is just one sample of the many minds you have stimulated by your penetrating comments of people and institutions along the West coast of Latin America."[105]

Although the Foundation as a whole provided a reception for Sauer's textual return, there was - at least initially - some mediation by Willits as the "face". Picking up on the positioning prior to Sauer's departure, Willits can be seen again to offer Sauer a sense of independence and to prioritise his, rather than the Foundation's, ideas. Rereading the letters at home, Willits appears to have been persuaded by Sauer's agenda and is ready to work against the block of the Foundation:

"You with your seeing eye have given a perfect demonstration of the way in which Foundations should work to seek out and discriminate between the truly intellectual and noble and the success boys who ride the band wagon. I don't believe even you realise how powerful the pulls are (from without and from within) to ride with the pack".[106]

"Where", he asks Sauer, "do we go from here?" This, however, as we shall see below, was a question that was out of Sauer's hands: the

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[105] Willits in West, 1982, op. cit., p.5.

[106] PC, Willits to Sauer, 11/7/42.

"pulls" to "ride with the pack" were indeed strong. While Sauer chose to position himself with Willits against the Foundation, he could not prevent an alternative positioning by others: he, of all people, should have known that you cannot bound the trail.

Safely home?

"The greatest risk in Latin America is a mule, in my past experience, and this risk we dodged...(we are safely home)."[107]

On August 7, 1942, Willits' secretary, Janet Paine, wrote to Sauer in Willits' absence that she was glad that he and Jonathan were "safely home".[108] Perhaps the greatest risks for Sauer, however, were those posed by the advent of his return. Arriving home, Sauer found himself visited by representatives of the United States Government's Board of Economic Welfare (BEW)[109] and he wrote to Paine in some confusion:

"It was a long rambling visit and I am not certain of the sequences in it. However, Anderson said that they had to get their teeth into the problems that may become critical very promptly and that he wanted my help because there was little known to them of the immediate situation in these countries."[110]

Sauer's obervations, he was told, were crucial, his cooperation with the BEW necessary:

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[107] OC, Sauer to Paine, 14/7/42.

[108] OC, Paine to Saue, 7/7/42.

[109] There is some confusion in the notes as to whether BEW stands for Board of Economic Welfare or Warfare. According to the Rockefeller Archive Center in New York, it is the former, but in some of Sauer's notes it appears as the latter. Perhaps an allusion to his political context?

[110] OC, Sauer to Paine, 18/7/42.

"He said something to the effect that I should set down these observations. Unguardedly, and without thinking two moves ahead, I said that of course I had included them in my letters to Dr. Willits."[111]

Anderson, maintaining that he had good relations with the Foundation, said that he would like to study Sauer's letters while Sauer attempted to backtrack saying they were "personal reports" and not written for "wider scrutiny". Here, however, Sauer was being read as representative of the Foundation and being tied into a network that operated at an institutional rather than a personal level. Realising that his own authority and his link with Willits were being ignored and that his letters were set to travel - as fact (not "sketches")[112]- into a highly politicised, governmental context (Washington as symbol of the modern looms large), Sauer wrote at length with concern again to Janet Paine:

"I have not shown the copies of the letters to anyone except Jonathan. They were thought of as letters to Mr Willits and to the Foundation...I should hate to think that this correspondence would become accessible in any file in Washington. I should have misgivings if ever the whole of these letters, with their many references to named individuals were examined by any member of one of the Washington bureaus. For instance, the relations between the State Department, the Office of the Coordinator of Latin American Relations, and the Board of Economic Warfare[113] are not in all respects mutually sustaining. I don't mind if certain of these observations of mine, for example, are of use to Henry Moe in his

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[111] Ibid.

[112] Here we see the "battle" of the reception of writing that was alluded to in Chapter Four - the notion that what is written and how it is interpreted is as much a factor of the "home" context (for Sauer, the political "moment" of World War Two and political space of Washington) as it is of the "field". This chapter shows the "worldly" nature of Sauer's writing - sets it in context - and returns it to its more modern "home". It also -through the mobility of Sauer's ideas from one context to another - returns us to the notion of discursive movement.

[113] See comment above.

Washington relations. That would be constructive criticism, and Moe knows me as well as he knows his men in Washington with whom he deals...It's a good deal of nuisance and I wish Anderson would forget about it. I think he does have the right to ask for aid in the war effort, but in those terms there should be a heavy editing of the letters. I am willing to be cooperative but I don't want to be indiscreet."[114]

Unfortunately, further correspondence only contains Willits' secretary's reply to Sauer to wait until Willits' return and a later letter informing Sauer of a meeting between himself, the Foundation and Anderson about the letters the next month. No further documentation exists of the meeting in either the Berkeley archives or the archives of the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, except a one-line enigmatic note from Willits to Sauer:"I enclose copy of a letter from Lewis Hanke [not enclosed] Shall I proceed on the same basis as with Dewey Anderson?"[115]

Despite a lack of information, this whole incident shows the futility of Sauer's attempts at maintaining a boundary between academics and politics and trying to work towards intellectual freedom through a body like the Rockefeller Foundation. Relating to faces - Willits, Moe - rather than to institutions, Sauer was not (or chose not to be) aware of the "pulls" of the "pack", hence the feeling of panic as supposedly non-partisan ideas are transformed into grist for the geopolitical mill. Also, the

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[114] OC, Sauer to Paine, op. cit., 18/7/42. It is interesting to see here how Sauer places his faith again in an individual - Henry Moe - rather than in an institution. He seems not to think at the structural level and to believe in individual agency within an institutional context. This is an interesting counterpoint to the James Duncan/Peter Jackson arguments that Sauer makes no room for individuals.

[115] PC, Willits to Sauer, 26/10/42 (RA).

intersection of Sauer's own personal beliefs and "passage to the premodern" with the similar beliefs of Willits working within the Foundation fed Sauer's myopia of the open political context within which he was working. Despite Sauer's apolitical and often doubtful positioning, his ideas were to be read authoritatively and politically by the BEW. At a wider level, then, repositioned amidst Government institutions in Washington, Sauer is not only forced to meet the political but also the modern.

The rough war; the enveloping gloom[116]

In the aftermath of the 1942 trip, perhaps related to the BEW incident, Sauer remains adamant about the separation of academics from politics, but, along with Willits (and the progression of World War Two), becomes increasingly disillusioned.[117] For Sauer,

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[116] Sauer to Kelly p114

[117] In addition to the BEW incident, Sauer must have been increasingly affected by the impact of the War on his Berkeley department and work in the field. As West notes (1982, op. cit., p.114), from the autumn of 1942 to the spring of 1944 Sauer was closely confined to the campus with teaching duties that were connected to the university's military program. The geography department in Berkeley felt the effects of the War on its student body and its resources and courses. Sauer writes to Mitchell Wilder (curator of the Taylor Museum Colorado Springs Fine Arts Centre) (PC, Sauer to Wilder, 10/2/44): "Things are of course like most places. The teaching staff is shot to pieces or else is abstracted into Army courses...our Ibero-Americana Series is more or less sunk with the late ruling restricting publication to members of this faculty." This must have further blurred the academic/politic boundary for Sauer and increased his disillusion.

At the same time, the War and the "field" were becoming increasingly intertwined in the lives of Sauer's students. Homer Aschmann, (PC, Aschmann to Sauer, 11/8/42) one of Sauer's students in the army, wrote to Sauer in 1942 of his experiences in his camp in Texas. Managing to get himself classified as a geographer, Aschmann is disappointed at the lack of recognition this gets and pursues his own education, looking out for geographical facts and the pioneering experience of life in the (military) field. Similarly, James Parsons (PC, Parsons to Sauer, 1/2/43) wrote to

the real fear seems to be the political takeover of the academic "field":

"I suspect that the world is in the greatest catastrophe it has known and that free intellectual enterprise is in for a bad time...It matters less that you have a competent supervisory organisation than it does that the scattered watchers of the sacred fire know that you are of their brotherhood...I don't think it matters that some fail, some are weak, and some turned aside...Darkness is spreading, and that is what matters."[118]

Sauer asks Willits to support individual academics who for him have "kindled and maintained a flame that should not go out".[119] In a letter dated January 1944,[120] he looks in opposition to the (nostalgic) early days of geography - " it was a promising spring in this country in the field of geography" - listing for Willits

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Sauer from Intelligence School of his salvage attempts from his training - hoping that scouting might develop his faculties for field observation that Sauer "so often mentioned". Although Robert Bowman writes to Sauer (PC, Bowman to Sauer, 11/9/43) that his army experience is "a far cry from geography", he tells Sauer of his travel to distant lands "where only a handful of explorers have penetrated" which ties in with the chance to see the "unknown" that we came into contact with in chapter two. Bowman's experience in New Guinea presents the "distant lands" as a mixture of army and field terrain - a fusion of the fieldwork and the military experience. Unlike Sauer's, this field is portrayed in all its politics of interaction and resistance.

Finally, other students of Sauer's, for example Robert West, found themselves working in Washington. West writes to Sauer with information on South America since his war effort involves the mapping and access of the continent as a strategic resource and the compiling of information on road conditions: "just one of the many things Military Intelligence should have had on its finger tips before the war started" (PC, West to Sauer, p55). Others, like Donald Brand (p88) found themselves urged into a desk job while they yearned to go out into the "field".

[118] PC, Sauer to Willits, 13/7/42.

[119] PC, Sauer to Willits, 31/8/43.

[120] PC, Sauer to Willits, 15/1/44.

the "good journeymen geographers of latter days" and his fears of the contemporary state of geography drawn away from research to teaching, economics and, worst of all, to geopolitics:

"I object strongly to the idea that I am a proper sort of geographer if I set myself up as a geopolitician, but am an improper one if I get interested in the way the Jesuits make their mission areas work...There is as much significance in extinction as in survival."[121]

Sauer has "a torch to carry" over the current affairs leaning of the Berkeley campus - verging on "political indoctrination"[122]-and is equally concerned with the Foundation's foreign area interest in Latin America and its tendency to focus on current events. Fearing change at all levels - academia as a whole, geography, Berkeley, the Foundation - Sauer still seems to feel that he is out of step with the time but now cannot separate himself from it completely: "The wedding guest, he beat his breast Yet he could not choose but hear".[123]

For Willits too, the fear is real: his letters to Sauer are full of the threat of the current, the state, the political:

"Yes, I feel we are headed for another Balance of Power or another Holy Alliance, which amounts to the same thing. I agree with what you say concerning the bitter harvest that is coming out of the sowing of our whole modern philosophy, of its materialism and its god, the all-powerful State...the struggle to power, the deification of the current and the exhibitionism of frustration. I wonder just what would happen to Jesus of Nazareth if he happened

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[121] PC, Sauer to Willits, 11/2/44.

[122] PC, Sauer to Willits, 11/5/44.

[123] PC, Sauer to Willits, op. cit., 11/2/44.

on the scene today."[124]

While Willits maintains the importance of freedom of scholarship - he has no "line" to take in Foundation affairs;[125] requires "Leave to live by no man's leave underneath the law"[126]- his view of the non-aligned Foundation becomes more and more pressurised as the War draws to a close. With the ultimate fusion of science and politics - the atomic bomb - entering the contemporary scene, he writes to Sauer: "Truly, the old order changeth".[127] It seems to dawn suddenly on Willits ("I need a confessor now") that scientific work is not value free, that the "physicists are generals", that the state has grown "and the station and dignity of the individual human being" has shrunk. Willits, looking still to Sauer for his answers, asks: "where are we headed?"[128] Sauer - stoic - was already picking up his "passage", looking to Berkeley for the renewal of an academic "home":

"I think we should reassemble and see whether there isn't still time for us to realise, at least in part, the design of scholarship we once had in common, for I have the feeling that there may be another bunch of boys coming up comparable to that extraordinary group that was gathered here in the '20s. I think we might have again a period like that unforgettable one."[129]

Where are we headed?

In Chapter One, I said that I wanted to find the limits to Sauer's

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[124] PC, Willits to Sauer, 21/12/43.

[125] PC, Willits to Sauer, 6/6/44.

[126] Ibid.

[127] PC, Willits to Sauer, 15/9/45.

[128] PC, Willits to Sauer, 15/9/45.

[129] PC, Sauer to Leighly, 15/11/45.

antimodernism. Although I edged towards this in the subsequent chapters, it is perhaps only through the consideration of the South America trip that the full complexity and ambiguity of Sauer's positioning come to light. In this chapter, I have tried to show that Sauer's oppositions - so frequently employed to conceptualise himself as different (authentic? authoritative? innocent?) - are artificial, constructed, ambivalent. Thus throughout there has been a sense of destabilisation: Sauer, associated with the particular, the apolitical, the intellectually free, the rural, the "field", the vantage point, the marginal, the individual (in combination: the (his) antimodern) is <u>also</u> implicated in their universal, political, intellectually constrained, urban, tourist, sketchy, central, institutional (again: in sum, Sauer's modern) counterparts. Sauer, it seems, was a modern man in spite of himself. It is this negotiation of Sauer's initially clear self-positioning that I take into the conclusion: ready to tease out the implications of Sauer's ambivalent situation on the antimodern/modern line (how progressive? how deceptive?) and to look beyond that to cultural geography and the academic "field" as a whole: the question of where <u>we</u> are headed.

CONCLUSION

"In my end is my beginning."[1]

Sauer once commented on what he saw as the futility of "going through life afraid to be lonely" when there was the inevitability of facing the "ultimate loneliness" in going out of life.[2] For Sauer, I think, disorientation amidst modernisation approached a form of "loneliness": a self-perception as one of the last bastions of German/European academic and cultural tradition and a self-positioning on the margins of the modern. This "loneliness" appears as "real" for Sauer as a "bewildered witness" during World War One (Chapter Two) as it does through his disillusionment during World War Two (Chapter Six). While this sense of dislocation amidst change was, for Sauer, a source of fear (he was afraid, remember, of the present and the future), it appears also as a source of productivity: Sauer the intellectual "Voortrekker", arguing for the potential of other (non-modern) ways and almost "unconcerned to discover" that there is "no-one following".[3] Having said that, however, Sauer's lone stance was often contradicted by various forms of "company" - and here I am not only thinking of companions that would have been vaguely acceptable to Sauer (for example, other American antimodernists in Mexico) but also the more modern, unsolicited form of companion, such as Dewey Anderson from the BEW. Thus, as I stated at the end of the last chapter, having

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[1] Eliot, op. cit., p.15.

[2] PC, Sauer to Willits, 15/9/45.

[3] Robinson, op. cit., p.338.

asserted Sauer's antimodern life theme and pursued it through various aspects of the "field", I am left with a tension within Sauer's antimodernism, an ambivalence that needs to be explored. I do this by focusing on the progressive, restrictive and deceptive threads to Sauer as antimodern man of the margins: issues that "speak" from the repetitions and contradictions of the last six chapters. Beyond that, I am concerned with how the "take" on Sauer pursued in this thesis can be made to "speak" to geographies in the present.

In 1944, Sauer was offered the chance to move from Berkeley to a new position in the geography department at Johns Hopkins: he declined and gave as his motivation the proximity of the university to Washington (as we saw in the last chapter, the ultimate space of the modern). He wrote:

> "I happen to have a fondness for the provinces and a somewhat emotional attitude that the better world will come through a strengthening of local centers of culture, not from the great capitals. Don't write this off as a whim of mine; the whole geography of evolution shows arguments uniformly in favor of partial isolation. If I should move into the center of the mass I should still feel that the germinal potential was out on the periphery..."[4]

We have come across examples of this "germinal potential" of the periphery in Chapters Five and Six. In both Mexico and South America, we saw Sauer attempting to strengthen local (often "Indian") cultures against the destructive effects of "Americanization" (monocentrism) from the north and advising the

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[4] PC, Sauer to Bowman, 21/5/44 in Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit.

Rockefeller Foundation on a way forward sensitive to cultural context. These instances, I think, allow for a productive reading of Sauer and culture - certainly a more generous perspective than that afforded by Peter Jackson in the Introduction. Jackson, as we saw, chose to read Sauer's focus on the rural and the provincial negatively as outmoded and conservative. However, Sauer's view of the "margins" was a more progressive one: as James Parsons states, while Sauer identified with "simpler cultures", it did not "follow that these simpler cultures were necessarily irrelevant to contemporary issues".[5] Indeed, as we saw with Sauer and indigenous agriculture in Chapter Five, Sauer, basing his advice in "Indian" practices and traditions, pre-empted today's vogue for the local as "germinal" base for development.[6]

Thus Jackson is perhaps overly hasty in rejecting Sauer's more provincial focus for the cultural politics of urban space. Certainly contemporary cultural debates have seen a resurfacing of the rhetoric of margin and centre, critiquing the control of the (modern, urban, colonial) latter and viewing the (premodern, rural, colonised) former as a source of creative energy. Ashcroft et.

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[5] Parsons, pers. comm. (L), op. cit. Thus, for Parsons, Sauer should be associated with the imagery of the "frontier" (pioneering the way forward) rather than that of the margins. However, the notion of the "frontier" is itself tied up in the rhetoric of colonialism (the "white man" bringing wild/savage nature and culture under his control at the "frontier" of discovery).

[6] Geographers, said Sauer in The quality of geography (1970, op. cit., p.9) "do not worry enough". Sauer himself worried about change but, he felt, could not get enough people to "worry along" with him. While some have taken up Sauer's worries about the environment, his worries on cultural change seem to have been vocalised less. Perhaps this is one of the other ways in which Sauer's geography may be brought forward?

al.,[7] for example, have isolated the tendency of what they call "post-colonial literature" to assert difference from the centre: the Empire, finally, writing back. Thus, in a sense, Sauer could be viewed as sympathetic to this counterdiscursive "movement", turning the spatial rhetoric of the modern centre on its head by prioritising the rural frontier and conferring authority on the margins.[8] Although for V.S. Naipaul, the people of the margins are "mimic men", condemned to repetition of the colonial authority,[9] for Sauer, as we have seen, it is the modern "tourists" (the herd) that mimic and the provinces that represent the authentic. The link between Sauer and "post-colonial" movements is not, of course, a direct one: Sauer's selected (and, as I show below, misleading) self-perception as marginal is a far cry from the enforced marginality of formerly colonised peoples. However, the link does provide other ways of looking at Sauer's writing and may provide a means to recycle Sauer's ideas which, as Lewis and Price suggest, are <u>not</u> ready for "academia's dust-bin".[10]

In addition to the "germinal" aspects of Sauer's views on culture, we do, however, have to think about the casualties of a "backward", ruralist perspective. For Raymond Williams, the contrast between city and country (so clearly identified with Sauer throughout the

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[7] Ashcroft et. al., 1989.

[8] The notion of turning colonial rhetoric on its head is not, however, without its limitations. Robert Young (op. cit.) writes of the difficulties of opting out of the binary oppositions that have characterised the presentation of modern Western thought.

[9] In Ashcroft et. al., op. cit., p.88.

[10] Price and Lewis, op. cit., p.5.

thesis) represents a tendency towards the idyllic rather than the "realistic". The true socio-cultural relations of the country are neglected and passed onto the city as centre of corruption; the rural areas remaining harmonious.[11] Such harmony, Williams fears, is a mystification out of which the rhetoric of nationalism - the call for blood and soil - may arise.[12] Sauer, with his semi-idyllic view of a rural "home", his consistent denigration of the city as corrupt and his use of the rhetoric of German nationalism to describe his Mennonite "ideal" cannot be excused from Williams' critiques. True, through his experience of the hardship of rural life, Sauer also voiced anti-idyllic sentiments in Mexico; however, it remains that, elsewhere, Sauer replaced his distaste for the "smiling aspects"[13]of modern American society with a counter-image of a "smiling" (Mexican) "countryside".[14]

Like Williams, James Clifford is also concerned with the tendency to idyllise the rural in a folkloristic appeal to the past[15]but, more centrally, with the allied attempt to redeem a cultural essence: a "symmetry of redemption" that requires cultural traditions to abstain from the modern. Clifford is suspicious about the positing of pure cultural forms that can be retrieved: culture for Clifford is relational, changing - it cannot be fixed

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[11] Williams, 1981, op. cit., p.31.

[12] Ibid., p.48.

[13] Lears, op. cit., p.17.

[14] Williams, 1981, op. cit., p.114.

[15] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.4.

except for authority as invention.[16] Here too, Sauer cannot be excused from critique: we saw in Chapter Five how his vision of "Indian" and Mennonite communities were, at least partially, clouded by his need to maintain the essence of "Indian" and German premodern culture for his sense of self. Thus the progressive side to Sauer's antimodernism proves tainted by a restrictive, immobilising element - keeping cultures in their place.[17]

If Sauer's sympathy with rural space and folk was genuine, however, his complete identification with them was not.[18] Allowing Sauer to set up "home" in the margins denies any relation with the metropolis and the spaces of the modern and this, as we saw in the last chapter, was not the case: Sauer found himself closer to Washington than he would have liked. For Mary Louise Pratt, the rural discourse of the traveller (perhaps-geographer?) is a "strategy of innocence", a deception that conceals his/her urban metropolitan identity.[19] Michael Williams, although less stridently, seems to adopt this rural/urbane contradiction for Sauer:

"Whether consciously or unconsciously the cult of the simple,

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[16] Ibid., p.11.

[17] See also Ashcroft et. al., op. cit., p.116 for a similar critique to Clifford: the notion that a redemption of pure culture is not an alternative; the impossibility of a return and the need for a positive perspective on the cultural confusion (syncretism) of the present.

[18] Hooson in Blouet et. al., op. cit., p.337.

[19] Pratt, 1992, op. cit., p.38. The innocent positioning masks a male, urban, lettered rationality that is being imposed on the world in the guise of the rural.

homespun, rural man (aided by the ever-present pipe) grew stronger with the years. But it masked a complex man whose early philosophy was broad ranging, learned and speculative. The paradoxical nature of this character and image is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to get a clear view of his thinking."[20]

Williams is justified in questioning the image of the "simple, homespun, rural man" (see Figure 12). Indeed, in addition to travelling in the "margins", Sauer lived and functioned in a modern academic context. He had power as Head of the Department of Geography at Berkeley; influence on the Selection Committee of the Guggenheim Foundation and input (if unbounded) into the policies of the Rockefeller Foundation. At the same time, although he spent extensive periods in the field, this experience and the fruits of its publication only further contributed to his academic status "back home". The self-presentation as intellectual craftsman thus shielded an all-too-institutionalised and authoritative academic. In this sense, as Thomas Glick notes, Sauer "was not the loner he is too often made to appear": "his influence was persistent and pervasive".[21]

Thus, as James Clifford points out: "All terms get us some distance and fall apart".[22] While Sauer as antimodernist allows us to reinject Sauer's "provincial" focus with a more "progressive" edge, it must be approached ambivalently. Certainly Sauer positions himself stridently against the modern but other voices point the way to the futility of antimodern - even cultural - flight. For

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[20] Williams, 1983, op. cit., p.4.

[21] Glick, 1988, op. cit., p.446.

[22] In Grossberg et. al., op. cit., p.110.

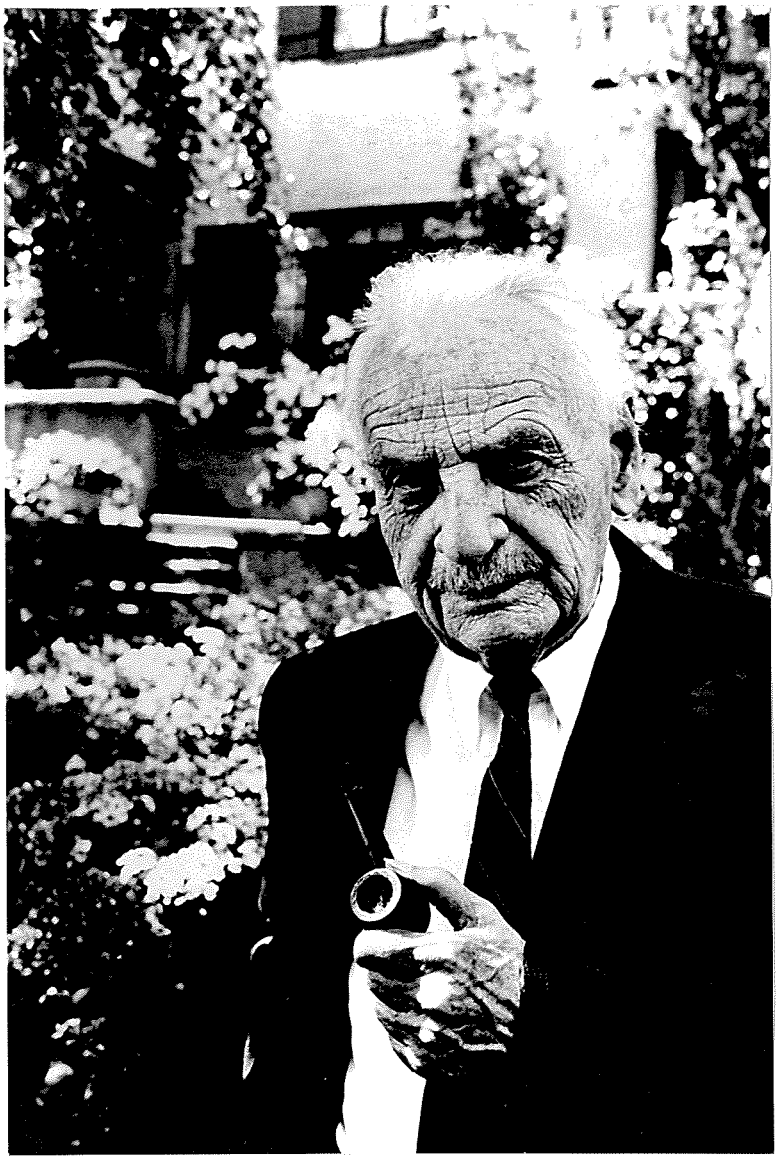

Figure 12: Sauer: man of the margins or modern in spite of himself? (returned to Berkeley, 1970).

Clifford, there are no distant places left:

"one no longer leaves home confident of finding something radically new: another time or space."[23]

Similarly, for Claude Levi-Strauss, escape from the modern only results in confronting the traveller with the "unhappiest forms" of his "historical existence": the "garbage" of the modern.[24] Finally, and perhaps most ironically, the voice of Alfred Kroeber, outlining the fundamentals of (what is taken to be Sauer's) "superorganic" view and, by association, condemning Sauer's attempts to escape his modern, American context:

"When a tide sets one way for fifty years, men float with it, or thread their course across it; those who breast the vast stream condemn themselves to futility of accomplishment."[25]

Progressive, restrictive, deceptive: this ambivalent view of Sauer, I hope, offers some form of mediation of the debate between the "new" and the "traditional" cultural geographers outlined in the Introduction. While I do not claim to have retrieved the essential

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[23] Clifford, 1988, op. cit., p.14.

[24] In Porter, 1991, op. cit., p.240.

[25] Kroeber in Duncan, op. cit., p.184. Once Sauer is placed in culture, then, the so-called "superorganic" view may be used to reflect on Sauer himself. If Sauer's cultural origins are viewed as modern American, then Sauer's attempts to position himself as "off-beat American", critical of and distanced from American culture, appears as paradox. Michael Williams (op. cit. 1983, p.20) has picked up on this contradiction between Sauer's cultural pronouncements and his "living" self: "The man of Sauer's writing was a disembodied, generic man; the man of Sauer's academic and intellectual life was a real, individual, thinking man. Sauer was the living example of the very thing his writing denied." However, if Sauer's cultural beginnings are viewed as traditionally German, then perhaps his passage to the premodern represents a move towards rather than away from his cultural "home": a slave to the "superorganic" after all?

Sauer, I have attempted to place him strategically in different "moments" in order to achieve a complexity and ambiguity that both departs from the hagiography of the "old" and the dismissal by the "new". As seen above, I find grounds for critique and promise in my consideration of Sauer. Also by way of departure, I have attempted to place the cultural debate on a different terrain. Unlike Jackson and Duncan, I have chosen to position Sauer himself amidst "culture", to allow him to interact in practice with others (rather than just conceptualise them at a distance as "wholes") and to contextualise this repositioning in the United States, Mexico and South America rather than speaking of Sauer and culture in the abstract. While juggling Sauer and Other amidst "culture", I have tried to maintain a focus on the question of authority, to express its ambivalence and to couch this in spatial terms (dwelling and travelling).

This shift in cultural perspective has been possible via a focus on Sauer in the "field" and a tying of the "field", in turn, to the "home". Sauer's personal life - his sense of "home" - either through his own constructed authority or the academic conventions of others, has remained fairly tangential to critique but here it adds a whole new dimension to Sauer and culture in the "field". I believe that it is by way of this process of constant shuttling between "field" and "home" - between Sauer's life values and his fieldwork directives; between his life spaces and his fieldwork places - that a rich and varied (if not exclusive or authoritative) consideration of Sauer becomes possible: the contradictions point the way for critique. Indeed, in the case of any critical analysis

of geographers (past or present), I maintain that the public sphere of (field)work cannot remain exempt from "pollution" by the personal.

My focus on the "field", however, stands not only as an attempt to depart from the debate surrounding Sauer, but also as a wider critique of geography, authority and culture as a whole. While in anthropology, as James Clifford states, there is a growing sense that "we ground things, now, on a moving earth", i.e. there are no longer any privileged positions (islands of distinction, vantage points of authority) from which to speak about the culturally Other,[26]geography, as Alisdair Rogers notes, has yet to experience such a "crisis of ethnographic authority".[27] This, for me, is a function of a neglect of the "field" as a focus for critical enquiry. Once we move beyond the seamless authority of geographic texts, legitimated by calls to the "field", and actually look at what work in "the field" entails, view it in its plurality and contradictions (the hardship, the silences, the emotions, the misunderstandings, the intrusions, the exclusions..), the geographer is forced to come down from the privileged position on

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[26] Clifford in Clifford and Marcus, op. cit., p.22. In contrast to Sauer's "vantage points" of authority, then, we turn instead to his cultural doubt of the last chapter. This is more akin to Clifford's sentiments on cultural representation in the present: "There is no longer any place of overview (mountaintop) from which to map human ways of life...Mountains are in constant motion. So are islands: for one cannot occupy, unambiguously, a bounded cultural world from which to journey out and analyze other cultures."

[27] Rogers, 1992, p.513.

the hill[28] and face up to a more critical perspective on the authority of fieldwork amidst "culture". Through Sauer, we can begin to see how geography constructs itself: how it draws on varied tropes and rhetorical devices to distinguish itself, how it presents a legitimate image of itself - in essence, how it lies to itself about its own authority. At the same time, we can begin to see how geography constructs others: how its practitioners can fuse their own sentiments with science and present cultures objectively as "personality". Thus, despite a continuous focus on Sauer, I am not simply advocating a rewriting of one geographer in the language of theory - merely attaching theoretical insights to a study of Sauer like "flags of convenience"[29]- but attempting a serious integration of critiques into geography as a whole. Picking up my critiques from the Introduction of the bounding, essentialising and fixing of Sauer, I take these into a reconsideration of geography as strategic, hybrid and reflexive space within wider disciplinary travel. This is an alternative view of geography as shifting and open, not overly concerned with boundaries and fixing and attempting an awareness of its own closures. Thus I end as I began: talking about travel in the academic field of geography. While Sauer, in his address to Californian geographers in 1970, said that this "kind of geography" was "gone",[30] the need to get away from the "but-is-this-geography state" and open the discipline

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[28] This coming down from the mount is, following on from the discussion of chapter three, particularly aimed at male geographers since "field", geography and geographical knowledge seem to be authorised in masculinist terms.

[29] Dhareshwar in Kreiswirth and Cheetham, 1990, p.242.

[30] Sauer, 1970, op. cit., p.6.

up to new trails remains.

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III. CARL SAUER IN LEIGHLY:

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Leighly, John, ed. 1969. Land and Life: A Selection from the Writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Their page numbers in Leighly and original dates of publication are given:

Conditions of pioneer life in the Upper Illinois Valley (pp.11-22; 1916).

The barrens of Kentucky (pp.23-31; 1927).

Homestead and community on the middle border (pp.32-41; 1962).

Historical geography and the western frontier (pp.42-52; 1930).

The road to Cibola (pp.53-103; 1932).

The personality of Mexico (pp.104-117; 1941).

American agricultural orighins: a consideration of nature and culture (pp.121-144; 1936).

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Foreward to historical geography (pp.351-379; 1941).

Folkways of social science (pp.380-388; 1952).

The education of a geographer (pp.389-406; 1956).

APPENDIX: PRIMARY MATERIAL

I. THE SAUER PAPERS:

The call number for the Sauer papers in the Bancroft Library (Berkeley) is 77/170c. I looked at Sauer's personal and organisational correspondence and at his notebooks for Mexico and South America. These are referenced here, in keeping with the Bancroft system, according to box and carton. In the thesis text, personal and organisational correspondence is referenced as "PC" and "OC" and followed by the correspondents' names and the date of the letter. The notebooks are referred to as "SN" (Sauer notebooks) or "KN" (Kroeber notebooks), followed by the file number and the notebook page number.

(ii) Personal correspondence (PC):

Letters to and from Sauer (arranged alphabetically in files):

Box:					
6	Homer Aschmann	16 6	letters	1943-1958
7	Robert Barlow	27 10	letters	1941-48
	Robert Bowman	30 1	letters	1938-1958
8	Donald Brand	21 17	letters	1932-1949
	Henry Bruman	12 6	letters	1936-44
9	Juan Comas	6 3	letters	1942-50
	Ricardo Donoso	2 2	letters	1943-44
	Samuel Dicken	6 5	letters	1932-47
11	Earl Hamilton	2 5	letters	1943
12	Leslie Hewes	13 9	letters	1932-57
13	Isabel Kelly	17 17	letters	1935-39
		17 5	letters	1940
		29 13	letters	1941
		30 11	letters	1942-3
		40 20	letters	1944-75
14	Paul Kirchhoff	3 4	letters	1941-53
	Fred Kniffen	10 7	letters	1938-67
	Alfred Kroeber	17 2	letters	1932-46
	Robert Lowie	7 4	letters	1932-48
	John Leighly	10 14	letters	1931-46
15	Sanford Mosk	8 3	letters	1935-57
	Pablo Martinez del Rio	15 7	letters	1944-54
	Peveril Meigs	20 12	letters	1932-72
17	James Parsons	23 12	letters	1938-64
	Enrique Riess-Vasquez	4 4	letters	1936-42
	Emilio Romero	9 6	letters	1944-55
18	Daniel Stanislawski	33 11	letters	1940-59
19	C. Warren Thornthwaite	25 17	letters	1932-36
20	Robert West	12 7	letters	1937-72
	Mitchell Wilder	18 13	letters	1939-72
	Joseph Willits	104 78	letters	1934-45

* Also Sauer to Jackson, 24/6/60 courtesy of James J. Parsons.

(ii) Correspondence with organisations (OC):

Box 1	File:	Institute of Andean Research	1 letter	1941
	File:	Americanists, International Congresses	10 letters	1958-60
	File:	Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences	Misc.	1933
	File:	Misc. reviews of publications	19 items	
	File:	American Council of Learned Societies	6 letters	1937-47
Box 3	File:	Rockefeller Foundation	9 letters, 7 items, manuscripts.	1941-42

Includes correspondence with:
Catholic University of America
Ecuador Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
St. Claire M. Donnell
Edwin Ferdon
Tracy B. Kitteridge
Floyd Lyle

	File:	Rockefeller Foundation	48 letters	1934-62

Includes correspondence with:
William Berrien
Roger F. Evans
Floyd Lyle
Dr. Stacy May
Dr. Harry M. Miller
Philip E. Mosley
Janet Paine
David H. Stevens

Carton 7	File:	Henry Allan Moe Guggenheim Foundation	1934-44
	File:	Sauer, Rockefeller grants, Mexico	
	File:	Latin American Institute, Centre for Latin American Studies, Group in Latin American Studies.	

* Also Sauer to Willits c/o Rockefeller Archive (RG1.1)(RA).

(iii) Sauer quotations (LQ):

John Leighly collected together a selection of Sauer quotations from the Sauer papers. I have used these and referenced them in the thesis text as the other correspondence - with the names of the correspondents and the date - and with the prefix "LQ" for Leighly quotation collection (LQS for its supplement) followed by the page number.

(iv) Notebooks (SN):

I had some difficulties with the notebooks in terms of identification, i.e. the date of the excursion to which each corresponded. Some were placed in files and dated at a different time to the date marked on the front of the notebooks; others had no date attached. The absence of anyone with specific knowledge of the notebooks in the Bancroft Library further complicated the situation. The time span of the notebooks marked below is taken from the first and last entries of each book. The year date is either that marked on the notebook (M) or my guess (checking against West, 1979, op. cit.) from the content and time span of the notes. Pagination for quotations in the thesis text is either that of the notebooks themselves or my own numbering of the pages for identification.

Carton 4 File 7:		Notebook re trip to Mexico	10-28/6/31 (M)
	8:	-----	10/1-11/4/41 (?)
	10:	Notebook re trip to Baja	7/46 (?)
	11:	Notebook re trip to Mexico	18/5-25/6/33 (M)
	12:	-----	2/4-11/6/29 (M)
	13:	-----	17/12-30/12/29 (?)
	14:	-----	1-25/7/48 (M)
		-----	14/7-1/8/35 (?)
	16:	-----	1935/8 (M unclear)
	17:	-----	(? unclear)
	18:	-----	15/12-16/2/44 (?)
	25:	Unidentified notebook (possibly of Cuba trip)	23/3-11/7/46 (M)
Carton 4 File 21:		Notebook of Rockefeller Foundation sponsored trip to South America	1/1-10/5/42 (M)
Carton 4 File 34:		Miscellany.	
File 4:		Miscellany.	

II. THE KROEBER PAPERS:

The call number for reference in the Bancroft for Kroeber's notebooks and correspondence is C-B 925.

Carton 6 File: Kroeber notebooks (KN):
Mexico 1930
(four volumes)

III. INTERVIEWS/OTHER CORRESPONDENCE:

Quotations from the three sources below are marked in the thesis text as "pers. comm." and then (V) for video, (I) for interview and (L) for letter, followed by the date.

(i) Video interviews (V):

Two videos from the series Geographers on Film: an Oral History of North American Geography:

Carl O. Sauer interviewed by Preston James (24/8/70).

John Leighly interviewed by Alan Pred (8/1/80).

(ii) Personal interviews (I):

Interviews conducted by me during the period June 1992 to June 1993:

In the Department of Geography at Berkeley:

David Hooson	8/1992.
David Stoddart	-----
James Parsons	-----
Alan Pred	-----
Anne MacPherson	-----
Paul Starrs	-----

In Vancouver:

Phil Wagner	10/6/92
Alf Siemens	12/3/93
Dick Copley	-----

(iii) Personal correspondence (L):

Letters to me from contacts in Berkeley re: Sauer:

James Parsons	16/6/92 and 12/2/93
Anne MacPherson	15/2/93 and 22/6/93
Albert Elsasser	24/2/93 and 12/4/93