TRAVEL TEXTS AND MOVING CULTURES
A German-focused Comparative Analysis in the Context of the Mobilities Turn

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

At the University of Otago

Dunedin,

New Zealand

21, December, 2012.
Abstract

How does the experience of travel transform culture over time? This is the question at the heart of my thesis, which brings together two main areas of scholarship: the cultural analysis of literature and film, and the emerging field of mobilities studies. The objects of analysis are travel texts, i.e. literature and film critically engaged in the cultural experience of movement as travel. The selected texts, which are predominantly German, are re)viewed within the context of the mobilities turn. This emerging methodological direction (re)conceives of cultures as mobile, and is set out paradigmatically in Mimi Sheller’s and John Urry’s article “The New Mobilities Paradigm” (2006). Mobilities scholars critique traditional sedentary perspectives of people and place, such as that which Martin Heidegger promotes in his essay “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken” (1951). My analysis generally draws on two main concepts or ways of being, namely dwelling, or remaining in one place, which connotes stability, groundedness and permanence, and mobility, or travel to other destinations, which connotes movement, change, and uncertainty.

The main body of analysis is prefaced by an examination of the Greek epic, Homer’s Odyssey (ca. 750-700 BC). I consider Odysseus’s culturally foundational journey and the notion of his return to Ithaca as an ideal homecoming. Next, I review selected examples of travel writing from a historical period of significant social change defined by Reinhart Koselleck as the Sattelzeit, 1770-1830. During the Sattelzeit a culture founded on mobilities emerged and the desire for travel opened up a space in which new supplementary ideas were formed in relation to technology, Bildung, and culture. Works analysed include Georg Forster’s A Voyage Round the World (1777), which describes the young German scientist’s journey to New Zealand with Captain Cook. I also examine Adelbert von Chamisso’s Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte (1814). This fictional narrative by the exiled French-German includes the notable image of a traveller who loses his shadow and thus human contact, but gains seven-league boots which enable enhanced worldwide travel.

The Sattelzeit is then compared to the contemporary period of 1985-2010, which comprises two sections. In the first part encompassing 1985-1995, the central focus is on global turning point of 1989/90. The analysis of travel texts shows that travel is increasingly regarded as a human right. I look at the travel ideals of East German writers in the build-up to the Fall of the Berlin Wall, in Erich Loest’s novel Zwiebelmuster (1985) and Friedrich Christian Delius’s novella Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus (1995). I argue that after 1989/90 the world reaches a point-of-no-return with regard to the global intensification of mobilities. This is intimated in Andrei Ujica’s documentary film Out of the Present (1995) via an extra-terrestrial filmic gaze and the obsolescence of the cosmonaut’s national identity. In the second part, encompassing 1995-2010, I evaluate how travellers experience and negotiate the overwhelming presence of intense mobilities. This is intimated in Andrei Ujica’s documentary film Out of the Present (1995) via an extra-terrestrial filmic gaze and the obsolescence of the cosmonaut’s national identity. In the second part, encompassing 1995-2010, I evaluate how travellers experience and negotiate the overwhelming presence of intense mobilities. Here, Theodoros Angelopoulos’s film, Ulysses’ Gaze (1995) and Christoph Ransmayr’s drama, Odysseus, Verbrecher (2010) are examined as contemporary iterations of the Odyssey, which problematize the possibility of homecoming.

In the concluding section of this thesis I recapitulate the dominant themes with reference to Bernhard Schlink’s novel Heimkehr (2006), the odyssey of a young German man in search of his father. I suggest future directions for research. Further, I reflect on the extent
to which a German-focused comparative cultural analysis of travel texts makes a useful contribution to the emerging field of mobilities studies. A key outcome here is that the approach taken opens up the possibility of an evaluation of the ethics of ever-increasing mobility which is lacking in existing critical mobilities literature.
Acknowledgements

There are so many people who have contributed to the writing of this thesis. First and foremost I would like to thank my amazing supervisors, Simon Ryan and Tim Mehigan. They have been so supportive, kind and inspirational throughout the entire PhD process as well as throughout all my years at Otago. I most certainly could not have done this without you, and it has been a great privilege to know you and work with you. I hope we remain in contact for many years to come.

I am so lucky to have a wonderful family. Thank you to Yvonne, Graeme, Chris, Anita, Talia, James and Kerry Perkins and Deb Frazer. My Nanna Stewart and Grandma Perkins also provide me with inspiration, as do Poppa Stewart and Grandpa Perkins who we remember with a smile.

I have so many friends there is not even room here to mention you all, but you keep me entertained and encouraged in so many ways. Thanks to my pod office friends, Margi MacMurdo-Reading, Robert Styles, Dean Alexander, Niki Williams, Anne Begg, Kenton Storey and everyone else from the postgrad years. I am grateful for the friendship of Danielle Salmon, Pia Davie, Flavia Rubini-Lean, Lauren Moody, Nicola Lormans, Anneke Bhat, Adrienne Martin, Mel Lewis, Amy Lewis, Molly George, Claire Sims, Amanda Mulock, Karen Tustin, Hadley O’ Sullivan and so many others!

Thank you to the staff at Otago, particularly Charles Tustin, Thelma Fisher and also the administrative and academic staff of the Department of Languages and Cultures. I would also like to thank Martha Bell, Tara Duncan and Vivienne Anderson of Otago for connecting me to mobilities research in New Zealand.

Thank you to the University of Otago for the generous support of a postgraduate scholarship.

Thank you all the staff and young leaders at the Asia New Zealand Foundation who have provided me with amazing friends and opportunities.

Thanks also go to Hans-Liudger Dienel, Heike Wolter and the T²M International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility for the chance to travel to Berlin in 2011.

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Notes on Abbreviations and Citations

Travel Texts

- Travel texts are cited in-text using the following abbreviations:
  [OD]: Homer’s *Odyssey*
  [JmR]: Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769*
  [BeR]: Friedrich Nicolai’s *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781*
  [VRW]: Georg Forster’s *A Voyage Round the World*
  [AR]: Phillip Moritz’s *Anton Reiser*
  [WML]: Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*
  [B]: Heinrich von Kleist’s *Briefe 1 März 1793-April 1801*
  [PS]: Adelbert von Chamisso’s *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*
  [LeT]: Joseph von Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*
  [ZM]: Erich Loest’s *Zwiebelmuster*
  [SvR]: Friedrich Christian Delius’s, *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus*
  [OoP]: Andrei Ujica’s, *Out of the Present*
  [UG]: Theodoros Angelopoulos’s *Ulysses’ Gaze*
  [OV]: Christoph Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher*
  [HK]: Bernhard Schlink’s *Heimkehr*

Citations

- In the case that I have added emphasis to part of a quotation, I write “my emphasis.”
- In the case that emphasis within a quotation was part of the author’s original text, I write “author’s emphasis.”
- In the case that I repeat an earlier-cited quotation, I write “cited above.”
- In the case of the primary text *Odyssey*, I cite quotations with reference to the book number, followed by the verse line number.
- Where films are cited, I provide the approximate time code.
- Newspapers with no mentioned reporter take a shortened version of the title in subsequent footnoted forms.
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Goethe’s Stein des guten Glücks

In a quiet corner of Johann von Goethe’s Gartenhaus\(^1\) in Weimar, Germany, sits a sandstone sculpture that bears the name of Stein des guten Glücks, or Stone of Good Fortune.\(^2\) From here, the journey of this thesis begins. Aesthetically speaking, the sculpture is quite simple in form – in essence, it is merely a globe resting atop a cube. Yet, if one enquires into the cultural meanings behind the creation of the stone monument from a mobilities perspective, one is inevitably led down a path toward asking some of the most fundamental questions of human existence. A mobilities approach raises questions of physical and emotional movement, identity formation and relationships, and the continual search for ideal balance in life.

“Agatha Tyche gegründet!” wrote Goethe in his diary on 5\(^{th}\) April, 1777.\(^3\) This was the day on which the Stein des guten Glücks, sculpted by and designed in collaboration with

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\(^1\) In this thesis German terms are italicised.

\(^2\) Image from Karen Michels, *Geschichte: Goethes Stein des guten Glücks*, 2000, <http://www.art-stone.de/geschichte_stein_deutsch.htm>. In order to reduce the size of footnotes, access dates of web references are omitted from footnotes, but are provided in the bibliography.

Leipzig artist, Adam Friedrich Oeser, was erected in Goethe’s garden. Müller-Wolff explains the concept behind the form of the sculpture and how it relates to the Greek goddess of fortune, Tyche:


From this quotation one may venture that the Stein des guten Glücks provides an appropriate symbolic entry point for the introduction to this thesis in two main ways, namely in terms of the theoretical approach and periodization. First, one might relate the idea of “die gegensätzliche[n] Kräfte, die das Leben bestimmen” to the overall theoretical approach adopted here which is derived from John Urry’s and Mimi Sheller’s “New Mobilities Paradigm.”5 More specifically, the stone relates to the constant negotiation between two seemingly opposed ways of being: dwelling, or remaining in one place, on the one hand, and mobility, or travelling to other destinations, on the other. Connotations of dwelling, one could argue, are invoked by the cube that forms the base of the sculpture, “der Festigkeit, Stärke und Ruhe versinnbildlicht.” This relates to ideas of groundedness, permanence and strength; the earth that supports us, yet to which we – especially the travellers among us – do not wish to be bound. The sphere which rests atop the cube may be said to be representative of the concept of mobility itself, that is, “als Symbol des Veränderlichen, des Dynamischen […] in unberechenbarer Bewegung.” This sphere or globe relates to ideas of change, fluctuation, fate and uncertainty; movement or journeying can entail wondrous possibilities, but equally unforeseen danger or suffering. If the sculpture is then considered in its entirety as a single

form, it may be regarded as symbolic of humankind’s ever-changing and contradictory experience of travel – from something to be avoided or endured, to an educational experience, to a fundamental human right – and of the desire to represent these experiences in a variety of expressive modes.\(^6\)

**Goethe’s Exploration of Antinomies**

Much of Goethe’s work revolves about an exploration of antinomies. For example, as well as conveying these ideas through the medium of the garden sculpture, he wrote poems which engaged with permanence and stability on the one hand, and transience and change, on the other. A first version of the poem “An den Mond” was written at around the same time the *Stein des guten Glücks* was erected.\(^7\) The subject of “An den Mond” undergoes a kind of spiritual journey (indicated by the phrases “[m]eine Seele” and “mein Geschick”) in an evocative natural setting and narrates this experience in an address to the moon.\(^8\) To begin with, there is an atmosphere of peace and calm underscored by the phrases “Still mit Nebelglanz” and “Lindernd deinen Blick”.\(^9\) But this tranquil mood soon yields to a sense of threat and loss in the face of volatile change, which is sparked by the sight of the flowing river (“Fließe, fließe, lieber Fluß! / Nimmer werd ich froh, / So verrauchte Scherz und Kuß, / Und die Treue so”).\(^10\) Some three decades later, in 1801-3, Goethe wrote another poem with similar thematic concerns entitled “Dauer im Wechsel.”\(^11\) As the title suggests, one possible interpretation of this poem is a search for meaning and a sense of stability during a time of

\(^6\) The *Stein des Guten Glücks* may also be said to be representative of Goethe’s view of the Greeks as described by Trevelyan: “we may say that he saw in them a people that had understood better than any other how to give form to life on a great scale. They had had the urge to strike out recklessly and know life to the limit; but they had known also how to keep this urge within bounds so that it never lost itself in formlessness. Greek form might at times be superhumanly vast, but it remained always in form,” Humphry Trevelyan, *Goethe and the Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1942), 77.


\(^8\) Goethe and Gray 34; 35.

\(^9\) Goethe and Gray 34.

\(^10\) Goethe and Gray 35. This interpretation is based on Gray’s statement: “the sight of the flowing river recalls the transience of things”, Goethe and Gray 36.

\(^11\) Goethe and Gray 181-2.
increasing change and speed. The opening lines read: “Hielte diesen frühen Segen,/ Ach, nur Eine Stunde fest!/ Aber vollen Blütenregen/ Schüttelt schon der laue West”). Furthermore, in addition to adjusting to outward transitions or changes in nature, as illustrated in the allusion to Heraclitus’s formulation, “Ach, und in demselben Flusse/ Schwimmst du nicht zum zweitenmal”, Goethe also suggests that one’s own sense of identity and point of view changes over time: “Mauern siehst du, siehst Paläste/ Stets mit andern Augen an”. These two poems, written some thirty years apart, appear to demonstrate a kind of gradual coming to terms with the ambiguity of life on the part of the author. Still, Goethe does not appear to resolve in any final sense the question of an ideal balance between permanence and change or dwelling and mobility. With reference to the poem “Dauer im Wechsel” Gray writes: “It is perhaps significant in this connection that the rhythm and rhyme scheme continue to race on toward the end as though no whole solution, reflected in sound as well as sense, had been found.”

**Goethe’s Stone Sculpture and the Thesis Periodization**

How might the *Stein des guten Glücks* “als Sinnbild der Zeit” also relate symbolically to the periodization of this thesis? My analysis takes into consideration those periods of human history which have been identified by historians and other scholars of human society as fundamentally significant in terms of world-impacting cultural, social and political transition and which, moreover, are marked by dramatic and irrevocable changes in cultural mobility, such as those which occur around such an event as the French Revolution, the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). These transitional periods are analysed in this thesis from the perspective of writers and filmmakers of selected travel texts in three selected. The first text I consider, the *Odyssey* (ca. 750-700

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12 Goethe and Gray 181.
14 Goethe and Gray 183.
BC), is drawn from the end of the heroic period in Greek antiquity. The second two periods I focus on occur in the period of Modernity, namely, the Sattelzeit 1770-1830, and the contemporary periods of 1985-1995 and 1995-2010.

**Part I: A Point of Departure**

Part I: A Point of Departure can be linked to the ideas behind the conception of Goethe’s *Stein des guten Glücks* by way of an idealisation of the Greek way of life in the classical age, including forms of dwelling and mobility. Goethe, somewhat one-sidedly and optimistically focused on the goddess Tyche as representative of a positive turn of fate: “speziell für das gütige Geschick und damit für den günstigen Ausgang aller Dinge.” In doing so he was likely imitating the beliefs widespread among a cult of early Greek thinkers, as Matheson explains: “Since the general perception of Tyche was of an unpredictable, often evil force, the most extensive cult was developed to Agathe Tyche, “Good Fortune,” in an attempt to counter Tyche’s basic nature.” Goethe enjoyed a relatively stable, contented period in his life in his garden house in Weimar and the thought process behind the stone sculpture likely reflected his feeling of good fortune: “Agatha Tyche gegründet!” Fate had led him here to a place in which to dwell, to experience a kind of (albeit temporary) homecoming, as set out in the following commentary:


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17 This point is reinforced in the sculpture’s title.
Goethe was indeed very familiar with Homer’s *Odyssey*,\(^{20}\) and also read the epic while in Weimar, as Trevelyan points out:

The earliest reference to Homer in the Weimar period reads like a passage from *Werther*. On Christmas Eve 1775 Goethe wrote to the Duke from Waldeck, a hamlet in the woods behind Jena: “I will ask the parson if he has the *Odyssey*. If he has not, I will send to Jena for it. It is impossible to do without it in this simple Homeric world.\(^{21}\)

Moreover, there are further traces of the epic to be found in Goethe’s own work, as Vail observes: “Homeric echoes abound in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* [published in 1774]. [...] The parallels between the stories of Odysseus and Werther are many[.].”\(^{22}\) While Tyche was not known to Homer (she became a goddess around the 4th century BC)\(^{23}\) perhaps unknowingly Goethe conflated the idea of Odysseus’s return with the idea of good fortune as a reflection of his own experience. Did Goethe perhaps identify his early experience in Weimar with Odysseus’s homecoming to Ithaca? In any case, the heroic figure of Odysseus in Homer’s epic, the *Odyssey*, has long retained literary and non-literary popularity, just as the story of his homecoming to Ithaca has long been held as an enduring image of an ideal return. This is the particular focus Part I of this thesis.

**Part II: An Emerging Mobilities Culture**

Part II: An Emerging Mobilities Culture, focuses on the second major time period I examine in this thesis, the *Sattelzeit* of 1770-1830. As noted above, the *Stein des guten Glücks* was erected in 1777, and thus is temporally situated proximate to the beginning of the *Sattelzeit*. The concept behind this stone sculpture, (“Festigkeit, Stärke und Ruhe” vis-à-vis “d[als] Verändliche[.], d[als] Dynamische[.]] [...] Bewegung”) implies that Goethe, at this point in time, while having a thorough knowledge of Greek Antiquity, was also already reflecting on ideas of movement vs. stasis, of stability vs. uncertainty as they were manifesting at that time.

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\(^{21}\) Trevelyan 84.

\(^{22}\) Vail ii; 38. For further details on the parallels between Odysseus and Werther see Vail 38-44.

\(^{23}\) Matheson 19.
Goethe was responding to the changing society around him in which a culture founded on mobilities was slowly emerging. This would explain, in part, his problematizing of the link between Greek culture and the realities of the present he was living through:

During the latter part of 1776 and the beginning of 1777 there is no evidence to show how he regarded the Greeks[,] nor how he related them to his struggle. But the position of Greek culture in modern life exercised him much during this period, both as a personal and as a social problem.  

Despite a gradual opening up to the idea of the benefits of travel at this time, embarking on epic journeys for educational purposes was by no means commonplace, especially near the commencement of the period I am calling, after Reinhart Koselleck, the Sattelzeit. This is perhaps one of the reasons why Goethe chose to keep his Stein des guten Glücks in his private garden, away from the critical gaze of the general public: “Da Goethe den ‘Stein des guten Glücks’ in seinem eigenen Garten aufstellte, mußte er auf dessen allgemeine Verständlichkeit für den Betrachter keine Rücksicht nehmen.” Still, in his own work and in the company he chose to keep, one can see a clear and enduring interest in the cultural possibilities of travel. This is made evident in the appearance of his 1795-6 Bildungsroman, Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre, in which a young man leaves his home village to go out in the world and experience what travel can make possible in his life. This narrative was possibly in part influenced by an amicable meeting between Goethe and Georg Forster, renowned naturalist, circumnavigator and author of the 1777 travel text A Voyage Round the World, in Goethe’s house in Weimar in September 1785. Another example which

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24 Trevelyan 85.
26 Müller-Wolff 63. The sculpture was also particularly unusual for the time due to its simplistic form: "Für die damalige Zeit ist das schlichte Steinmonument äußerst ungewöhnlich, ja fortschrittlich: keine Schnörkel, kein Ornament – nur einfache geometrische Formen. Tatsächlich ist der „Stein des guten Glücks“ eines der ersten nicht-figürlichen Denkmäler Deutschlands!”. Audioguidetext.
27 Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre ed. Erich Schmidt (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1980). Subsequent references take the form “[WML]” in parentheses followed by the page number.
demonstrates Goethe’s enduring interest in the cultural possibilities of travel can found in his travel narrative *Italienische Reise*.\(^{30}\) *Italienische Reise* documents his travels around Italy from 1786-88 and was originally published in 1816-17:

> It was above all antiquity – the Rome of Winckelmann and the Rome of Greece – which Goethe discovered on his Italian journey. He was moved by Raphael and Paladio and by the Italian landscape and sky. [...] He was refreshing his roots of poetry by the escape from the abstemiousness of Weimar to the license of Rome.\(^{31}\)

Goethe’s Italian Journey is thus significant in terms of the liberating experience of travel and the impact of this of Goethe’s poetic development.


In the twenty-first century, Goethe’s stone monument is no longer a private symbol of contemplation. Tourists from around the world are able to view the *Stein des guten Glücks* six days a week as part of organized tours of the garden house.\(^{32}\) The researcher in New Zealand is able to download audio in German about the stone, the same audio the tourist with headphones listens to while walking through Goethe’s garden in Weimar.\(^{33}\) Anywhere in the world, a consumer with access to the internet and a credit card can purchase a marble replica of the sculpture in black, white, yellow or red for € 97.\(^{34}\)

What do these dramatic changes reveal with regard to the final analytical section of the thesis: Part III: The Contemporary Period of New Mobilities (1985-1995 and 1995-2010)? Contemporary modes of access to the *Stein des guten Glücks* support the following

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\(^{30}\) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Charles Adolphus Buchheim, *Goethe's Italienische Reise: the German Text, with English Notes, Literary and Biographical Introductions, and a Complete Vocabulary* (London: David Nutt, 1897).


\(^{33}\) Klassik Stiftung Weimar

general inferences about the changes from the *Sattelzeit* to the contemporary period: mobility is no longer emerging, but rather omnipresent; much of what was private is now publically and internationally accessible, whether in the form of a tourist attraction or downloadable internet files. What technological forces and human desires led to this major transition and how does it impact on our everyday lives? In addressing this question and in my analyses of adapting technology and mobile human experience, I focus on questions of representation: I concentrate on representations of events and physical phenomena and their social consequences. Rather than examining everyday lives per se, my focus is on cultural representations of everyday lives and how they have been transformed by experiences of mobility. This is one of the issues addressed by the filmmakers and travel texts of 1985-1995, such as Erich Loest’s novel *Zwiebelmuster* (1985)\(^{35}\) and Andrei Ujica’s documentary film *Out of the Present* (1995).\(^ {36}\) In the process of global mobilisation something is undoubtedly gained: the traveller is now able to view the historic *Stein des guten Glücks* at first hand. At the same time, something is lost: a monument imbued with personal symbolic significance for Goethe is reduced to a reproducible on-line shopping commodity. Accordingly, in the contemporary period, it is the aim of some travel text writers, such as filmmaker Theodoros Angelopoulos, director of the 1995 film, *Ulysses’ Gaze*,\(^ {37}\) and Christoph Ransmayr, author of the 2010 play *Odysseus, Verbrecher*,\(^ {38}\) to question the supposed advantages of the current state of the mobilised world. In this mobilised world the image of an ideal homecoming, such as that depicted in the *Odyssey*, persists, yet is no longer possible in the Homeric sense of a singular journey with a successful homecoming. What would Goethe think of this

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36 *Out of the Present*, dir. Andrei Ujica, K Films, 1996. Original release date was 1995. Subsequent references take the form “[OoP]” in parentheses followed by the time code.

37 *Ulysses’ Gaze*, dir. Theodoros Angelopoulos, Madman, 2006. Original release date was 1995. Subsequent references take the form “[UG]” in parentheses followed by the time code.

38 Christoph Ransmayr, *Odysseus, Verbrecher* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2010). Subsequent references take the form “[OV]” in parentheses followed by the page number.
contemporary penchant for mobility? It is difficult to speculate about this as he himself never quite found the answer to the question of how to find the right balance between dwelling and mobility: “Das Streben nach dem Ausgleich einander wiederstrebender Mächte sollte ihn zeitlebens beschäftigen.” In the following section I outline my methodological approach to analysing different responses to this question, which is one of the main issues I consider in this thesis.

1.2 A Mobilities Approach to the Analysis of Travel Texts

I refer to my approach of this thesis as a German-focused comparative cultural analysis of travel texts (both literature and film), from a mobilities perspective. I clarify what is meant by a mobilities perspective by way of a discussion of concepts that have emerged in the new field of mobilities studies, notions of culture and globalisation, a new approach to the discussion of travel literature emerging from the paradigm of mobilities, and, finally, a discussion of the ways in which one may identify this project as comparative.

Ernst Jünger’s Concept of Total Mobilisation

The German term for travel or journey, die Reise, in one of its earliest forms is etymologically grounded in the concept of military mobilisation. The following entry for the term Reise is provided in the 1891 Etymological Dictionary of the German Language:

Reise, f., ‘journey, travel, voyage,’ from MiDHG [Middle High German of approximately 1050 to 1350]. reise, f., departure, march, journey, military expedition.  

In the period between the First World War and the Second World War, the German writer and intellectual Ernst Jünger contributed significantly to ideas about the economic, social and

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39 Müller-Wolff 63. See Chapter Three, 92, for a discussion on the way in which Goethe utilised the idea of Bildung as a mediating concept between the states of dwelling and movement.

40 In a general sense, military mobilisation has been defined as: “the process of assembling and organizing troops, materiel, and equipment for active military service in time of war [...] [which] brings together the military and civilian sectors of society to harness the total power of the nation”, John Whiteclay Chambers, ed., The Oxford Companion to American Military History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 208.


42 Kluge 283.
political consequences of increasing movement and mobility.\textsuperscript{43} While the work of Jünger has not been extensively acknowledged in contemporary mobilities scholarship, he is a well-known figure in German studies.\textsuperscript{44} Furthermore, an understanding of his approach is vital to contextualise the emergence of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling, which is a key theoretical idea in this thesis, as I set out below. This contention is supported by Tijmes’s statement: “Juenger’s work is important to consider since his influence on Heidegger is large and not well known.”\textsuperscript{45} On the other hand, sociologist Georg Simmel’s work of the early 1900s is (appropriately, if sometimes superficially) credited as “establish[ing] a broad agenda for the [contemporary] analysis of mobilities.”\textsuperscript{46} Yet after Simmel, it is notably Jünger who foregrounds new forms of mobility and the spread of mobilisation through technical-industrial societies.

Jünger sets out his argument in two essays “Feuer und Bewegung”\textsuperscript{47} and “Die totale Mobilmachung,”\textsuperscript{48} both published in 1930. In the following passage, Jünger outlines the far-reaching significance of military mobilisation:

Neben den Heeren, die sich auf den Schlachtfeldern begegnen, entstehen die neuartigen Heere des Verkehrs, der Ernährung, der Rüstungsindustrie – das Heer der Arbeit überhaupt. […] [Das] macht den Weltkrieg zu einer historischen Erscheinung, die an Bedeutung der Französischen Revolution überlegen ist. Um Energien von solchem Ausmaß zu entfalten, genügt es nicht mehr, den Schwertarm zu rüsten – es ist eine Rüstung bis ins innerste Mark, bis in den feinsten Lebensnerv erforderlich. Sie zu verwirklichen ist die Aufgabe der Totalen Mobilmachung[.].\textsuperscript{49}

Thus, total military mobilisation, which reached its ultimate form in the First World War, involves all members of society, whether military or civilian. As Kaes has summarised it: “[F]or Jünger total mobilization was nothing other than a total system in which every

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item For example see “Special Issue on Ernst Jünger,” \textit{New German Critique} 59.Spring/Summer.
\item Tijmes 201.
\item Jünger (b) 126.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
movement is functionalized for the good of the state.” Technological advances were an integral part of the unprecedented military mobilisation of the First World War: “Es war zu erwarten, daß im Zeitalter der Technik die Mittel und Methoden der Kriegführung einer schnelleren und gründlicheren Veränderung unterliegen würden, als sie sonst im Wechsel der feindlichen Begegnungen, die zwischen Menschen stattfanden, beobachtet worden sind.” In addition, Jünger points out that these technical advances in the conduct of warfare cannot be differentiated from everyday social life in times of peace: “[D]er Krieg ist nicht ein Zustand, der völlig seinen eigenen Gesetzen unterworfen ist, sondern eine andere Seite des Lebens, die selten an der Oberfläche tritt, aber eng mit ihm verbunden ist.” The repercussions of the First World War for humanity were almost beyond comprehension: “[e]ine Mobilisation von diesem Umfang hatte der menschliche Verstand zu Beginn des Weltkrieges noch nicht vorgesehen.” With the development of mass killing machines, Jünger states, empathy for others decreases: “An vielen Stellen ist die humanitäre Maske fast abgetragen, dafür tritt ein halb grotesker, halb barbarischer Fetischismus der Maschine […] hervor.” As such, the First World War should then be generally regarded as: “das größte und wirksamste Ereignis dieser Zeit.” In 1980, Jünger reflected on his earlier work and concluded that his ideas concerning the significance of military mobilisation and the fetishisation of technology still held true. He observed: “Die Rüstung der Weltmächte hat planetarische Maße gewonnen[.] […] Jeder rüstet, und jeder wirft es dem anderen vor. Das wird zugleich als Teufelskreis

50 Kaes 112.
52 Jünger 1980(a), 108. In a similar vein Kaes writes, “[t]he general process of militarization and mobilization necessitated by the war was not abandoned when the war ended”, 112.
53 Jünger 1980(b), 126.
54 Jünger 1980(b), 140.
55 Jünger 1980(b), 121.
empfunden wie auch in Paraden zelebriert.” In 1998, Tijmes writes: “No one who reflects on technology in our time can afford to overlook Juenger.”

**The Emergence of Mobilities Studies**

There are other precursors to the emergence of the field I term here as *mobilities studies*, including Paul Virilio, who was greatly influenced by Jünger, but neither their work nor Jünger’s is a primary methodological focus of this study. Crucial to my undertaking here is the research of sociologist John Urry in the late 1990s and early 2000s. One may identify three of his seminal texts (two as co-author) as being important for the constitution of mobilities research as a research field in its own right. In his 2003 article, ‘Social Networks, Travel and Talk’, Urry examines “the role that physical, corporeal travel plays in social life” in light of, “a large and increasing scale of such travel that has grown simultaneously with the proliferation of communication devices that might substitute for travel.” Up to this point, the bulk of research on travel had been undertaken by transport engineers and economists. It is imperative, he observes, “to contribute to the emerging ‘mobility turn’ within the social sciences.” The 2006 inaugural editorial of the journal *Mobilities* adds weight to his claim for the existence of a mobility/mobilities turn. Hannam’s, Sheller’s and Urry’s 2006 essay entitled “Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings,” provides further

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56 Jünger 1980(b), 142.
58 For an example of the way in which Jünger’s work influenced Virilio see Kaes 106.
60 Urry 2003, 155.
61 Urry 2003, 156.
62 Urry 2003, 155.
63 Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller and John Urry, ”Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings,” *Mobilities* 1.1 (2006): 1-22. Subsequent references take the form “Hannam, Sheller and Urry” followed by the page number. I prefer to refer to this turn as the “mobilities turn” rather than “the mobility turn.” The “mobilities turn” has connotations of plural and multidirectional movement as well as semantically differentiating this field of study from conventional understandings of the term “mobility” related only to movement per se.
contextualisation for mobilities studies and emerging directions in related terms of research.

They state:

Mobility has become an evocative keyword for the twenty-first century and a powerful discourse that creates its own effects and contexts. [...] 'mobility turn' is spreading into and transforming the social sciences, not only placing new issues on the table, but also transcending disciplinary boundaries and putting into question the fundamental ‘territorial’ and ‘sedentary’ precepts of twentieth-century social science.64

The mobility turn is a turn away from traditional methods of social science research which essentially imagine research subjects as still or non-mobile, as “territorial” citizens of specific places, which they never leave because they are viewed as “sedentary.”

Arguably the most fundamental contribution to the advent of mobilities research is an article published in the same year by Sheller and Urry entitled “The New Mobilities Paradigm.” The authors of this paper further develop the conceptual aspects of the mobilities turn by setting out its characteristics, properties, and implications in paradigmatic terms.65 Sheller and Urry underscore the dramatic changes that are occurring globally in terms of physical and virtual travel: “[a]ll the world seems to be on the move”, yet have largely been ignored.66 The new “mobilities paradigm” is identified as interdisciplinary in scope; the authors go on to specify those particular disciplines which have been the driving force behind the mobilities turn, namely, “anthropology, cultural studies, geography, migration studies, science and technology studies, tourism and transport studies, and sociology.”67 At the same time, the paradigm is concerned mainly with sociological questions and this can lead to analyses which are empirical and lacking a wider critical context. While my thesis takes as its basis the general conceptual concerns laid out by Sheller and Urry, it also contributes to the extension and modification of the paradigm. Given that my methodology in this thesis incorporates the analysis of writing and film, my approach has the effect of broadening the

64 Hannam, Sheller and Urry 1-2.
65 Sheller and Urry 207. Interestingly, Sheller and Urry make no mention of Ernst Jünger as influencing mobilities studies.
66 Sheller and Urry 207.
67 Sheller and Urry 208.
ambit of mobilities research and argues for the inclusion of cultural and literary aspects in the discussion of a new “mobilities paradigm.” A focus on the representation of experience, rather than on the way in which mobilities operates at a functional level, means that my analysis provides the mobilities paradigm with a critical accent by taking it into the domain of cultural reflection. In the next section I explore this idea further by addressing the following questions: to what extent does this approach sit alongside or diverge from terms in which the new mobilities paradigm has so far been formulated? Although the analytical perspective I develop may be regarded as being tangential to the concerns of the paradigm expounded by Sheller and Urry in the area of sociology, these theorists are encouraging a degree of openness toward the aims of mobilities research. Rather than viewing the field as an already established set of parameters, they state: “The new mobilities paradigm suggests a set of questions, theories, and methodologies rather than a totalising or reductive description of the contemporary world.” Moreover, Sheller and Urry call for a mobilisation of theory itself in order to adequately research contemporary movement: “New mobilities are bringing into being new surprising combinations of presence and absence as the new century chaotically unfolds. Methods and theories will need to be ever on the move to keep up with these new forms of mobilities.” The cultural dilemma of how to reconcile the desire to stay with the desire to go, or the search for the ideal balance between these conflicting desires, I argue, is at the heart of human experience. My analytical approach thus contributes to and extends Sheller’s and Urry’s aims by introducing a critical cultural accent to the new mobilities paradigm. I interrogate some canonical texts as well as lesser known ones within the framework of mobilities research in order to encapsulate the importance of imagination and representation in the spaces through which the traveller moves. My analysis is based on

68 See also Chapter Six, 260-1.
69 Sheller and Urry 210.
70 Sheller and Urry 222.
the premise that travel becomes meaningful first and foremost at the conceptual level, as idea, image, ideal or desire, and thus takes mobilities into the sphere of textuality and visuality.

**Conceptualising Mobility**

The growing body of scholarship in the field of mobilities studies may be taken as an acknowledgement of a scholarly shift toward centring social research on experiences of movement and travel. As a result of the interdisciplinary nature of the field, mobility has been conceptualised in a number of different ways. Commonly, it is conceived of in terms of a continuum with little or no movement at one end, and extreme mobility at the other, or a dialectical relationship between these two points.\(^{71}\) Hannam, Sheller and Urry indicate a preference for visualising mobility in terms of mobilities and moorings, and the systems which they produce:

> Mobilities cannot be described without attention to the necessary spatial, infrastructural and institutional moorings that configure and enable mobilities\(^{2}\) […] There are interdependent systems of ‘immobile’ material worlds and especially some exceptionally immobile platforms, transmitters, roads, garages, stations, aerials, airports, docks, factories through which mobilizations of locality are performed and re-arrangements of place and scale materialized. The complex character of such systems stems from the multiple fixities or moorings often on a substantial physical scale that enable the fluidities of liquid modernity, and especially of capital.\(^{72}\)

The focus on mobilities and “moorings” is particularly useful for perceiving the world in terms of the movement of people, objects and currency through a complex set of systems, as opposed to a more grounded view which places emphasis primarily on places rather than the movement. It is useful in understanding processes of globalisation as movement per se, at a meta-level. This is particularly applicable for contextualising the historical background of the time periods which I discuss in this thesis. Further, the term *mobilities* in the plural highlights the complexity and multiplicity of such movements, and the term moorings denotes the predominantly *temporary* nature of rests or pauses between movements, which, I argue, is a condition of contemporary mobilities.

\(^{71}\) Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2.

\(^{72}\) Hannam, Sheller and Urry 3.
In a keynote address entitled “On Staying” at the inaugural conference of the Travel Research Network of the University of Melbourne, cultural studies expert Mary Louise Pratt offered another variation on conceptualising mobility. In this presentation, Pratt conceived of travel in terms of relations between bodies that move and bodies that stay, or goers and stayers. The relationship between goers and stayers organises cultural spaces, for example, in the activity of visiting: someone is at home and someone comes by their home. This relational perspective on mobility is particularly useful for revealing the underlying or assumed power dynamics that emerge when some people are mobile and others are immobile. Pratt suggests that it often those who stay who are overlooked by researchers, in spite of the fact that stayers are crucial to enabling the mobility of goers. She gives the example of stayers who provide support in the forms of providing necessary accommodation to travellers on a pilgrimage journey, or those who stay behind maintaining families or factories while others travel to war. While the main focus in this thesis is on the experiences of those who travel, I also pay attention to the traveller’s relationship with the loved ones or stayers who remain behind, with particular regard to the way in which stayers are the integral part of the traveller’s image of home.

The Concept of Dwelling

The dialectical relationship between moorings and mobilities, and the relations between goers and stayers are both conceptually useful to this thesis for the reasons outlined above. However, both conceptualisations of mobility are somewhat limited in terms of addressing the foci and analytical dimensions of this thesis. Here, I expand instead on an approach mentioned but not concentrated on by Sheller and Urry in the new mobilities paradigm, that is, conceptualising mobility on a continuum with dwelling at one end and intense mobility at

73 Mary Louise Pratt, "On Staying", Travel Ideals: Engaging with Spaces of Mobility, University of Melbourne, 18 July, 2012.
74 Pratt’s point can be related to Jünger’s concept of total mobilisation above as a process involving goers (soldiers) and stayers (civilians at home).
the other. As time goes on, generally speaking, the world moves along the continuum toward intense mobility, although there are important exceptions, as demonstrated in Part III, Chapter Four, which includes analysis on enforced dwelling in the German Democratic Republic.

In the new mobilities paradigm, Sheller and Urry refer to the concept of dwelling when they call into question the extant theory of sedentarism. Sedentarism, they explain, “treats as normal stability, meaning, and place, and treats as abnormal distance, change, and placelessness”, and, methodologically speaking, “locates bounded and authentic places or regions or nations as the fundamental basis of human identity and experience and as the basic units of social research.”

Sheller and Urry add that sedentarism: “is often derived loosely from [Martin] Heidegger for whom dwelling (or wohnen) means to reside or to stay, to dwell at peace, to be content or at home in a place.” Here, they somewhat fleetingly reference Heidegger’s concept of dwelling as it is set out in his 1951 essay “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken.” However, rather than loosely basing my critique of sedentarism or fixed-culture on Heidegger’s concept of dwelling, I take his concept as an analytical point of departure.

It is important to note that Heidegger’s concept of dwelling does not completely preclude travel, but it does assume that travel is the exceptional way of being and is to be carried out for necessary purposes only, such as work (as in the following example) or, one may hazard, war (as in the case of Odysseus in the Odyssey). Heidegger writes: “Wir wohnen nicht bloß, das wäre beinahe Untätigkeit, wir stehen in einem Beruf, wir machen Geschäfte, wir reisen und wohnen unterwegs, bald hier, bald dort.” In other words, the concept of

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75 Sheller and Urry 208-9.
76 Sheller and Urry 208.
77 Martin Heidegger, “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken,” Vorträge und Aufsätze (Stuttgart: Günther Neske Pfullingen, 1990), 139-56.
dwelling does not entail complete inactivity. Rather, dwelling has to do with limiting one’s movement to travel that is strictly necessary, and to a concomitant set of values that revolve around the home, family and a peaceful existence.

Heidegger’s concept of dwelling or the notion of sedentarism can be applied to the epic Greek travel journey, Homer’s *Odyssey*. At the point in the story when Odysseus comes across King Alcinous’s daughter Nausicaa after being washed up on the island of Skheria, he flatters her thus: “may the Gods requite all your heart’s desire; husband, house and especially ingenious accord within that house: for there is nothing so good as when man and wife in their home dwell together in unity of mind and disposition” (OD, 6: V. 180-4). Dwelling, Heidegger suggests, involves restricted mobility “im Bereich unseres Wohnens”, or the “domain of our dwelling.” In my analysis I refer to this concept with the term “dwelling-place.” It follows that wayfaring is unsettling and has negative implications; relentless and aimless wandering to foreign places, i.e. outside the domain, having temporary homes (or no home) is highly objectionable and leads to an unhappy, tumultuous life, such as Odysseus’s harrowing experiences in the period before he finally reached his home of Ithaca. Conversely, when people remain and dwell within a limited geographical space, it means that culture is, from this Heideggerian perspective, rooted, easily contained, maintained and defined. This is in stark contrast to the contemporary boundary blurring notion of “dwelling-in-travel” or, as Sheller and Urry term it, “material and sociable dwelling-in-motion,” for example, in a travelling automobile.

Examining sedentarism from the viewpoint of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling brings a significant analytical perspective to the thesis and prompts discussion of issues such as the origin of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling. As mentioned above, Heidegger’s philosophy was

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79 Heidegger 1990, 139; Heidegger 1978, 323.
80 This term is influenced by Sheller’s and Urry’s observation that Heidegger “talks of dwelling places”, 208.
82 Sheller and Urry 214.
influenced by the work of Ernst Jünger. Tijmes notes how Jünger’s thinking regarding the impact of technology on changes in modernity played a part in the formation of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling:

Martin Heidegger […] was deeply influenced by Juenger but did not join his warm and drastic enthusiasm for technology […] Heidegger borrowed from Juenger the idea that modern technology ushers in a revolutionary period of history, and he was convinced that this revolution leads to alienation or uprootedness. Heidegger tried to counter this situation.  

One might say that Heidegger tried to counter this situation by advocating a rooted life and placing less value on modern technologies which enable mobility. Another issue to address is the question, how does the desire for a dwelling-life compare to the desire to travel? In addition, I ask, why does this in many respects outmoded concept maintain its appeal as a way of living or a set of values in the contemporary period where life seems predicated on travel and the need for it?

**Understandings of Culture and Globalisation**

One may understand the field of mobilities studies as a subfield of globalisation studies. This is because at the heart of its enquiry is a critical examination of the impacts of intensification (in speed and frequency) of the worldwide movement of people, objects and information. At the same time, it is important to point out that as well as problematizing the focus on sedentarism, mobilities studies also seek to question understandings of globalisation “that posit a new ‘grand narrative’ of mobility, fluidity or liquidity.” While new technologies enable the flow of some travellers, this is by no means a universal phenomenon. One must take into consideration the power relations and political contestations arising from varying levels of access to mobility that “enhance the mobility of some peoples and places

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83 Tijmes 202.

84 See Chapter Four, 134-8 for discussion on different understandings of globalisation processes and how these relate to mobilities studies.

85 See Chapter Four, 146, for an example of a traveller who decides to move slowly and with man-powered technology and see Chapter Five, 247, for an example of an extreme sky diver who jumps from space and can be viewed using internet technology. See also Chapter Three, 60-1; 62-3, in which I discuss global exploration and the development of international trade during the Sattelzeit.

86 Sheller and Urry 210, author’s emphasis.
and heighten the immobility of others, especially as they try to cross borders."87 For instance, "[r]ights to travel [...] are highly uneven and skewed even between a pair of countries."88 Therefore a mobilities perspective allows one to acknowledge the operation of dominant assumptions, such as sedentarist or universalist viewpoints, while at the same time developing a kind of third or alternative position allowing these viewpoints to be transcended and new accommodations with mobility to be reached.

One example I discuss in this thesis demonstrates the way in which a mobilities perspective can shed new light on popular explanations of the worldwide political climate around a period I hold to be pivotal: 1989/90. For example, one may conjecture that a universalist outlook on culture led political scientist Francis Fukuyama to declare an end to history in 1989 on the basis of an alleged universalization of the values enshrined in Western liberal democracy.89 Similarly, one may suggest that political scientist Samuel P. Huntington took a sedentarist approach when he declared a clash of civilizations between the eastern and western worlds in 1993.90 Yet, these readings of the periods in question based on these assumptions do not adequately explain the desire for travel of East Germans before the Fall of the Berlin Wall, and why East German writer Erich Loest, for example, could devote an entire novel (Zwiebelmuster) to discussion of the psychological need to transcend the limited geographical space of the GDR in which he is trapped. Neither can these theories account for the reasons why Greek film producer Theodoros Angelopoulos would script and direct a film (Ulysses’ Gaze) which explores the travel desire of a Greek-American filmmaker who wishes to travel through the contemporary geographical space of the Balkans, as well as back through time in the hope of finding a perspective on life lost for nearly a century.

87 Sheller and Urry 207.
88 Hannam, Sheller and Urry 3.
90 Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?,” Foreign Affairs 72.3 (Summer 1993): 22-49.
Still, if one is to claim that universalist and sedentarist approaches to understanding culture do not suffice in order to explain the complexities of historic and contemporary social experience, how then is one to understand culture in relation to travel? Methodologically speaking, on what assumptions a cultural analysis of travel texts be justified? An answer to these questions may be found in the anthropologist James Clifford’s 1992 essay “Traveling Cultures.” Clifford’s article outlines a particular theoretical approach to conducting anthropological field research:

One needs to focus on hybrid cosmopolitan experiences as much as on rooted, native ones. […] The goal is not to replace the cultural figure “native” with the intercultural figure “traveler.” Rather the task is to focus on mediations of the two, in specific cases of historical tension and relationship. In varying degrees, both are constitutive of what will count as cultural experience. I am not recommending that we make the margin a new center (e.g. “we” are all travelers) but rather that the specific dynamics of dwelling/traveling be comparatively organized.91

Experience gained while travelling is equally as constitutive of cultural experience as not travelling. As Pratt suggests, one possible way forward for mobilities research is to look at the relations between stayers and goers (“mediations of the two”). One may ask, what is it that makes one decide to set forth from a rooted existence and make the transition from stayer to goer or vice versa? Which ideas, ideals, political and social restraints, relationship difficulties, future prospects, notions of self-formation etc. motivate travel itself in different time periods, or “in specific cases of historical tension”? And, further, what motivates writers and filmmakers to represent cultural experiences of travel in writing and on film? To paraphrase Clifford, without making the margin a new centre or adopting a universalist approach, I attempt to answer these questions by conceptually organising specific cultural dynamics of global and even extra-global experience. I identify how these cultural dynamics relate to, on the one hand, an insistence on dwelling, and concomitant notions of permanence and stability as connoted by the cube part of Goethe’s sculpture, and, on the other hand, the

91 Clifford 101. See Chapter Four, 152-5, Chapter Five, 210-12, for further discussion of Huntington’s thesis.
compulsion for intense mobility, and associated notions of speed, change and unpredictability as connoted by the sphere part of Goethe’s sculpture.

**On the Meaning of Travel Texts**

In this thesis, I define the objects of analysis as *travel texts*, and by this I mean works of literature and film which critically engage with the cultural experience of travel. Here, I consciously depart from travel writing in the conventional sense which may be somewhat limited by encompassing only that which is considered canonical literature, or by certain disciplinary approaches such as tourism studies, (e.g. of guidebooks), or studies of colonialism (e.g. of travelogues of missionaries). In my approach, travel texts are those texts which include a variety of cultural experiences of mobility across time. For this reason, I consider under the rubric of travel texts, the analysis of which I approach not in the terms of conventional film theory, but in the context of exploring the usefulness of the mobilities paradigm itself. Each travel text sheds light on a particular individual’s understanding of the world in relation to others and how this changes over the course of their journey. Adopting such an openly premised enquiry allows the analysis to move in unanticipated, yet coherent directions.  

Generally speaking, the geographical pathway of this analysis broadens over time and constitutes a journey from Greece, through Germany and Europe, to the antipodes and, finally, into the space surrounding the earth. While traditional approaches call for more fixed approaches, (e.g. an analysis of British writers in France), there are two main reasons why I do not adopt this kind of restricted approach. The first argument relates to the problems with imagining spaces as fixed. The second point relates to the oftentimes transnational or highly mobile identities of writers and filmmakers.

First, restricting my analysis to writers or filmmakers of specific nations who have produced texts on experiences in specific nations would be contrary to the ambit of the new

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92 See also Chapter Six, 261-2.
mobilities paradigm, namely the call for a mobilisation of theory itself in order to adequately research contemporary forms of movement. The paradigm, Sheller and Urry point out, is “part of a broader theoretical project aimed at going beyond the imagery of ‘terrains’ as spatially fixed geographical containers for social processes.”93 Indeed, in the contemporary period it becomes necessary in some cases to conceive of places themselves as mobile.94 To a great extent the notion of place as fixed or sedentary remains uncontested in traditional literary analyses of travel writing. By adopting a mobilities approach, I open up the possibility of an alternative view which recognises the significance and power of travel as a concept which helps to shape our life experiences and understandings of the mobile world through which we move physically and imaginatively. Second, the ever-accelerating increase in international movement now means that identifying writers/filmmakers in terms of a singular national identity descriptor or failing to acknowledge the writer’s or filmmaker’s experience of mobility in some form is an increasingly suspect approach. Meyer-Kalkus states that for the researcher of travel literature “[i]t is becoming increasingly difficult to relegate authors to a single culture and nation – they live and write in the spaces between.”95 My approach involves much more than examining German travel texts through a mobilities lens. My analysis draws on representations of travel experiences which themselves call into question the notion of cultural self-identity, such as ‘being German’, or the idea of belonging to a particular nation or local territory. Geographically restricted identity classifications are also problematic when it comes to considering the perspectives of readers of travel texts. Thus, it must be acknowledged that contemporary writers are now, “speaking to — and for

93 Sheller and Urry 209.
94 Sheller and Urry 214.
— readers as hybrid and many-souled as themselves."96 At the same time, however, this does not mean that I disregard the importance of particular national or cultural identities. Rather it means that the analyses allow for new mobility-inspired forms of identity to arise, as exemplified in filmmaker Theodoros Angelopoulos’s statement: “I do not believe that Greece is only a geographical location. [...] [T]his Greece that is in my mind is the Greece I call home.”97

The travel texts examined in this thesis contain a mixture of that which outside of literary studies would commonly be delineated as fictional and non-fictional works. On the one hand, one could argue that finding a way in which to wholly demarcate so-called fiction from so-called non-fiction, on close inspection, would be a rather complex and arduous task. This reflects Angelopoulos’s statement that “[e]very moment consists of the past and the present, the real and the imaginary, all of them blending together into one.”98 For example, in Karl Phillip Moritz’s text Anton Reiser 1785-6,99 which I analyse in Chapter Three: The Sattelzeit, it is difficult to determine to what extent the work is an autobiographical account, and to what extent it is made up of imagined scenarios and characters. This is a point I directly address in my analysis. On the other hand, in the case of each text, it is made clear to the reader of this thesis which is presented as a factual account of a travel experience and which is presented as an imagined journey. In each example, however, I also provide relevant autobiographical details of the writer’s or filmmaker’s own experience of mobility which

97 Andrew Horton, “”What Do our Souls Seek?”: an Interview with Theo Angelopoulos,” The Last Modernist: the Films of Theo Angelopoulos (Great Britain: Bookcraft, 1997), 96-110, 106.
98 Dan Fainaru, “The Human Experience in One Gaze,” Theo Angelopoulos: Interviews, ed. Dan Fainaru (U.S.A: University of Mississippi, 2001(b)), 93-100, 98. Friedrich Nicolai, a traveller in the Sattelzeit, made comments concerning the importance of writing a journal daily while on the move, so as to prevent fictional elements from entering the account (see Chapter Three, 82). Perhaps it could be said that by the contemporary period, mobilities has reached such a point-of-no-return that the producers of travel texts such as Angelopoulos, in a different approach, embrace the mixing of fictional and non-fictional elements catalysed by mobilities and cultural mixing.
99 Karl Phillip Moritz, Anton Reiser:ein autobiographischer Roman, ed. Heinrich Schnabel (Munich: Martin Morike, 1912). Subsequent references take the form “[AR]” in parentheses followed by the page number.
reflect on how such experiences translate into the given text. In one particular example examined in Chapter Four, the question of what is fictional versus what is non-fictional is again complex. *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus* (1995)\(^{100}\) is a literary version of an actual journey that took place before the Fall of the Wall, which itself, was a retracing of a journey that took place and was recorded in a journal during the *Sattelzeit*. Thus, generally speaking, I argue that an open definition of travel texts, which includes fictional and non-fictional texts, leads to unanticipated, yet enlightening, analytical connections, and that all travel text analyses contribute to the overall research aim of responding to the key question of how travel or mobility transforms culture over time.\(^{101}\)

*A Comparative Analysis of Travel Texts*

Given the conceptually open geographical and textual categories I apply, it may at first appear questionable to refer to this research as a comparative approach. Rather, it is a variation on a more traditional sense of comparative literature as a direct comparison between works of two cultures, nations or languages. My analysis is somewhat cross-sectional: it is a comparative approach to the analysis of mobile experience in travel texts across space, time and cultural experience. By this I mean that I compare travel texts across *time*: i.e. between and within the *Sattelzeit* of 1770-1830, and the contemporary periods of 1985-1995 and 1995-2010; (geographic) *space*, i.e. the different, ever-widening spatial realms of travelling (i.e. Greece, Europe, global circumnavigation and the space surrounding the earth), that are traversed with increasing speed; and *cultures/ways of being*, dwelling vis-à-vis travel. I intend that this comparative approach contributes to the historicisation of mobilities, an approach

\(^{100}\) Friedrich Christian Delius, *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus: Erzählung* (Germany: Rowohlt Verlag, 1995). Subsequent references take the form “[SvR]” in parentheses followed by the page number.

\(^{101}\) This is one of two main questions addressed in the conclusion of this thesis.
which is largely absent in existing critical literature since the mobilities turn.\textsuperscript{102} My historical approach leads me to regard mobility as a permanent facet of human experience. Yet the representations of travel and of the tension between staying and going turn out to be quite different at different moments in time. In the \textit{Sattelzeit}, for example, the development of a mobile technology for writing signals a change in which the representation of human experience is thought to be more authentic if recorded in the immediate present while on-the-move, rather than in the slower time of reflection and recollection, when the writer is again sedentary. In the contemporary period of new mobilities, technology starts to take the upper hand so that mobility becomes dependent on it. Thus the technology of writing is no longer highly regarded as a means of recording experience; mobile digital communications start to displace writing. These examples from different historical junctures represent shifts in cultural values and the social consequences related to the representation of physical phenomena. Here, I provide a more specific example in which a comparative approach brings to light new perspectives to travel analysis.\textsuperscript{103} In Friedrich Christian Delius’s \textit{Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus}, one sees that the situation in East Germany in which most citizens are unable to travel to the West is particularly frustrating given the freedom that travellers enjoyed in the earlier \textit{Sattelzeit}. The protagonist of the novella, a dweller, though importantly not by choice, illegally escapes East Germany, and attempts to retrace the footsteps of his \textit{Sattelzeit} hero through Italy. However, an exact recreation of the journey is not possible: his sense of urgency to complete the trip leads him to travel by express train rather than on foot, as in the earlier period.

\textsuperscript{102} In reference to transport studies, for example, Clarsen identifies the need “to add historical perspectives to the ‘mobility turn’ in the social sciences”, Georgine Clarsen, “Gender and Mobility: Historicizing the Terms,” \textit{Mobility in History: the State of the Art in the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility}, eds. Gijs Mom, Gordon Pirie and Laurent Tissot (Neuchatel: Presses Universitaires Suisses, 2009), 235-41, 235.

\textsuperscript{103} Refer to Chapter Two, 41-2; Chapter Three, 53; 70-82; footnote 242, for further examples on the ways in which humankind’s relationship to technology over time has an impact on the ways in which one travels.
Furthermore, a comparative approach to the analysis of travel texts is also significant in terms of developing and comparing analytical concepts relevant to the social context of each time period. For example, in the *Sattelzeit* period I argue that a culture founded on mobilities was emerging, and that some people were embarking upon in order to see what travel could make possible in their lives. I analyse the selected travel texts in relation to the notions of the idea of culture, the idea of *Bildung*, and the development of enabling technology that both promotes travel and travel writing. In the contemporary period, (particularly Chapter Five), however, I argue that, conceptually speaking, there is a shift from the *Sattelzeit* process of exploring what travel can make possible in one’s life, to the contemporary process of coming to terms with the present moment of intense mobilities. It is therefore possible to ask such questions as, what happens to the notion of *Bildung* in the contemporary period? In the *Sattelzeit*, I suggest, *Bildung* is a concept largely related to the idea that a natural consequence of travel was the education of the traveller in both senses of the term *education*: i.e. in the sense of acquiring knowledge (e.g. Georg Forster’s fieldwork in New Zealand or the global scientific exploration of Adelbert von Chamisso’s protagonist, Peter Schlemihl), and in the sense of personal development or self-formation (which is successful in the case of Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s protagonist, Wilhelm Meister, but unsuccessful in the case of Phillip Moritz’s autobiographical protagonist, Anton Reiser). However, in the contemporary period, I suggest that *Bildung* takes on the function of coming to terms with the present state of mobilities (e.g. Andrei Ujica’s *Out of the Present* 1995), and requires one to take responsibility for human-caused relationship breakdowns and environmental damage that have come as a result of increased travel (e.g. Christoph Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher* 2010), and finding new ways to build a sense of self-identity and home in a global context increasingly devoid of geographical or cultural fixity.

104 Adelbert von Chamisso, *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte* (Ulm: Ebner, 1976). Subsequent references take the form “[PS]” in parentheses followed by the page number.
In the following section I lay out the structure of the thesis, including the periods, travel texts, and main areas of enquiry.

1.3 Thesis Structure
This thesis consists of three main parts. Each part is divided temporally and preceded by an introductory section in which the relevant historical context and key analytical concepts are presented. In Part I, I view Homer’s *Odyssey*, as a foundational travel text. In this section, I examine this early travel text as an example of what I refer to as *mobility-singular*, that is, of uni-directional travel to a specific fixed destination. Odysseus’s journey home takes him over twenty years, during which time wife, Penelope and son, Telemachus, waits for him in the family estate. Here, I look at how Odysseus travels, before a time of mechanized mobility, the Gods who govern his travel and his relationship to them, and the images and ideas of home that propel him forward and constitute the image of an ideal *dwelling-life*, viz. remaining in one place, at home, contentedly. In doing so, I address the question of why the *Odyssey* remains one of the most frequently referenced travel texts of all time, from the *Sattelzeit* to the present.

In Part II of this thesis, I look at eight travel texts from a period which the German historian Reinhard Koselleck has called the *Sattelzeit*. These texts are Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769* (1846),105 Friedrich Nicolai’s *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781* (1788),106 Georg Forster’s *A Voyage Round the World* (1777),107 Phillip Moritz’s *Anton Reiser* (1785-6), Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795-96), Heinrich von Kleist’s *Briefe I*

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106 Friedrich Nicolai, *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781*, (Berlin und Stettin: Georg Olms Verlag, 1788). <http://books.google.de/booksid=jfkOAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&q=Beschreibung+einer+Reise+durch+Deutschland+und+die+Schweiz+im+Jahr+1781&dq=Beschreibung+einer+Reise+durch+Deutschland+und+die+Schweiz+im+Jahr+1781&hl=de&ei=rMI0TfvLGYWe6vPM0cj0Cw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CEAQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q&f=false>. Subsequent references take the form “[BeR]” in parentheses followed by the page number.

107 Where there are two dates in brackets, the first indicated the original year of publication and the second indicates the bibliographical year of publication.
März 1793-April 1801 (1848),\textsuperscript{108} Adelbert von Chamisso’s *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*, (1814), and Joseph von Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (1826).\textsuperscript{109} These writers are all German speaking (although Forster composed his respective text in English and Chamisso’s first language was French). The selection of these texts is partly motivated by my background in German studies. Their travels (or those of their protagonists) take them through Germany, Switzerland and other areas of Europe as well as to the antipodes and around the world. Here one sees a change from the period of Antiquity whereby travel becomes multidirectional and broadened in space, and the idea of a fixed home to return to becomes problematic. One may summarise this change as a transition from mobility-singular to mobilities-plural. As the modern world begins to mobilise there are dramatic changes in the idea of culture and in the make-up of societies. For example, Georg Forster disrupts previously established binaries between European and indigenous people. The French Revolution marks the rise of the middle classes. Members of the middle class learn to read. Writers such as Goethe, Moritz, and Eichendorff compose narratives which depict the travels of young men seeking out a better life and hoping to become worldlier elsewhere. This period of change also saw the emergence of the Industrial Revolution, and the development of new technology which inevitably changed the way in which people travel and experienced travel. Whereas Odysseus is limited to travel by foot and by water *Sattelzeit* travellers now go overland by post coach (Nicolai), or by sea with advanced navigational equipment (Forster). Motivated by the idea of capturing the immediacy of his experience, Nicolai furthermore develops a new piece of technology for writing while on the move in a coach. Although the benefits of travel were beginning to be realised during this period, with mobilisation arose, in some cases a sense of dislocation and disorientation (noted to some


degree in all texts, especially Moritz). At times, journeys did not live up to expectations and
travellers held the false expectation that they would arrive home to find that the people and
places were exactly as they had left them (Goethe, Kleist, Chamisso). Generally speaking, in
the analysis of these texts of the Sattelzeit, I discuss the ways in which each writer expresses
a desire to travel and the new experiences of each figure as they accommodate themselves to
new ways of being in an increasingly mobile modern world.

Part III of this thesis examines mobilities in the contemporary world in two sections.
The first section looks at the period around 1989/90, which, I argue, was a pivotal moment in
time for the transition to a world increasingly dominated by (and reliant on) mobilities. This
moment was marked particularly by the Fall of the Berlin Wall, 10th November 1989 and the
collapse of the USSR (formally dissolved on 25th December 1991). In this section, I discuss
three texts set in this transitional period. The first two texts engage in the experiences of East
Germans in the 1980s who were essentially rendered immobile behind the Berlin Wall,
namely Zwiebelmuster, by Erich Loest (1985), and Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach
Syrakus, by Friedrich Christian Delius (1995). The protagonists of these stories each hold a
strong desire to travel to the West but risk jail or death for doing so. These analyses provide
evidence to support the claim that at this time the world reached a point-of-no-return with
regard to the intensification of mobilities: travel, elsewhere regarded as a human right,
imposed unacceptable restrictions on GDR citizens. The third text I analyse is a documentary
film called Out of the Present by Andrei Ujica (1995). This film documents for the first time
the experience of living aboard a space station. It depicts the life of cosmonaut Sergei
Krikalev who spent 10 months aboard the space station MIR (from May 1991 through March
1992), during which time Soviet Union dissolved. He left earth as a citizen of the USSR but
loses this identity while orbiting the earth. This travel text shows a new era of mobilities in
which travel extends beyond earth into space, and in which national identity is rendered irrelevant.

In the second section of Part III, I analyse travel texts published or released between 1995 and 2010, namely, Theodoros Angelopoulos’s film, *Ulysses’ Gaze* (1995), Christoph Ransmayr’s drama, *Odysseus, Verbrecher* (2010), and again, Andrei Ujica’s film *Out of the Present* (1995). If one is to accept that mobilities have intensified beyond a point-of-no-return and that new technologies have irrevocably altered the idea of travel, culture and numerous ways of being, then what do these travel texts reveal about the ways in which humankind now deals with such dramatic change? Interestingly, most of these texts recur to some aspect of Homer’s *Odyssey* and this raises the question of why the Greek epic continues to find such resonance with contemporary audiences. In these travel texts, contemporary filmmakers and writers return to the well-known trope of Odysseus to examine issues such as: the consequences of contemporary mobilities and whether or not we should try to reduce travel and return to a more stable life; if it is still possible to come home in the traditional sense of returning to a fixed place; and what the idea of home now means. In addition, I look at the endings of the travel texts to try and determine the author’s or filmmaker’s final message for the future of humankind and for mobilities.

In Chapter Six, the conclusion of this thesis, I first reflect on major themes and ideas put forward with reference to examples from a contemporary travel text, the novel *Heimkehr* by Bernhard Schlink (2006).\(^\text{110}\) *Heimkehr* narrates the journey of a young German in search of his absent father. This text draws heavily on Homer’s *Odyssey* as an intertext and as such, it provides a contemporary analytical reflection on Part I, to bookend the thesis. I divide this analysis and summative commentary into three areas of enquiry: first, the significance of the *Odyssey* throughout time; second, responses to intense mobilities; and, finally, the possibility

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of homecoming. Next, I make comment on the way in which this thesis has made a contribution to the existing body of mobilities scholarship, for example, by historicising and adding a comparative perspective to the contemporary context and by providing more contextual depth from German studies to notions such as Heidegger’s concept of dwelling. Finally, I make suggestions for future research. The producers of travel texts travel open up a space in which to show readers and viewers different perspectives on what is happening in the world, and thus promote reflection and potential change. I argue that future scholarship could focus on the ways in which this knowledge can be transferred beyond literary studies and film studies and into a broader area of political science, environmental studies, or perhaps even government policy making.

Throughout this thesis I keep in mind Goethe’s concern for balancing opposed realms of human experience symbolised by the forms of his Stein des guten Glücks sculpture. Concerning dwelling, mobility and the ideal way of being, or “[d]as Streben nach dem Ausgleich einander wiederstrebender Mächte” I ask, are the new mobilities good for us? In other words, does more travel and moving further, at ever-increasing speed make our lives better?¹¹¹ This is not an easy question to answer and Kaplan strikes an appropriate note of caution when she writes: “The line between the benefit of movement and the threat of uncontrollable change or flow is not always clearly apparent.”¹¹²

¹¹¹ See for example, Chapter Three, 66: 127-30.
Part I: A Point of Departure

Chapter Two: Homer’s *Odyssey* (circa. 750-700 BC)

2.1 Introduction

Homer’s *Odyssey*\(^{113}\) is indubitably of great significance to a long-ranging cultural analysis of travel texts, particularly to an approach which attempts to historicise mobilities. Thalmann refers to the Greek epic as one of the “cornerstones not only of Western literature but also of Western thought and culture.”\(^{114}\) This travel text, he adds, “pervades our language and thinking” and “has remained one of the world’s most explored subjects of artistic expression.”\(^{115}\) In the analysis that follows, I draw on the narrative of the *Odyssey* as a platform for understanding some of the earliest ideas about the cultural experience of travel, on which many subsequent notions have been based. I identify specific ideas interpreted from Homer’s work that have had a great influence on scholars – here, particularly Martin Heidegger – as well as writers and filmmakers of the modern period, who variously concur with, contest or resist such notions. The ideas I explicate here include the concepts of *mobility-singular* and *dwelling-life*, which are part of *fixed-culture* or sedentarism; Odysseus’s motivations for travel, including the images and memories of home and family; and finally, gods, mortals and the power relations in the governance of mobility. At the same time, I examine potential contradictory readings of this fundamental travel text, which regard Odysseus’s journey and return to Ithaca as either ideal and complete, or contested and temporary.

\(^{113}\) In my analysis of Homer’s *Odyssey* I use the translation by T.E. Shaw, the pseudonym for Thomas Edward Lawrence. This readerly translation serves my analytical purpose which focuses on the narrative of the *Odyssey* to draw general inferences concerning the idea of homecoming and the journey of return. However, I am aware of the existence of other translations of the epic into English, see George Steiner, ”Homer in English Translation,” *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, ed. Robert Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 363-75. One of the most highly-regarded translations is that of renowned classicist, Richmond Lattimore: Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (New York: Harper Collins, 2007). The first edition of Lattimore’s translation was published in 1965. Where I refer specifically to phrases from the *Odyssey*, I also provide in the associated footnote Lattimore’s translation for purposes of comparison.

\(^{114}\) Thalmann inside front cover.

\(^{115}\) Thalmann inside front cover. For example, Homer’s *Odyssey* was highly regarded by Goethe and Herder.
2.2 The Odyssey Begins

At the beginning of the *Odyssey*, it is ten years since the end of Trojan War. The hero Odysseus finds himself the captive of Lady Calypso on the remote island of Ogyia, unable to escape. The goddess Athene takes great pity on Odysseus and his plight. When the god Poseidon, “whose enmity flamed ever against [Odysseus] till he had reached home”, is far away in Ethiopia, Athene goes to Mount Olympus (OD 1: V.20-1). There she tries to convince Zeus, King of the Gods, to have mercy on Odysseus. Athene voices her plea to Zeus as follows:

> [M]y heart is heavy for Odysseus, so shrewd, so ill-fated, pining in long misery of exile on an island which is just a speck in the belly of the sea. This wave-beset, wooded island is the domain of a God-begotten creature, the baleful Atlas whose are the pillars that prop the lofty sky: whose too are the deepest soundings of the sea. The daughter has trapped the luckless wretch and with subtle insistence cozens him to forget his Ithaca. Forget! Odysseus is so sick with longing to see if it were but the smoke of his home spiring up, that he prays for death. I marvel, my Lord of Olympus, how your heart makes no odds of it. Can you lightly pass over the burnt offerings Odysseus lavished upon you, by the Argive ships in the plain of Troy?” (OD 1: V.48-62)

Athene’s remark that the “ill-fated” Odysseus is in “the long misery of exile,” provides a preliminary clue that the *Odyssey* advocates a sedentarist or fixed-culture ideal type. To begin with, Odysseus’s current state of being in exile rests on the presupposition that he is undergoing an enforced separation from his home or dwelling-place. If, on the other hand, the protagonist of the story were to have multiple homes, or lead a life of dwelling on-the-move, (rather than merely “find[ing] shelter on the way”), then the very notion of being exiled would come unstuck. However, in this case it is manifest throughout the epic that Odysseus’s journey is about trying to return home to his (singular) native place. I refer to this idea by using the term *mobility-singular*.

Further, the fact that, at this point of the narrative, Odysseus is feeling miserable and distressed in this foreign place, relates to the fixed-culture idea that being away from home leads to emotional trauma. This sentiment is echoed in Heidegger’s essay “Bauen, Wohnen,

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116 Lattimore’s translation reads: “unhappy man, who still, far from his friends, is suffering griefs”, 1: V.49-50.
117 Heidegger 1978, 325.
118 The circumstances of Odysseus’s exile contrast to Chamisso’s exile, Chapter Two, 107-8.
Denken.” Here, Heidegger directly connects the idea of dwelling, i.e. “das Bleiben, das Sich-Aufhalten” with emotional well-being, i.e. “zufrieden sein, zum Frieden gebracht, in ihm bleiben.” I subsequently refer to this idealised way of being by using the term dwelling-life.

So strong is Odysseus’s longing to return to Ithaca that he feels sick and hopes for death. Being so far out in the ocean with no obvious way to travel homeward, life is not worth living – peace is only to be found in dwelling-life or death.

2.3 Cultural Memories of Home

Athene pities the tormented Odysseus, trapped at this faraway location, and thus refers to him as a “luckless wretch.” In particular, she shows concern that Lady Calypso is causing him to forget Ithaca. This is emphasised by way of repetition when Athene exclaims (above): “The daughter […] cozens him to forget his Ithaca. Forget!”

Still, one could potentially question the degree to which Odysseus indeed suffered while on Ogyia, despite his desire to return to Ithaca. Homer writes: “She [Lady Calypso] craved him for her bed-mate: while he was longing for his house and wife” (OD, 1: V.14-16).

Nonetheless, Athene’s distress that Odysseus may fail to conjure up recollections of his native place reinforces the point that fixed-culture and the production and preservation of a rooted cultural-national identity is closely tied to cultural memory. In Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity, Weissberg contends that “the more a person fe[els] the need to insist on memory and to construct his or her past, the more memory seem[s] to be in danger.” Throughout the Odyssey, forgetting home, or not being able to conjure up the constructed history of common experiences, traditions and associations of the dwelling-place, is a constant threat to the return journey. Without the motivation of their cultural memories Odysseus and his

119 Heidegger 1990, 143.
120 My emphasis. Lattimore’s translation reads: “and ever with soft and flattering words she works to charm him to forget Ithaca”, 1:V.56-7.
121 Lattimore’s translation employs the phrase: “longing for his wife and homecoming,” 1: V.9.
companions lose sight of the purpose of life, i.e. staying alive and keeping moving in order to return home and dwell once again.

The fragility of cultural memory is illustrated in another instance in the story when Odysseus sends a group of his crewmen ashore onto the island of the Lotos-eaters and they sample some of the local Lotos flower. Odysseus recalls that, “as each [in the group of crewmen] tasted of this honey-sweet plant, the wish to bring news or return grew faint in him: rather he preferred to dwell for ever with the Lotos-eating men, feeding upon Lotos and letting fade from his mind all memory of home” (OD, 9: V.94-97). Odysseus, on discovering that his shipmen were all in grave danger of forgetting home (i.e. losing their cultural memory), quickly drags the afflicted group back, constrains the remainder on the ship and sets sail, “lest perhaps more of them might eat Lotos and lose their longing for home” (OD, 9: V.101-2). Somewhat ironically here, Odysseus sees staying on-the-move as a vital part of the homeward journey with the end-goal of dwelling and remaining in one place. There is a direct connection between remembering home and moving homeward or conversely, forgetting home and remaining in one place.

Once more, cultural memory is under threat when the men land on Aeolian island and the goddess Circe, “mixed drugs so sadly powerful as to steal from them all memory of their native land” (OD, 10: V.234-6). Hermes, the god whose travel is often for the purpose of delivering messages from Gods to humans, then comes to the aid of Odysseus by providing him with immunity to these memory-stealing drugs and a plan to rescue his crewmen. Despite this assistance, Circe still successfully manages to hinder the men’s progress. One year passes as they are, “sitting to table and delighting in her untold wealth of flesh and mellow wine” (OD, 10: V.477). Again, in this example, one may call into question the extent to which Odysseus’s longing to return home causes him suffering or drives him onward with

123 Lattimore’s translation, employs the phrase: “forget the way home,” 9: V.97.
124 Again, Lattimore’s translation employs the phrase: “forget the way home,” 9: V.102.
125 Lattimore’s translation employs the phrase: “to make them forgetful of their own country,” 10: V.236.
haste. On the other hand, it is important to appreciate the protagonist’s experience of time in its historical context. Odysseus, at this point, has already been away from home for several years. Thus, while he yearns to return home, he most likely does not share the level of urgency and immediacy of some travellers in the modern period.\textsuperscript{126}

In any case, finally, after so long tarrying on the island (from a modern perspective), Odysseus is reminded again by his crewmen, “Master, it is time you called to your memory your native land, if fate will ever let you come alive to your well-built house and ancient estate” (OD, 10: V.473-5).\textsuperscript{127} In a similar vein, before Odysseus leaves the Aeolian island, Circe warns him that he will soon have to face the Sirens who pose a grave danger to his homeward journey. He must have himself “lashed hand and foot” to his ship mast, in order to resist the temptation of their songs (OD, 12: V.50). Circe explains, “If a man come on them unwittingly and lend ear to their Siren-voices, he will never again behold wife and little ones rising to greet him with bright faces when he comes home from sea. The thrilling song of the Sirens will steal his life away” (OD, 12: V.40-44). This latter example shows that one’s family – which in Odysseus’s case is his wife, Penelope, his son Telemachus, and his father, Laertes – is regarded as a fundamental part of the ideal image and memory of home.

2.4 Athene, Penelope and the Restoration of Fixed-Culture
I now turn to the divine meeting between Zeus and Athene on Mount Olympus (referred to in the quotation above). Although written at the beginning of the epic, chronologically speaking, this event takes place after Odysseus’s encounter with the Sirens and after all his crewmen have died trying to get home. Athene’s pleading with Zeus to intervene in Odysseus’s fate and to engineer his escape from Ogyia eventually results in Zeus’ accession, as indicated when he says: “Poseidon the land-shaker, though he dare not quite kill Odysseus, at least implacably frustrates his every effort to get back to the land of his fathers. But come, let us

\textsuperscript{126}See for example, Chapter Three, 82-4; Chapter Four, 184-5.

\textsuperscript{127}Lattimore’s translation reads: “It is time to think about our own country, if truly it is ordained you will survive and come back to your strong-founded house and to the land of your fathers,” 10: V.472-4.
put all our heads together to contrive the man’s return” (OD, 1: V.74-7). As a result of her convictions, here and throughout the narrative, Athene can be seen as an ambassador for upholding the principles of fixed-culture. She insists that Odysseus’s movements be for the purpose of getting home, and that he is constantly reminded of home, i.e. so he does not forget and give in to the temptation to dwell in a foreign place such as the island of Lotos-eaters or the Aeolian island. To put it another way, Athene’s own movements are to encourage Odysseus’s return to dwelling-life.

After the assembly, Athene disguises herself as Mentes, leader of the oar-loving islanders of Taphos, in order to converse with Telemachus, Odysseus’s son. At this time, Telemachus is held up in the family home in Ithaca supporting his inconsolable mother, Penelope. There, a barrage of suitors vies for her hand in marriage, yet Penelope cannot dwell in peace without her long lost beloved husband. She therefore rejects the suitors’ offers in the hope that Odysseus will return to Ithaca. This point, in conjunction with Zeus’ comment above concerning Odysseus’s return to “the land of his fathers”, adds more weight to the argument that being together with one’s family is a significant part of an emotionally stable sense of dwelling. If Odysseus returns home and Penelope does not welcome him back as her husband, then a successful homecoming is in doubt. However, Penelope is loyal to her husband and she is praised for this by the spirit of Agamemnon. In contrast to Penelope’s ideal behaviour, Agamemnon’s wife betrayed and killed him after he left his homeland:

Blessed have you been O son of Laertes, ingenious Odysseus, in winning a wife of such surpassing virtue! So upright in disposition was Penelope the daughter of Icarius that she never forgot Odysseus the husband of her youth: and therefore shall the fame of her goodness be conserved in the splendid poem wherewith the Immortals shall celebrate the constancy of Penelope for all the dwellers upon earth. (OD, 24: V.192-8)

Thus, despite Odysseus’s absence of twenty years, the reader is assured near the end of the Odyssey, that Penelope, (even after a disguised Odysseus tests her), has remained loyal to Odysseus and reaffirmed their relationship. This is also made evident when Odysseus says to her:
Lady mine, hitherto we have both travailed exhaustively, you in lamenting the hindrances to my return, I in the sorrows wherewith Zeus and the other Gods afflicted me, homesick, far away: but now that we have both reached the bed of our desire, do you take my indoor interests under your especial care. (OD, 23: V.350-5)

Hence Penelope, to use Pratt’s term, is the ideal stayer, an exemplary wife “for all the dwellers upon earth.” Because she holds onto the memories of her younger days dwelling happily together with her husband (“she never forgot Odysseus the husband of her youth”), Odysseus is eventually able to recreate this experience when he returns many years later, (“hitherto we have both travailed exhaustively […] but now […] we have both reached the bed of our desire”).

While there is little doubt that Homer’s notion of society depicted in the Odyssey was thoroughly patriarchal (e.g. Ithaca is referred to as “the land of our fathers”), there is also evidence here that its author gave thought to the various roles and contributions of women in the period of mobility-singular. Whereas Lady Calypso and Circe each conspire to keep Odysseus in their own respective dwelling-places, Athene (by way of divine intervention) and Penelope (by way of remembering and staying faithful) encourage or enable his return to his original home to restore (fixed) cultural order. These latter two are highly praised for such virtues.

2.5 Mobility and the Gods

In addition to some of the specific gender roles assigned to characters in the Odyssey, one may also derive some general assumptions about the writer’s view of the world by comparing the travel experiences of gods and of mortals. Athene’s descent to Ithaca, to put in motion the events which will aid Odysseus’s escape from Ogyia, is described in the following extract:

She ceased, and drew upon her feet those golden sandals (whose fairness no use could dim) that carried their mistress as surely and wind-swiftly over the waves as over the boundless earth. She laid hold of her guardian spear, great, heavy, and close-grained, tipped with cutting bronze. When wrath moved the goddess to act, this spear was her weapon: with it, and stayed by her pride of birth, she would daunt serried ranks of the very bravest warriors. Downward she now glided from the summit of Olympus, to alight on Ithaca before Odysseus’ house, by the sill of the main gate. (OD, 1: V.96-104)

Here one can make two main points concerning governance and mobility in the world of the *Odyssey*. First, I argue, this Homeric view is largely determined by power relations between gods and mortals. It appears that the world is generally divided, both literally and metaphorically, (viz., both geographically and in terms of power structures), in a top-down fashion, that is between (superior) sky-dwelling gods and (inferior) earth-dwelling mortals. For example, the way in which humans fear the gods and their power is evident in the quotation: “When wrath moved the goddess to act […] [Athene] would daunt serried ranks of the very bravest warriors.” Second, (and integral to the first point), a significant part of the gods’ superiority and influence lies both in their enhanced mobility in comparison to mortals and in their control over human mobility. For her travel purposes, Athene utilises a pair of “golden sandals” which may be seen here as a representation of privileged transportation device/vehicle. This enables her to glide “wind-swiftly over the waves as over the boundless earth”, in a similar manner to the way in which the god Poseidon “the world-girdler”, traverses the globe, almost effortlessly (OD, 1: V.68).

The strong distinction marking comparatively inferior immortal mobility is also evident at another point in the story, when Zeus sends his son Hermes to deliver a message to Calypso. The message is that “long-suffering Odysseus shall return home as best he can, without furtherance from gods or mortal men” (OD, 5: V.31-2, my emphasis). Odysseus, the earth-dweller, on the one hand, is to leave the island of Ogyia by his own devices, “lash[ing] together a raft as firm as may be, on which after twenty days of hazard and disaster he will make rich-glebed Scheria, the Phaeacian island” (OD, 5: V.33-5). On the other hand, Homer describes divine Hermes’s descent to earth as follows:

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129 It is clear throughout the narrative that Zeus, addressed by Athene as “Father of us all and King of Kings”, is at the top of the (im)mortal hierarchy (OD, 24: V.473). Zeus is not entirely immune to influence, as Athene does manage to persuade him to help Odysseus. Yet, ultimately, both the gods and humans are subject to his rule.

130 Lattimore’s translation employs the phrase: “that carried her over the water as over the dry boundless earth abreast of the wind’s blast,” 1: V.97-8.

131 Lattimore’s translation reads: “the homecoming of Odysseus, that he shall come back by convoy neither of the gods nor of mortal people,” 5: V.31-2.
Instantly he laced to his feet the fair sandals of imperishable gold by which he made equal way, swift as a breath of wind, over the ocean and over the waste places of earth. He took the wand […] and with it in hand the Argus-slayer leaped out into the air and flew strongly. Over mount Pierus he dived down from the firmament to sea level: and then along the waves he sped like a cormorant. (OD, 5: V.44-51)

Hence, the deity’s experience of travel is in stark contrast to Odysseus’s treacherous, unaided and comparatively slow journey. Like Athene, Hermes is provided with the luxury of “the fair sandals of imperishable gold” enabling him fly unhindered and quickly along the waves. The conceptual link between the sandals as a device for transport and immortal power, or cultural stratification along the lines of mobility, supports Greenblatt’s emphasis on the importance of analysing modes of literal movement as “indispensable keys to understanding the fate of cultures.”

From these examples of the gods’ power and superior mobility over humans, one may conclude that the primary purpose of immortal travel in the Odyssey is to intervene in the fate of mortals and to control them. This claim is supported at another point in the narrative in which Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, berates Antinous, the suitor, for hitting him: “Your striking this unhappy waif was a sin, Antinous, which will seal your fate in so surely as there is a God in heaven. Not to mention that these very Gods are always disguising themselves as travellers from abroad and roaming our settlements to note human good or ill” (OD, 17: V.483-7).

If, looking back from a contemporary perspective, one takes these examples from the narrative of the Odyssey as a platform for understanding some of the earliest ideas about the cultural experience of travel, the question arises, to what extent has the structure governing

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132 Here Odysseus is also fated to eventually enjoy a higher mode of travel: “The Phaeacians [will] […] send him forward to his native place in a ship laden with gifts of copper and gold and clothing of an abundance Odysseus would never had amassed for himself in the sack of Troy” (OD, 5: V.35-9). However, this still cannot be said to match the privileged travel of the gods.


134 Lattimore’s translation reads: “For the gods do take on all sorts of transformations, appearing as strangers from elsewhere, and thus they range at large through the cities, watching to see which men keep the laws, and which are violent,” 17: V.485-7.
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mobility changed from the period of mobility-singular to the modern period? Technology has changed travel dramatically in terms of speed, distance and in the ways everyday experience is represented. Still, one point which Skeggs makes seems to remain constant across time: “Mobility and control over mobility both reflect and reinforce power. Mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship.”¹³⁵ In subsequent chapters I examine the responses of writers whose access to mobility is severely impeded as a result of shifting power relations and socio-political circumstances, such as the French-German author Adelbert von Chamisso, who was forced into hiding during the French Revolution, and Erich Loest, who was able to write freely after being exiled from the German Democratic Republic in the 1980s.

2.6 An Ideal Return to Ithaca?
Generally speaking, from a mobilities perspective, the imaginative landscape of the *Odyssey* may be viewed as a space in which an ordered cultural world is posited, one in which a superior presence – the gods – reign over the humans who live in their various dwelling-places on earth. The relative immobility of humans arguably makes them easier to manage and maintain power over. That the basic *top-down* hierarchical structures persist throughout the narrative is indicated by the different ways in which the mortals and immortals travel: compare Odysseus’s “twenty days of hazard and disaster” to Hermes’s flying “[as] swift as a breath of wind” (cited above). The overwhelming majority of literal movements may be viewed as attempts to restore the *original* idea of a fixed-culture, i.e. by getting Odysseus home and ensuring a successful homecoming. Indeed, on seeing Ithaca again he is overwhelmed with elation, as described in the following: “The joy of seeing his own place so

wrought upon Odysseus that he fell kissing its bounteous soil, before invoking the nymphs with up-stretched hands” (OD, 13: V.353-5).^{136}

However, Odysseus’s homecoming is not as simple as merely arriving in Ithaca. His situation is still uncertain after his arrival and Odysseus must act skilfully and with cunning: he must avoid a massacre by the suitors or rejection by his loved ones who may not recognise him after 20 years in absentia. There is, for example, a sense of urgency when Odysseus is reunited with his father: he cannot risk lingering in the moment: “I, my father, I myself am the one you ask after, arrived in this twentieth year home. Cease your sighs and sobs – for let me tell you, quickly as the need is, that I have killed all those suitors in my house, to punish their burning insolence and iniquity” (OD, 24: V.321-6). Yet Odysseus overcomes adversity, is reunited with his wife, father and son, and reclaims his house and authority by killing the suitors. Overall, one could say that Odysseus’s journey and his return to Ithaca are ideal and complete and the reader is entitled to imagine him finding his dwelling-place. At first glance, it would appear that the gods have been successful in restoring cultural order.

In fact, on closer inspection of the text, even after his years of travel and the slaughtering the many suitors who had forcefully occupied his estate, Odysseus’s journey is destined to carry on beyond Ithaca and thus beyond the endpoint of the narrative. Following the said massacre, Penelope is happily reconciled with her husband and questions him about the future: “Bed is yours the instant your heart wills, for have not the Gods restored you to your own great house and native land?” (OD, 23: V.257-9). Odysseus is forced to admit to her that he is still fated to wander for some time to come. He relays to her a version of the warning Teiresias gave him while he was in Hades of his prophecy beyond his return home. Teiresias forewarned him as follows:

^{136} See also Chapter Five, 220. Lattimore’s translation reads: “Long-suffering great Odysseus was gladdened then, rejoicing in the sigh of his country, and kissed the grain-giving ground, then raised his hands in the air and spoke to the nymphs,” 13: V.353-5.
After you have killed these suitors, either by cunning within the house or publicly with the stark sword, then go forth under your shapely oar till you come to a people who know not the sea and eat their victuals unsavoured with its salt. [...] Then pitch in the earth your polished oar and sacrifice goodly beasts to Poseidon, a ram and a bull and a ramping boar. Afterward turn back; and at home offer hecatombs to the Immortal Gods who possess the broad planes of heaven: to all of them in order, as is most seemly. At last, amidst a happy folk, shall your own death come to you, softly, far from the salt sea, and make an end of one utterly weary of slipping downward into old age. (OD, 11: V.119-37).

In the end, Odysseus’s homecoming and return to dwelling-life is only temporary. As Ithaca is on the coast, it is implied here that he will die at peace (“amidst a happy folk”) but not at home (“far from the salt”). Further, his reconciliation with Penelope is predicated on an alteration of the truth. On close reading, one notices that this final detail concerning his death away from home is a point which he spares Penelope when recounting Teiresias’s prophecy to her. Instead he says to her: “Then I may return homeward, to celebrate the Gods of high heaven with hecatombs of victims, and all things else in order due. While death shall come to me from the sea, very mildly ending me amidst a contented people after failing years have brought me low” (OD, 23: V.279-4, my emphasis). This lie, part of that technique which Trahman refers to as Odysseus’s “skill in deceit”, one may argue, is to ensure contentment in their relationship beyond homecoming in terms of Penelope’s emotional stability. In the subsequent analysis, I consider contemporary iterations of Homer’s Odyssey, and why it is the case that some contemporary writers and filmmakers chose to focus on Teiresias’s prophecy in their own narratives or the idea of an on-going journey beyond the temporary homecoming.

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137 Lattimore’s translation reads: “Death will come to you from the sea, in some altogether unwarlike way, and it will end you in the ebbing time of a sleek old age. Your people about you will be prosperous,” 11: V.134-7. It is thus contentious whether Odysseus dies at sea or not. See also, Chapter Five, 234.

138 This is despite Odysseus’s promise to Penelope: “Brave spirit, I shall tell you, hiding nothing” (OD, 23: V.265). Earlier in the narrative Homer highlights Odysseus’s skill in lying: “As he spun them, his lies took on the hue of truth” (OD, 19: V.203). Lattimore’s translation reads: “He knew how to say many false things that were like true sayings,” 19: V.203.

139 Refer to Chapter Five, 234, for a discussion which recontextualises Teiresias’ prophecy.

2.7 Beyond the Odyssey: Flaws in Heidegger’s Homeric Idealism

As mentioned above, the kind of restoration to a fixed-culture world portrayed in the *Odyssey* was an inspiration to Heidegger during the later period of his philosophy. Young summarises Heidegger’s concern as modernity’s “loss of the gods [which] entails, too, a loss of community” and a loss of “dwelling” or, the “loss of being at home in world.”¹⁴¹ Heidegger argued for society to return to an original culture: “Aus einer ursprünglichen Einheit gehören die Vier: Erde und Himmel, die Göttlichen und die Sterblichen in eins” and against unnecessary travel beyond “[der] Bereich unseres Wohnens.”¹⁴² At the same time, one might argue, Heidegger knew that this kind of ideal fixed-culture could never exist in a complete sense, or he knew that there was, in reality no ideal original to return to. One may infer this by noting Heidegger’s own reluctance to travel. Heidegger had been encouraged to travel to Greece for many years by contemporary academics and acquaintances Merdad Boss, Erhart Kästner and Jean Beaufret.¹⁴³ He cancelled two trips which were already booked in 1955 and then again in 1960. Heidegger wrote the following explanation for this, “I must be allowed to think certain things about Greece without seeing the country.”¹⁴⁴ Finally, he made the trip to Greece by boat in 1962, at the age of 73, which Safranski outlines as follows:

After the second night on board, they sighted the island of Corfu, the ancient Kephallenia. This was supposed to be the land of the Phaeacians? On the upper deck Heidegger reread the sixth book of the *Odyssey* and found no agreement. The surmised did not appear. Everything was more like an Italian landscape. Ithaca, the home of Ulysses [Odysseus], similarly did not move him. Heidegger wondered whether the search for the “original Greek” was the right way of discovering Greece.¹⁴⁵

By questioning his preoccupation with an arguably Greek model of dwelling, one might even go so far as to argue that Heidegger was becoming more open to possibilities of increased mobility. Movement and technology appeared to be homogenising culture, in his opinion. Evidence for this is to be found in a piece of writing from two days before his death in 1976:

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¹⁴² Heidegger 1990, 143; 139.
¹⁴⁴ Cited in Safranski 410.
¹⁴⁵ Safranski 401.
“there is much need for contemplation whether and how, in the age of a uniform technological world civilization, there can still be such a thing as home.”

2.8 Crumbling Antique Foundations

In The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing, editors Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs point out that even one thousand years before the Odyssey a story had been composed in Egypt about a shipwrecked sailor alone on a marvellous island. This indicates that storytelling and mobility might well be interlinked, and this assumption on its own suggests the need to widen the ambit of mobilities studies by undertaking an historical analysis of mobility and texts in which mobility appears as a central concern. And arguably the most culturally significant travel narrative to date is Homer’s Odyssey. Hulme and Youngs provide an explanation for the text’s significance with particular reference to Odysseus:

In particular, Homer’s Odysseus gave his name to the word we still use to describe an epic journey, and his episodic adventures offer a blueprint for the romance, indirection, and danger of travel, as well and the joy (and danger) of homecoming.

With the preceding analysis in mind, one may expand on Hulme’s and Young’s interpretation, while simultaneously linking it to some of the arguments made in the subsequent analysis.

First, from an etymological perspective, Homer’s antique discourse has survived millennia of dramatic social upheaval, which points toward the intrinsic value of the human experience of journeying (“Homer’s Odysseus gave his name to the word we still use to describe an epic journey”). In addition to the examination of semantic content as an indicator of an enduring cultural meme, changes in the meaning of specific terms may be indicative of cultural transition. This is particularly evident during a period I call, following Koselleck, the Sattelzeit.

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146 Cited in Safranski 432.
148 Hulme and Youngs 2.
Second, concerning the “romance, indirection and danger of travel”, it appears that the *Odyssey* provides a blueprint for subsequent travel experiences and texts insofar as it presents a set of values or ideals. These include: romance, or the hero’s relationships with women who variously hinder (viz. Circe, Calypso) or encourage/enable Odysseus’s return to Ithaca (viz. Athene and Penelope). Do these relationships have an impact on men’s expectations of women in the early period of modernity? Second, the indirection and danger of travel in the *Odyssey* seems to revolve around forgetting home, and as a result, straying or tarrying from the homeward course, or losing motivation for the return journey. What happens in the *Sattelzeit* in which an emerging culture founded on mobilities complicates the notion of mobility-singular and fixed dwelling-places?

Third, the ambiguous nature of the return home, or “the joy (and danger) of homecoming” could be understood as referring to the events unfolding after Odysseus’s arrival in Ithaca. For example, his happiness at reconciling with his father coexists with the sense of danger of being recognised and killed by the suitors in his residence. Alternatively, one may understand “the joy (and danger)” of Odysseus’s homecoming as pertaining to its temporary nature: Odysseus is fated to journey onward, as outlined in Teiresias’ prophecy. On the one hand, Odysseus felt joy on arriving in Ithaca: (“The joy of seeing his own place so wrought upon Odysseus”), but at the same time, he is destined to die in faraway place (“your own death come to you, softly, far from the salt sea”). In the period of modernity, why do some people choose to regard Odysseus’s journey, finished with his arrival and reestablishment in Ithaca, as ideal and complete? Yet, at the other extreme, if one gives up on the idea of homecoming altogether, is there only disillusionment to be found? Over time, humans become more mobile and in the process the idea and practice of having a stable home becomes more complex. While our inherent inclination to journey remains, it takes on new, sometimes unexpected forms.
Part II: An Emerging Mobilities Culture  
Chapter Three: The *Sattelzeit* 1770-1830  

3.1 Introduction  

In this chapter I examine a corpus of travel texts which were written between approximately 1770 and 1830, the period of major transition referred to by Koselleck as the *Sattelzeit*, or saddle period (1979). Examples from the various texts are used as evidence to adduce signs of a major cultural shift which took place during this time – a culture, I postulate, founded on an early idea of mobilities. The selected texts spanning the saddle period comprise, in order of subsequent analysis: Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769* (1846), Georg Forster’s *A Voyage Round the World* (1777), Friedrich Nicolai’s *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781* (1788), Karl Phillipp Moritz’s *Anton Reiser* (1785-6), Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795-96), Heinrich von Kleist’s *Briefe 1 März 1793-April 1801* (1848), Adelbert von Chamisso’s *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte* (1814), and Joseph von Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (1826). In the analysis of these texts of the *Sattelzeit*, I demonstrate the ways in which each writer expresses what I refer to as the discursive desire to travel. In addition, I look at supplements to the new experiences of each figure as they accommodate themselves to new ways of being in an increasingly mobile modern world. Broadly speaking, these so-called supplements may be grouped into the following three categories: the idea of culture, the idea of Bildung, and the development of enabling technology for travel and travel writing.

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149 Koselleck starts the saddle period at around 1770, as evidenced when he writes “seit etwa 1770 eine Fülle neuer Worte und Wortbedeutungnen auftauchen, Zeugnisse neuer Welterfassung, die die gesamte Sprache induzieren” (XV). Koselleck does not specify an exact end to the *Sattelzeit* and there is some discrepancy over an end year. However, it is generally understood to be centred around 1800 or the transition to modernity. I place the end of the *Sattelzeit* at 1830, in accordance with Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, ed., *The Cambridge History of German Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 204.

150 I have ordered the analysis of text according to the chronological order in which the writer’s journey itself was experienced/ took place, or, in the case of those autobiographical and fictional texts, according to the original date of publication which approximately reflects on the point in time in which the writer felt a desire to write about his own or his protagonist’s mobile experience of the *Sattelzeit*. 
3.2 Theoretical Approach

*Locating the Discursive Desire to Travel*

Before discussing Koselleck’s conception of the *Sattelzeit*, I first provide here an explanation of my analytical approach to this chapter. The argument I put forward follows the approach adopted by Geoffrey Batchen in his essay “Desiring Production,” from his study, *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History*. Batchen emphasises that the traditional way of conceptualising photography has been predominantly in terms of a relatively fixed “originary event”: Referring to the 1839 technological achievements of Louis Daguerre of France and William Henry Fox Talbot of England he explains, “The invention of photography has become the stable platform on which all the medium’s many subsequent forms are presumed to be founded.” Alluding to Derrida, Batchen notes that, rather than posing the “troubling philosophical question” of what photography is, historians have preferred to pin down the emergence of photography to the time and place of its invention. As an alternative, Batchen proposes a more complex reading of this history in which he considers not only the commonly-accepted “originary event”, but also “the wider significance of the timing of photography’s emergence into our culture.” In this way, “a beginning that was once thought to be fixed and dependable is now revealed as a problematic field of mutable historical differences.” The key question in this line of enquiry is not one concerning the (one) inventor of photography, but rather: “At what moment in history did the discursive

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152 Photography is relevant to the idea of the gaze in the subsequent analysis of films.
153 Batchen 3, my emphasis. More specifically Batchen writes: “It was on January 7, 1839, in the form of a speech by Francois Argo to the French Academy of Sciences, that the invention of photography was officially announced to the world. Further enthusiastic speeches about Louis Daguerre’s amazing image-making process were subsequently made […] [and] within a few months the daguerreotype had found its way to almost every corner of the globe”, 3.
154 Batchen 3.
155 Batchen 4.
156 Batchen 24.
desire to photograph emerge and begin to manifest itself insistently?" Batchen seeks to answer this question by surveying a number of individuals, mostly from European countries or the United States, who “recorded or subsequently claimed for themselves the pre-1839 onset of a desire to photograph.” According to his findings, these expressions date back to 1794, and he calls this group “the protophotographers.”

In a similar way to Batchen, in my analysis of travel texts of the Sattelzeit, I do not attempt to explicitly affix a single specific individual, date or location to the emergence of a culture founded on mobilities. Instead, I look to various literary sources and identify signs that implicitly show how the experience of movement and travel were gradually becoming an integral part of (certain) people’s lives and everyday habits. Hence, following Batchen, I ask the question, at what moment in history did the discursive desire to travel (as opposed to dwelling) and to produce travel writing emerge and begin to manifest itself insistently? In this chapter I postulate an answer to this question by suggesting that: first, this discursive desire emerged at a number of moments during the saddle period, and, second, that the experiences described in the travel texts of the Sattelzeit generate supplements that relate to and are of significance for the contemporary period of new mobilities which I examine in Part III. For these reasons, one may regard these writers expressing a desire to travel and to produce travel writing as proto-mobilities travellers, voyagers of the Sattelzeit period.

The Supplements: Culture, Bildung, Technology

I now provide a brief overview of the concept of supplements discussed in this chapter. My use of the notion of the supplement is loosely based on Jacques Derrida’s formulation of this

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157 Batchen 5.
158 Batchen 6. Batchen notes that this group he has identified is, “undoubtedly an incomplete and still speculative one”, 6. Rather than pinning down and closing off this group, Batchen is open to the emergence of new evidence and the possibility to extend or amend his group.
159 Batchen 6. Batchen also discusses contemporaries of the protophotographers expressing similar desires including a painter and a poet.
160 In the context of my analysis, the term insistently is not to be understood as concerning a huge-scale number of travellers or travel writers, but rather a gradual, yet insistent, irrepressible multifaceted transition to a culture founded on mobilities.
Generally speaking, a supplement may be understood as “something that, allegedly secondarily, comes to serve as an aid to something ‘original’ or ‘natural’.” One might see travel as something “original” or “natural” in the way that it has always been an existing part of human experience. Because during the Sattelzeit, the ways in which people travelled, the reasons why they travelled and the ways in which they thought about travel were changing, supplementary ideas were required to serve as aids to this change. Thus, the supplements that were produced in the Sattelzeit may be understood as correlates to the idea of travel that drove concept formation within the context of an increasingly mobile world. In other words, the supplements allowed the writers to reference changes that could not be talked about in any other way; their work projected what they saw as not being there yet: “[t]he self, ego or ‘I’ is always caught up in the movement of supplementarity.”

Additionally, notes Royle, “a supplement is at once what is added on to something in order further to enrich it and what is added on as a mere ‘extra’”, that is, a supplement is both a “surplus”, “and it makes up for something missing, as if there is a void to be filed up.” The Sattelzeit writers’ supplements both extend, and adapt existing ideas to the new conditions as well as adding extra ideas. For example, with regard to the supplement of the idea of culture, when travellers such as Herder and Forster went beyond national borders, they began to question and reconceptualise previous notions of national culture and Western

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163 Nicholas Royle, *Jacques Derrida*, Routledge Critical Thinkers (London: Routledge, 2003), 59. The notion of the supplement, while very productive, evades simplistic description because it is something that encompasses both the before and the after: it describes the coming into being of something, yet, at the same time, whatever thing has come into being was necessarily preceded by another supplement. On the other hand, for this very reason it is highly appropriate to apply the notion of the supplement to an analysis of mobility, because travel has always existed and because the supplement, by its nature, requires movement, from the previous supplement, to the next supplement. In this sense, one might understand the Sattelzeit as a period of comparatively intense movement from one supplement to the next.

164 Royle 49.
binaries of so-called barbarism/civilisation and move toward wider global-scale cultural identifications which offer new perspectives on humanity and the idea of cosmopolitanism. Concerning the supplement of the idea of Bildung, a growing consciousness of travel during the Sattelzeit resulted in the contemplation and questioning of both the benefits and disadvantages of dwelling-life vis-à-vis life on-the-move, and particularly how this played out in the formative years of one’s education. For writers such as Goethe, the idea of Bildung took on the role of mediating between dwelling and movement. Bildung is a multi-faceted concept, though generally speaking in the travel texts I analyse it relates to the new knowledge generated and learned as a result of travel in the Sattelzeit, as well as the new focus on the experiential and social formation of the travelling individual. The supplement of new travel technologies, understood here as material supplements to mobilities discourses, enabled unprecedented travel to take place during this period. For example, the invention of new sailing and navigational equipment made Forster’s journey to New Zealand and his text *A Voyage Round the World* possible. Similarly, the speeding up and more disjointed nature of time in the Sattelzeit led the travel writer Nicolai to develop a new piece of technology, a portable multidirectional shelf, in order to capture the immediacy of mobile life and write while on the move.

*Koselleck’s Sattelzeit*

I now turn to take a closer look at Koselleck’s concept of the Sattelzeit, which he defines in the introduction to *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (1979). Like Batchen, rather than constructing a “stable platform” on which to nail down, so-to-speak, events, inventors and the like, Koselleck takes up a wider, more complex position. He does so by detailing the mobilisation of people, new ideas and ideologies during the Sattelzeit, which took over from the preceding (pre-Sattelzeit) time of relative stability, (or mobility-singular). Specifically, Koselleck takes an etymological
approach to observe the way in which the meaning of words changed as a result of the wider social, cultural and political transitions occurring during this significant era in the transition to modernity:

Der heuristische Vorgriff der Lexikonarbeit besteht in der Vermutung, daß sich seit der Mitte des achttzehnten Jahrhunderts ein tiefgreifender Bedeutungswandel klassischer topoi vollzogen, daß alte Worte neue Sinngehalte gewonnen haben, die mit Annäherung an unsere Gegenwart keiner Übersetzung mehr bedürftig sind. Der heuristische Vorgriff führt sozusagen eine “Sattelzeit” ein, in der sich die Herkunft zu unserer Präsenz wandelt. […] Alte Begriffe haben sich in ihrem Bedeutungsgehalt den sich verändernden Bedingungen der modernen Welt angepaßt. 165 Koselleck emphasises that the semantic overhaul in the meanings of words and categories taking place during the saddle period was characterised by large-scale change or vicissitude, and variation. This is made apparent when he refers to changes in meaning (“Bedeutungswandel”), a new focus on the present moment rather than origins (“die Herkunft zu unserer Präsenz wandelt”), 166 and vicissitudinary general circumstance (“den sich verändernden Bedingungen”). The Sattelzeit may thus be generally understood as a significant period of transition. Within the Sattelzeit, old concepts are moulded and adapted to meet the changing conditions of the modern world. In a similar vein, Derrida argues: “[E]very conceptual breakthrough amounts to transforming, that is to say deforming, an accredited, authorized relationship between a word and a concept, between a trope and what one had every interest to consider to be an unshiftable primary sense, a proper, literal or current usage.” 167 Taking both Koselleck’s and Derrida’s points together, the Sattelzeit is defined by the degree to which the formation of supplementary notions becomes necessary. I further conjecture here that the terminology Koselleck has chosen to denote this changeover phase, viz. Sattelzeit, reconciles or bridges the two opposing concepts of dwelling and mobility. The term Sattel takes its meaning from a Bergsattel, or high ridge, but it is indeed

165 Koselleck 1979, XV.
166 Here Koselleck’s concept of the Sattelzeit is very similar to Batchen’s approach to the analysis of photography, which, “has little to do with a desire to reveal photography’s essential characteristics as a medium […] [but] is, rather, an effort to evoke directly the lived experience of history, a reminder that history is continually unfolding itself in the materiality of the present – in the presentness of whatever photograph, from whatever era, happens to be before us”, IX-X. This comment is also interesting when compared to David Harvey’s statement “present is all there is”, see Chapter Three, 151.
167 Cited in Royle 49.
ultimately derived from the word for saddle. On closer inspection, the metaphorical meaning of *ridge* relates to stasis, and thus connects on a semantic-etymological level with the paradigm of dwelling. However, saddle in the literal meaning does provide for a sense of movement, indeed requires it; it is a moving point that enables travel, and therefore connects with the mobilities paradigm. It is thus inferred that mobility must always be understood in relation to dwelling, and vice versa – they are not isolated concepts. This is a point also underscored by Clifford in his seminal 1992 text “Traveling Cultures”: “in my terms, cultural dwelling cannot be considered except in specific historical relations with cultural traveling, and vice versa.”

**Movement and Cultural Transformation**

If indeed the *Sattelzeit* marks a changeover phase from a culture founded on dwelling to the emergence of a culture founded on mobilities, it follows that another key concept of this period is that of movement. As Koselleck writes below, the intensification and alteration of movement may be viewed as the defining force behind the myriad of changes taking place:

> Der heuristische Vorgriff führt also zu einer Schwerpunktbildung, die […] nach Wandel oder Umbruch durch revolutionäre Bewegung bestimmt ist. Alle Begriffsgeschichten zusammen bezeugen neue Sachverhalte, ein sich änderndes Verhältnis zu Natur und Geschichte, zur Welt und zur Zeit, kurz: den Beginn der „Neuzeit.“

So how did these mobilised and changing conceptual relations to nature, history, time and the world play out at the level of human experience? Time in this new era, to take one example, was experienced in a new way. No longer was time perceived as even and linear, but increasingly as accelerated and disjointed, Koselleck suggests: “[D]ie „Neuzeit“ aufgrund ihres beschleunigten Erfahrungswandels [ist] auch als eine „neue Zeit“ erfahren worden.”

Further, whereas in the pre-*Sattelzeit* period the world was predominantly conceived of from a fixed viewpoint, for the *Sattelzeit* traveller “[p]lötzlich aufbrechende, schließlich anhaltende

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168 Clifford 115.
169 Koselleck 1979, XV, my emphasis.
170 Koselleck 1979, XV.
Veränderungen machen den Erfahrungshorizont beweglich.” Thus a new experience of time is an important part of the shift from mobility-singular to mobilites-plural. For Johann Gottfried Herder, for example, the movement of travelling at sea during his journey of 1769 dramatically changed the way in which he experienced and thought about the space that he was traversing. Rather than considering himself to be in – or be in relation to – a bordered country, Herder perceived himself in a nationless space. He explains:

Man bildet sich ein, daß man auf Meeren, indem man Länder und Welteile vorbeiﬂiegt, man viel von ihnen denken werde; allein diese Länder und Welteile sieht man nicht. Sie sind nur fernher stehende Nebel, und so sind auch meistens die Ideen von ihnen für gemeine Seelen. Es ist kein Unterschied ob das jetzt kurische, preußische, pommersche, dänische, schwedische, norwegische, holländische, englische, französische Meer ist: wie unsre Schifffahrt geht, ist’s nur überall Meer. Die Schifffahrt der Alten war hierin anders. (JmR 19)

As indicated at the end of the quotation, Herder was also aware that this point marked a change in the thinking of former times. Indeed the practice of sailing at sea was not uncommon, but previously the point of reference (the nation) remained fixed. Now, in this so-called Sattelzeit, it was this point of reference itself which moved, or blurred into insignificance.

Koselleck and Heidegger: Etymological Approaches to Cultural Analysis

From the arguments above and the brief illustration taken from Herder’s Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769, one may summarise two of the foundations of Koselleck’s Sattelzeit as, first, change, and second, movement. The work of Heidegger, as set out in the introductory chapter, also considers issues of mobility and dwelling. Like Koselleck, he looks to etymology to further his arguments in this area. However, in contrast to Koselleck, Heidegger, a strong advocate of the dwelling paradigm, foregrounds ideas of, first, (returning

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171 Koselleck 1979, XV.
172 The point of reference here could also be in the city, as it was in ancient times of Greek and Roman Antiquity.
173 It is not surprising in some ways that Koselleck’s and Heidegger’s methodological approaches converged, as there was a period in which they were exposed to the same scholarly influence. Keith Tribe, translator of Koselleck’s work writes: “Koselleck had direct contact with Heidegger: during the later 1940s and early 1950s Heidegger was a regular visitor to the Heidelberg seminars of Gadamer and Löwith that Koselleck also attended” Reinhard Koselleck, Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), XI.
to) origins, and, second, stasis (remaining in dwelling-places). In his essay “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken,” for example, Heidegger writes:


Here, Heidegger constructs a defence against the perceived threat of mobilities. In his view, we can look to the essence of language – in this case, Old High German, the earliest form of the German language – to find and return to the ideal original state of living that we have lost, that is, to dwell or stay in a place. Rather than launching into a life on the move, (as Herder did 1769), our desire should be to remain and commit to the tasks of “hegen und pflegen, nämlich den Acker bauen, Reben bauen.”

Heidegger idealised the early Greek way of life and conceivably, just prior to writing this particular passage, he had read Book 24 of the pre-
Sattelzeit text Homer’s Odyssey. Odysseus, the hero returned to Ithaca, “reached the flourishing estate of Laertes” and “found his father alone in the neat vineyard, hoeing round a vinestock” (OD, 24: V.205-6; 226-227).

Despite their shared etymological approach, Heidegger would almost certainly regard Koselleck as one who does not respect “das Wesen [...] der Sprache.” Rather than focusing on origins or essence, Koselleck regards words as ever-changing mobile carriers of meaning. To refer back to Koselleck’s quotation above, words are seen as phenomena which change over time (“alte Worte [, die] neue Sinngehalte gewonnen haben”), and which

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174 Heidegger 1990, 140.
175 Heidegger 1990, 141.
176 It is this kind of image, i.e. of a flourishing estate in Ithaca which Heidegger may have had in mind when avoiding travel to Greece, see Chapter Two, 46. Paradoxically, Laertes is portrayed as a very unhappy character, however it is perhaps because he stays in his dwelling-place that Odysseus is able to find him, and Laertes is able to find joy again.
177 Koselleck elaborates on this point and the way in which his opinion differs to Heideggarian perspectives in the following interview extract: “language is always ambiguous. [...] On one hand it indicates social change and on the other it is an essential factor that allows us to become conscious of changes in reality. Gadamer did not accept this ambiguity in language. For him, following Heidegger’s footsteps, language implicitly contains the totality of experience”, Javiér Fernández and Fuentes Sebastián, Juan Francisco, “Conceptual History, Memory, and Identity: An Interview with Reinhart Koselleck,” Contributions to the History of Concepts 2.March (2006): 99-128, 126.
lose their semantic content in new contexts, hence becoming separated from the past ("Worte […] die mit Annäherung an unsere Gegenwart keiner Übersetzung mehr bedürftig sind"). In the saddle period the search for linguistic or conceptual essence seems obsolete; this was a time when origins gave way to presence, ("eine “Sattelzeit” […] in der sich die Herkunft zu unserer Präsenz wandelt"). Herder, for example, while travelling in 1769, felt it appropriate for the times “an das, was vor mir liegt, [zu] denken […] immer die Gegenwart [zu] genießen” (JmR 123). In Koselleck’s Sattelzeit, earlier concepts simply changed meaning to adapt to the modern world, a world in which a culture founded on mobilities was emerging.\(^\text{178}\) It is this critical stance of the essential, of the dubious nature of a fixed, isolated and un-changing original, where Batchen, in his idea of proto-photography, Koselleck, in his concept of the Sattelzeit, and Derrida, in his notion of the supplement, converge, as emphasised when the latter theorist writes: “It is the strange essence of a supplement not to have any essentiality.”\(^\text{179}\)

### 3.3 Historical Context and Sattelzeit Writers

When noting the different approaches to research on dwelling and mobility, one should also take into consideration the period in which the scholar is writing in relation to the time in which he is theorising. Could it be that Heidegger, presenting his essay “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken,” in 1951, had detected and was responding to the potential emergence of the new mobilities of the post 1989/90 period? Was his focus on the historical essence of early (German) language, on the behaviours of early (Greek) peoples, and, generally speaking, on the pre-Sattelzeit period an attempt to reverse the change? Could it also be that Koselleck, writing in the late 1970s, had also sensed this change? Yet, recognising its imminence, had

\(^{178}\) This is epitomised in the phrase cited above: “Alte Begriffe haben sich in ihrem Bedeutungsgehalt den sich verändernden Bedingungen der modernen Welt angepaßt”, Koselleck 1979, XV.

\(^{179}\) Derrida 1976, 314. Further to this point, Derrida notes that it is impossible to arrest the concept of the supplement: “One wishes to go back from the supplement from the source: one must recognize that there is a supplement at the source”, Derrida 1976, 304.
Koselleck instead of trying to oppose it, attempted to understand what might be happening by locating precursory changes in thought and culture, in the Sattelzeit period?

Global Exploration

Before I take a look at the texts of each selected Sattelzeit writer, here I briefly consider how their lives, and therefore the textual representations of their experiences, were affected by the wider socio-political and economic circumstances of this historical period of movement and change. At this time, colonial and scientific exploration by sea involving the discovery, mapping and conquering of new parts of the world, contributed greatly to the rise of nation-states and the growth of Empires in Europe. The aristocracy of the British, Prussian, French and Russian Empires was sufficiently wealthy to pay for foreign experts to gather scientific information on these voyages on their behalf. In 1772, the British Admiralty invited German natural scientists Johann Reinhold Forster and his son, Georg Forster to collect botanical and ethnographic data on Captain James Cook’s expedition to the Pacific. On the title page of Georg Forster’s account of this trip A Voyage Round the World, the author acknowledges the fact that the journey took place on “His BRITANNIC MAJESTY’S Sloop, RESOLUTION” (VRW 3). Similarly, in 1815, the French-born German writer, Adelbert von Chamisso gained employ of the Russian Empire as a botanist on Captain Otto von Kotzebue’s voyage of exploration to the Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, funded by Count Nikolay Rumyantsev, which Chamisso describes in Reise um die Welt, “mit der Romanzoffischen Entdeckungs-Expedition.”

Chamisso considers the connection between his travel at sea and the importance of producing knowledge for the public in the following:

Der einzige Vorteil, den ich mir von meinen Bemühungen während und nach der Reise als Naturforscher und Schriftsteller versprechen durfte, war, diese von mir geforderten Denkschriften vor dem Publikum, für welches sie bestimmt waren, in reinem Abdruck und würdiger Gestalt erscheinen zu sehen.

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181 Chamisso 1980, 83.
These epic sea journeys taking place during the Sattelzeit thus generated scientific knowledge as the building blocks of growing Empires; seafarers developed new technologies to circumnavigate the globe, as scientists such as the Forsters and Chamisso were able to measure, quantify and analyse flora and fauna and ethnographically document indigenous peoples.

**Social Upheaval: the Rise of the Middle Classes**

At the same time, however, playing out against the expansion of the Empires was an upheaval against the aristocracy, an Umbruch, or growing desire for social change and emergence from the feudal order. Two major events of the time, the French Revolution (1789-1799) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), and to a lesser extent, the Befreiungskriege (wars of liberation between Napoleon’s troops and the central-European opposition 1813-15) resulted in the mobilisation of thousands of people, including some of the Sattelzeit writers: Adelbert von Chamisso’s aristocratic family had to flee from France to Germany amid socio-political tension, and later in his life, during his university study, Chamisso was forced into exile as a result of the Befreiungskriege; Heinrich von Kleist fought in the Prussian Army in the Rhein Campaign; Joseph von Eichendorff also fought against Napoleon’s army in the final years of his Napoleonic Wars. Somewhat ironically, the rise of the middle classes, and the concurrent weakening of aristocratic rule, both fuelled and were fuelled by the contemporary movement of knowledge and ideas by way of burgeoning print media. One literary manifestation of this largely youth-driven social rebellion was the emotionally intense writing of the Sturm und Drang period, of which (the young) Johann Wolfgang Goethe was a proponent. The writers of this period felt that rational scientific thought failed to convey the complexity of human experience. A further outcome was that some people of the lower and middle classes were demanding access to education along with other social rights, which was made increasingly possible thanks to the proliferation of
newspapers, journals and books. Koselleck comments on the subsequent spread of political concepts, which hitherto were primarily restricted to the (educated/enlightened) world of aristocrats below:

Im Zuge der sich auflösenden ständischen Welt dehnt sich der Anwendungsbereich vieler Begriffe aus [...] Blieb bis in die Mitte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts die politische Terminologie auf die Spitzen der Aristokratie, auf Juristen und Gelehrte beschränkt, so erweitert sich der Kreis der Beteiligten seitdem sprunghaft auf die Gebildeten. Dem entspricht die emporschnellende Zahl der Zeitschriften, und der Wandel von der intensiven Wiederholungslektüre der immer gleichen Bücher zur extensiven Lesegewohnheit, die das stets neu Anfallende verzehrt.182

One may consider, for example, the literary journals and bibliographic collections established in Germany by Frederich Nicolai, such as the Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek (ADB) (1765-1805), as materials, “[die] das stets neu Anfallende verzehrt [haben].” In 1780, Nicolai released a catalogue, Verzeichniss einer Handbibliothek der nützlichsten deutschen Schriften zum Vergnügen und Unterricht...welche um beygesetzte Preise zu haben sind bey Friedrich Nicolai, which was followed up by a second expanded version in 1787.183 Over time, Nicolai helped to establish a widely-read network of German literary criticism: “[d]urch die ADB habe sich das schreibende und lesende Deutschland [ungeachtet des Standes] vielleicht zum ersten Mal als Einheit erlebt.”184 In these circumstances, some (exceptional) literate lower class citizens such as Johann Gottfried Herder gained the opportunity for social ascension through travel and education. Although born into a poor family, Herder taught himself to read, and this eventually allowed him to enrol in university and later go on to travel to Riga in 1784 to take up an academic post. Similarly, the eponymous protagonists in the narratives of Karl Phillip Moritz’s Anton Reiser, and Joseph von Eichendorff’s Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts, both of humble beginnings, teach themselves to read and become educated in matters of the wider world. Subsequently both characters are opened up to the idea of travel,

182 Koselleck 1979, XVI.
184 “Gedenktage: Friedrich Nicolai,” Fachdienst Germanistik 2, 2011:4-5. This is in stark contrast to the later divided Germany in which East Germans could read about travels to the west but could not visit the places read about as their West German counterparts could, see Chapter Four, 144-5.
with the Taugenichts leaving feudal life to eventually marry into the aristocracy. Thus the ideas of education and travel and the proliferation of print media were closely linked to the rise of the middle classes and the socio-political rebellion that took place during the *Sattelzeit*. For this reason, it is highly appropriate that Dieter Lenzen places the beginning of the modern notion of education at about late 1770 (when the first chair of pedagogy was founded at the University of Halle), coinciding with the start of the *Sattelzeit*.\(^{185}\)

**The Development of International Trade**

Another way in which to look at the general historical context of the *Sattelzeit* is in terms of international trade, the movement of objects and the resulting social consequences. As mentioned above, books and other print media were gaining wider circulation, and this extended beyond national borders, as many works underwent translation into other languages to access a larger readership and create a reader’s market. More generally, the growth of international trade resulted in the desire for particular items from far-off countries. Chamisso hints at this in the narrative of *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte*, when he writes: “Es wäre göttlich, meinte wer aus der Gesellschaft, wenn man türkische Teppiche hätte, sie hier auszubreiten” (PS 25). Again, in the same text, Chamisso alludes to the global travel of commodities (and perhaps even people as commodities) when he provides the image of, “sehr viele Schiffe […] alle nach anderen Weltstrichen, alle nach anderen Küsten bestimmt” (PS 41). In a similar vein, Koselleck points toward the way in which increases in trade and the introduction of foreign products into local settings changed every day semantic content: “[In den] veränderten wirtschaftlichen Bedingungen […] wird der Übergang zu Neologismen fließend.”\(^ {186}\)

One can further exemplify the effect of trade on people’s lives during the *Sattelzeit* by taking a general look at the life and family history of Goethe. Goethe was born in Frankfurt


\(^{186}\) Koselleck 1979, XV.
am Main, “an old Imperial city, a republic of German nationality within the Holy Roman
Empire, with its many crafts and trades”\textsuperscript{187} and the wealth of Goethe’s family was based on
trade.\textsuperscript{188} By this means, his familial predecessors had, over time, been able to elevate their
social status somewhat: “die Goethes gehörten zu jener ursprünglich handwerklich-
kleinbürgerlichen Schicht, die den Dreißigjährigen Krieg überlebt hatte und ein neues
Bürgertum und frischen Adel bildete.”\textsuperscript{189} In Goethe’s Bildungsroman, Wilhelm Meister’s
Lehrjahre, it is the protagonist Wilhelm’s family connection to trade which allows him to
escape his mundane bourgeois lifestyle and to go out into the world, gather experience and
become educated.

The period in which the Sattelzeit writers lived was thus a tumultuous time of
expanding empires, social upheaval and rising middle classes, of moving objects of
international trade and the dissemination of scientific knowledge, literary criticism and
political ideas through print media. Through it all, the idea of travel as a way of life, whether
for purposes of combat, escape, education, social ascension, trade or simply gaining
experience, was beginning to take hold and gain validity. I now take a closer look at the
Sattelzeit texts, and the individual journeys and voyages of the Sattelzeit travellers.

3.4 Travel Text Analysis: Sattelzeit Journeys

3.4.1 Johann Gottfried Herder’s Journal Meiner Reise im Jahre 1769 (1846)

Escape from Riga

The way in which changes in movement and time led to a mobilised and shifting horizon of
experience (Erfahrungshorizont) during the Sattelzeit is exemplified in Johann Gottfried
Herder’s Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769. The journey begins when Herder, a rather
restless figure, makes a sudden departure from his adopted home of Riga. A prominent

\textsuperscript{187} Richard Friedenthal, Goethe: His Life and Times (Great Britain: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), 14.
\textsuperscript{189} Curt Hohoff, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Dichtung und Leben (München: Langen Müller, 1989), 15-16.
educator and teacher, Herder’s leave-taking of Riga was abrupt and unanticipated by many: “[Herder] suddenly electrified his fellow-citizens in May 1769, by resigning his charges in school and church and immediately afterwards leaving the city by sea.” The inability to lead a peaceful life in his dwelling-place amid an out-of-hand muddle of largely self-caused problems resulted in Herder’s decision in favour of a mobile life. Herder explains: “Ich gefiel mir nicht als Gesellschafter […] als Schullehrer […] als Bürger […] als Autor […] Alles war mir zuwider. […] Ich mußte also reisen […] so schleunig, übertäubend und fast abenteuerlich reisen, als ich konnte” (JmR 1). “It was very much like running away – running away from an impossible set of circumstances”, writes Gillies. “Die sich verändernden Bedingungen” of the Sattelzeit are thus evident in the dramatic transformations in Herder’s life as an individual and in the “impossible circumstances” of his dwelling-life. As he literally cast himself adrift, one may observe Herder’s Erfahrungshorizont, and, in particular, the way in which his mode of thinking was mobilised:

So denkt man, wenn man aus Situation in Situation tritt, und was gibt ein Schiff, das zwischen Himmel und Meer schwebt, nicht für weite Sphäre zu denken! Alles gibt hier dem Gedanken Flügel und Bewegung und weiten Luftkreis. (JmR 4)

In addition to a newfound sense of freedom and movement in terms of his thinking, Herder also revelled in the discovery of how it would be possible to read while moving, that is, “lesend schlendern zu können” (JmR 123). Note here that the term schlendern is significant for two reasons. First, the emphasis is again placed on the movement, rather than the activity of reading, (i.e. Herder did not choose to write “schlendernd lesen”). Second, schlendern has connotations of relaxation and enjoyment, a further positive association with mobility. Homer’s Odyssey was one of Herder’s recommended books to read while on the move, because, as he notes, “[e]s gibt tausend neue und natürlichere Erklärungen der Mythologie oder vielmehr tausend innigere Empfindungen ihrer ältesten Poeten, wenn man […] zu

191 Gillies IX, my emphasis.
Schiffe liest” (JmR 14). Herder elaborates: “So fliegt man mit den Fittichen des Windes und schifft mit dem abenteuerlichen Seehelden, statt daß jetzt die Bewegung des Geistes und Körpers entgegenstreben” (JmR 19). One can better understand and make literal and metaphorical connections by moving with the mythical heroes of the sea, such as Odysseus, when one is travelling oneself, reading and sailing on the move. It is almost as if Herder is trying to bring Homer’s pre-Sattelzeit text up-to-date by advocating a Sattelzeit hermeneutic method – mobile reading.

The Freedom of a Mobile Life

As an early Sattelzeit travel writer, Herder’s general stance on the merits of a mobile life as opposed to a more settled dwelling-life with which the Journal meiner Reise im Jahre 1769 is imbued, makes him appear as a thinker before his time. To Herder, travelling brings a sense of freedom and opens up the mind and spirit to new ways of thinking and being. Herder is at sea after leaving Riga when he writes:

Auf der Erde ist man an einen toten Punkt angeheftet und in den engen Kreis einer Situation eingeschlossen. […] wo sind die, für denen ich mich fürchtete, und die ich liebe? … O Seele, wie wird dir’s sein, wenn du aus dieser Welt hinaustrittst? Der enge, fest, eingeschränkte Mittelpunkt ist verschwunden, du flatterst in den Lüften oder schwimmst auf einem Meere – die Welt verschwindet dir – ist unter dir verschwunden! – Welch neue Denkart! (JmR 4-5)

The world to which Herder refers to above, is a restrictive and repressive place of dwelling, which he emphasises in his use of evocative terminology, such as “angeheftet”, “eingeschlossen”, “eng” and “eingeschränkt.” He has managed to escape this “homogene Gesellschaft” (JmR 5). He has entered a nationless space in which his spirit and his capacity to think have been freed, opened up and allowed to move in new ways (“du flatterst in den Lüften oder schwimmst auf einem Meere”). Moving brings freedom to one’s life yet moving is also avoidance – evasion of the pain and stress that are inevitably a part of human

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192 At the same time, one can safely assume from the quotation cited above that Herder was (becoming) aware of the differences between the journeys of his time in which destinations (and nations) lose some significance as the importance of the travel itself emerges, as compared to Homer’s Odyssey which is centred on the idea of Odysseus returning to his homeland of Ithaca: “Es ist kein Unterschied ob das jetzt kurische, preußische, […] französische Meer ist: wie unsere Schiffahrt geht, ist’s nur überall Meer. Die Schiffahrt der Alten war hierin anders”, JmR 19.
interaction. As such dwelling-life has associations with death, emotional turmoil, and the restriction of movement and life experience (“man [ist] an einen toten Punkt angeheftet”). Not surprisingly, this view is in stark contrast to Heidegger’s antithetical view of dwelling which, derived from the Gothic, wunian, means “zufrieden sein, zum Frieden gebracht, in ihm bleiben”\textsuperscript{193} “Die Sterblichen wohnen”, opines Heidegger “[…] damit ein guter Tod sei.”\textsuperscript{194}

However, perhaps the positive/negative delineation between the abovementioned early advocates of dwelling and mobilities is not quite as clear cut as it may first appear. While Herder extols a sense of new found freedom from being on-the-move, it turns out that this does not come without cost. Without his doting students around him, and in the knowledge, deep down, that he ran away, Herder is simultaneously stuck in an intense process of self-examination (as indicated when he says “O Seele, wie wird dir’s sein[?]”), and, ultimately, harrowing self-pity. The act of leaving everything behind, he writes, “kostet Tränen, Reue, Herauswindung aus dem Alten – Selbstverdammung!” (JmR 5). Gillies takes note of this darker side of Herder’s journey and the effect that it had on the content of the Sattelzeit travel text: “His diary is no ordinary one. It is not a description of his journey.”\textsuperscript{195} In fact, claims Gillies: “The whole Reisejournal is one long regret and accusation. He has no good to say either of himself or of any of the countries he saw.”\textsuperscript{196} Escaping responsibility for the relationships of one’s dwelling place means facing oneself, and Herder, it seems, did not like what he saw.

\textsuperscript{193} Heidegger 1990, 143.
\textsuperscript{194} Heidegger 1990, 145.
\textsuperscript{195} Gillies XI.
\textsuperscript{196} Gillies XXIX.
**Humanity Beyond Nations**

However, a positive turning point came for Herder when he began to look outward, take a wider view of the world and open up to new ways of thinking about the idea of culture. In his typically dramatic style, Herder’s thoughts moved from himself to considering the position of humankind in general. It was sailing at sea and removing himself, both physically and mentally, from the binds of the nation which allowed for this progression. Gillies describes this shift as follows:

> The sea gave Herder a sense of freedom. […] It enabled him to indulge his thoughts to the full. […] The urge to study human origins, so as to be able to prophesy the future, became increasingly entrancing. […] Where is all this to lead to but the whole history of humanity? Herder sets out his purpose with the most engaging positiveness.

It is almost as if being physically mobile is catalyst to the psychological process of moving one’s thoughts forward and outward at a faster pace. One may observe this process in Herder’s own words in the following passage. Here, he again alludes to mobile reading (in this instance, to gain better understanding of scientific texts), to the emancipation of the mind while travelling at sea, and, finally, to the transition from questioning himself, to the pursuit of knowledge regarding mankind and its origins. Herder writes:


The supplementary idea of culture based on humanity beyond nations that arose from Herder’s travel experience around the beginning of the Sattelzeit had influence on subsequent scholars. These included prominent Italian political theorist/activist Giuseppe Mazzini who

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197 Perhaps, like running away from Riga, this was another kind of evasion tactic: by focusing on the entire history of mankind he no longer had to face up to himself.

198 See Gillies XIV.

199 Gillies XIII-XIV.
was engaged with such ideas as the *Sattelzeit* was coming to an end. Herder’s influence is clearly evident in Mazzini’s theory of humanity, which he sets out in texts such as *The Duties of Man (Doveri dell’uomo)* of 1860. In *The Duties of Man*, Mazzini outlines the principles by which he believes his audience, men of the Italian working class, should live. Of foremost importance here is man’s duty toward humanity: “[N]ever forget that your first duties - duties without fulfilling which, you cannot rightfully fulfil those towards your country and family – are towards Humanity.” Thus, like Herder, Mazzini emphasises the cultural dimension of humanity beyond (though not precluding) nations, as evidenced in the following: “In whatsoever land you live, wheresoever there arises a man to combat for the right, the just, and the true, that man is your brother.” Mazzini even went so far as to claim that as a new focus on mankind takes hold, “[d]istinctions of Cou ntry […] may possibly disappear.”

Despite the convergence of their ideas, it should be noted that Herder, in *Journal meiner Reise*, was generally advocating a life on the move, whereas Mazzini was encouraging a dwelling-life that supports humanity as a whole. This is intimated when Mazzini writes that losing one’s family leaves one “wander[ing] restless and unhappy.”

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200 See Bolton. King, *The Life of Mazzini* (London: JM Dent & Sons, 1912), 10. Toward the end of *The Duties of Man*, Mazzini cites his own writing from twenty years ago about the importance of “the Universal tradition of Humanity”, indicating that he was writing about this topic in about 1840, around 10 years after the *Sattelzeit* came to an end. Giuseppe Mazzini, *The Duties of Man*, trans. E.A. Venturi (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), 214. King outlines the specific aspects of Herder’s thinking which influenced Mazzini: “From him [Herder] he [Mazzini] learned or confirmed his spiritual conception of life, his belief in immortality, his theory of the progress of humanity and the man’s co-operation in the work of Providence”, 10. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the differences between each theorist’s ideas (partly due to the different time periods in which they were writing). On this point Urbinati notes that while both scholars agreed on the importance of humanity and the moral equality of nations “Herder stressed pre-political factors as constitutive of the nation, such as race and ancestral identity […] [whereas] Mazzini gave the nation an essentially political meaning”, Nadia Urbinati, “The Legacy of Kant: Giuseppe Mazzini’s Cosmopolitanism of Nations,” *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Globalisation of Democratic Nationalism 1830-1920*, ed. C.A. and Eugenio F. Biagini Bayly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11-36, 23.

201 Although it is clear that Mazzini’s reader is the Italian working class man from the title of the preface “Preface to the Italian Working Class” (IX), and the subtitle “addressed to working men” (1), it is also evident that Mazzini is thinking beyond Italian borders, for example, when he writes “In whatsoever land you live” (82, cited above), and that he is thinking in terms of equality for women when he calls for, “[t]he Emancipation of Women” (219).

202 Mazzini 82.
203 Mazzini 82.
204 Mazzini 98.
205 Mazzini 96.
Generally speaking, Herder recognised that a travelling lifestyle had the potential to have both positive and detrimental effects, and again, this may be seen as symptomatic of the “[p]lötzlich aufbrechende […]Veränderungen”, of the Sattelzeit, whereby (physical) movement brings about (emotional) change. For example, in the same stream of thought Herder quickly goes from exclaiming, “Welch neue Denkart!” to experiencing an overwhelming sensation of “Selbstverdammung!” Perhaps it was (and is) this ability to feel and learn from such extremities of emotion within a foreign or previously unknown space which drove the Sattelzeit travellers to either become wedded to travel and a mobile lifestyle, or, to subsequently reject this kind of mobile lifestyle in favour of returning to a more settled life of dwelling. Like Herder, the following Sattelzeit traveller, Georg Forster was to undergo a dramatic expansion and change in his thinking as a result of sailing vast distances across the sea.

3.4.2 Georg Forster’s A Voyage Round the World (1777)

A Sailing Voyage to the End of the Earth

Georg Forster was exposed to a mobile lifestyle from an early age. In 1765 at age 11, he travelled from Germany to Russia with his father, natural scientist and Protestant Minister Johann Reinhold Forster. On this journey, the younger Forster learned about mapping, scientific exploration and researching colonial settlements. In 1766, the Forsters, Junior and Senior, moved to England where they worked on translating travelogues. Even when Georg Forster was not on the move, he was still intensely engaged in ideas and experiences of mobility. Moreover, through his translation of travel texts he helped to disseminate

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206 This particular trip was commissioned by the Russian government with the purpose of making observations of settlements of German colonists near the river Volga, Nicholas Thomas and Oliver Berghof, “Introduction,” A Voyage Round the World (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000), XIX-XLIII, XIX.
knowledge of travel in Europe and elsewhere by making it accessible to speakers of other languages.\textsuperscript{207}

On 13 July 1772 at the age of 18, Georg Forster joined his father as a crewman on Captain Cook’s second voyage on the \textit{Resolution} to the regions of the Pacific and Antarctic. Father and son were a last-minute addition to the crew after the resignation of the British botanist, Joseph Banks.\textsuperscript{208} Forster described their general role as: “to collect, describe, and draw the objects of natural history which we might expect to meet with during our course” (VRW 17).\textsuperscript{209} Those crewmen on board Cook’s ship \textit{Resolution} who were of note in Georg Forster’s eyes included: “The greatest navigator of his time [Captain James Cook], two able astronomers [William Bayly and William Wales],\textsuperscript{210} a man of science to study nature in all her recesses [Johann Reinhold Forster], and a painter [William Hodges] to copy some of her most curious productions” (VRW 5). The journey was on a grand scale in terms of both the distance covered and gathering scientific and ethnographic information. “Thus”, writes Forster in retrospect, “after escaping innumerable dangers, and suffering a long series of hardships, we happily completed a voyage, which had lasted three years and sixteen days; in the course of which, it is computed we run over a greater space of sea than any ship ever did before us; since, taking all our tracks together, they form more than thrice the circumference of the globe” (VRW 684).

Like Friedrich Nicolai, those aboard the \textit{Resolution} and her partner vessel the \textit{Adventure} had a clear common purpose to their journey: they were on “A VOYAGE to

\textsuperscript{207} In this analysis I refer to the English version of \textit{A Voyage Round the World}, which is the original language in which the text was published. On this note Thomas and Berghof write: “In its author’s German translation, this work became a classic of natural history writing, but its original English version has long been neglected by Anglophone scholars”, inside jacket cover.

\textsuperscript{208} Further to this rather hasty appointment Georg Forster writes: “We prepared with the utmost alacrity for this arduous undertaking, and in the space of nine days sent all our baggage on board the Resolution” (VRW 17).

\textsuperscript{209} This information contributed to the wider Enlightenment project of collecting and disseminating knowledge, as evident on the title page of \textit{A Voyage Around the World}, on which Forster acknowledges his membership to the “Royal Academy [of Medicine and Natural Science] of MADRID, and of the Society for promoting Natural Knowledge at BERLIN” (VRW 5).

\textsuperscript{210} I assume Forster is here referring to William Bayly, although Bayly was primarily posted to the Resolution’s partner ship, the \textit{Adventure}. 
explore the high southern latitudes of our globe”, and to determine the possible existence of the Great Southern Continent, or *Terra Australis Incognita* – literally ‘the unknown land of the south’ (VRW 17). This followed a long history of Europeans imagining and mapping the space of Australia in pre-*Sattelzeit* times. Batchen discusses the conceptualisation of Australia as “a potent site for the discourses of European desire” for some 2000 years: “[f]rom the Pythagorean perspective of the ancient Greeks, who projected an unknown southern continent as a necessary Antipodean other to their Northern Hemisphere, to the satirical vision of Swift’s 1726 *Gulliver’s Travels*,²¹¹ which is strategically set in an unmapped space on the globe near what was to become Adelaide.”²¹² Forster was part of a group of travellers in the *Sattelzeit* who were able to successfully physically realise the exploration of this area, on which note Forster writes “[t]he principal view of our expedition, the search after a southern continent within the bounds of the temperate zone, was fulfilled” (VRW 684). However, there was something that occurred as a result of the trip which Forster most likely did not anticipate. In the process of making ethnographic observations, his ideas about culture – in particular, regarding the traditional binary between so-called barbarians and civilised peoples – would undergo a dramatic process of change, and ultimately set the younger Forster apart from his father in terms of his thinking.

**Ethnographic Research in New Zealand**

New Zealand was to Forster, “ein anthropologisches Laboratorium besonderer Art”, a previously unexplored area in which to carry out ethnographic description and the cataloguing of flora and fauna.²¹³ Forster was thus a distinctive writer of the *Sattelzeit*

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²¹² Batchen 28. Batchen makes this point in relation to the Australian celebrations of 200 years of history which completely disregard both the history of the area as part of *Terra Australis Incognita*, and, even more importantly (and insultingly), of thousands of years of Aboriginal history, 27-29.

narrating his experiences of, “ein sich änderndes Verhältnis zu Natur und [...] zur Welt.”

Thomas and Berghof outline the complexities of his writing style and content in the following: “Forster’s ethnographic reportage is extensive, rich, and particular; it also features the summary distillations and sweeping judgements endemic in travel writing, though these tend to be advanced at one moment and qualified or contradicted at the next.”

One point of interest in the ethnographic details of *A Voyage Round the World* on which Forster appears to both advance and contradict is the relationship between travel and dwelling. He refers to the Maori as “natives” or “New Zealanders”, and in so doing suggests that they were regarded as the indigenous dwellers of this area vis-à-vis the travelling Europeans (VRW 102). However, as Forster spent more time in New Zealand and had more encounters with Maori, the lines of this boundary became blurred. To begin with, it seemed that the Maori family Forster encountered at Dusky Bay dwelled in an almost idyllic Heideggarian sense: “so secluded from the rest of the world, in a spacious bay”, with “a superfluity of food” and “all the necessaries of life” (VRW 103). Yet, over time Forster came to suspect that they, “lead a nomadic or wandering life, and remove according to the season, the conueniency of fishing, and other circumstances” (VRW 103). Still, such movements appeared to be within the realm of acceptability. However, when the Maori family “made signs of going to kill men”, Forster quickly switches to writing about the “state of barbarism, in which the New Zealanders may justly be said to live” and “their innate and savage valour” (VRW 103). He could not understand why they would want to leave such a peaceful and plentiful dwelling-place to go to war, even though, in this case, the Maori indicated that they were going to war after having received a number of hatchets from Cook’s crew (VRW 102).

Were the Maori family in fact, driven to war after having had acquired these European weapons? Despite the grand-scale and unprecedented nature of Cook’s second

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214 Cited above.
215 Thomas and Berghof XXXIII.
voyage to New Zealand, Forster did not understand a great deal of Maori language and thus his knowledge of their culture was limited to what he could interpret from observation and interaction. He knew little, for example, of the early history of Maori mobility and the phenomenal navigation skills they possessed: Polynesian explorers had already crossed the Pacific Ocean and discovered New Zealand sometime between AD 500 and 1000, “at a time when European seamen were still hugging the shoreline as they sailed from port to port along their coastlines.”

**Questioning Cultural Binaries**

As Forster spent more time among Maori he began to think more about the relationship between the European sailors and the New Zealand Maori and how this, in turn, problematizes wider human issues such as the binary between cultural groups referred to by some Europeans at the time as “civilised” and “barbarian” peoples and the stigmatisation of cannibalism. Forster comes to call into question his initial stance that the European travellers are superior to and can better the lives of the “savage” Maori dwellers. One may understand his changing idea of culture as a supplementary notion arising in response to the changing conditions referred to in Koselleck’s definition of the *Sattelzeit*: that is, the traditional ideas (or “klassische topoi”) regarding the dichotomy of “barbarian”/“civilised” man are problematized as a result of unprecedented long distance travel and extended interaction with Maori (an example of the “sich verändernden Bedingungen der modernen Welt”).

This transition to a new way of thinking was, however, by no means a simple process. Forster’s at times highly contradictory statements concerning European and Maori, travelling and dwelling, reflect an internal fluctuation. On the one hand, the Europeans had an “extended sphere of knowledge” and the crewmen were to execute duties so as to promote an easier transition to the future (British) colonial dwelling life in New Zealand (VRW 128). On the

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217 Koselleck 1979, XV.
other hand, Forster often demonstrated a great degree of respect for Maori, their culture and way of living, and came to question whether he and his comrades could or should actually attempt improve their lives and extend their “narrow views” (VRW 128).

This line of thinking was likely influenced to some degree by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s 1750 “Discourse on the Sciences and Arts,” also known as the “First Discourse.” In this highly controversial essay, Rousseau criticises the enlightened knowledge of civilised peoples, condemning “the vanity and vacuousness of those proud titles which dazzle us and which we so gratuitously place on human knowledge”, and finding fault with “the labors of our most enlightened learned men and our best Citizens [which] provide us with so little that is useful.” Forster’s dilemma over whether the Europeans and the knowledge they bought with them actually improved the lives of Maori comes to a head at a particular point in the narrative: here he pondered the possible causes of sexually transmitted infections transferred between Maori women and European sailors at Queen Charlotte’s Sound and what he viewed as the general moral corruption of Maori. Initially, he concludes that “the venereal disease was indigenous in New Zealand, and not imported by Europeans”, but goes on to attenuate this stance somewhat (VRW 136):


219 Rousseau 14;17. In the preface to the First Discourse Rousseau apologises for the controversial nature of his essay, before he even begins to write it. One may presume he is aware of the upset that questioning the authority and superiority of civilised men over so-called savages: “I expect I shall not easily be forgiven for taking the side I dared to take. Clashing head on with all that is today admired by men, I can only expect universal blame”, Rousseau 4.

220 This point recalls Rousseau’s claim in the Second Discourse, “[w]hen one considers the good constitution of Savages, at least of those we have not ruined with our strong liquors, when one realizes that they know almost no other illnesses than wounds and old age, one is strongly inclined to believe that the history of human diseases could easily be written by following that of civil Societies, 138. Further to the lamentation of the moral corruption of Maori by the European sailors Forster writes: “It is unhappy enough that the unavoidable consequence of all our voyages of discovery, has always been the loss of a number of innocent lives; but this heavy injury done to the little uncivilized communities which Europeans have visited, is trifling when compared to the irretrievable harm entailed upon them by corrupting their morals”, VRW 121.
But if, in spite of appearances, our conclusions should prove to be erroneous, it is another crime added to the score of civilized nations, which must make their memory execrated by the unhappy people, whom they have poisoned. Nothing can in the least alone for the injury they have done to society, since the price at which their libidinous enjoyments were purchased, instils another poison in the mind, and destroys the moral principles, while the disease corrupts and enervates the body. (VRW 136-7)

In reference to this passage, Bohls and Duncan claim that here Forster has turned 180 degrees on his initial position. They suggest Forster now believes “the common sailors, ignorant, hardened, licentious, are the true savages.” However, I would argue that this is an oversimplification. Here Forster appears to be entering a plea of no contest, neither admitting guilt nor claiming innocence. What he does do, in a hypothetical sense, is express doubt about the positive outcomes of the new mobilities of the *Sattelzeit* era. It is in this line of thinking that Georg Forster diverges from the opinions of his father, Johann Reinhold Forster, argues Horst Dippel. As the following examples show, whereas in *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* (1778), Johann Reinhold Forster denigrates peoples “unconnected with the highly civilized nations”, Georg Forster, in *A Voyage Round the World*, suggests that without European contact the “brave, generous, and hospitable” Maori would potentially not have suffered such exploitation. Johann Reinhold Forster writes:

> [T]he human species, when unconnected with the highly civilized nations, is always found more debased in its physical, mental, moral and social capacity. [...] [T]heir hearts grow insensible to the dictates of virtue, honor and conscience and, they become incapable of any attachment, affection or endearment.

By contrast, Georg Forster writes:

> A race of men, who amidst all their savage roughness, their fiery temper, and cruel customs are brave, generous, hospitable and incapable of deceiving, are justly to be pitied, that love, the source of their sweetest and happiest feelings, is converted into the origin of the most dreadful scourge of life. (VRW 137)

Perhaps then the world would be more peaceful if peoples were left to dwell in their own nations and preserve their own cultures and lifestyles? Despite their uncivilised nature, here

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223 Cited in Dippel 36. Dippel points out that Forster was particularly dismayed with this section of his father’s work: “Es war ein vernichtendes Urteil, das Georg Forster entschieden zurückwies, was zur Konsequenz hatte, daß er diesen ganzen Passus in seiner Ausgabe des väterlichen Buches ersatzlos strich” 38.
Forster implies an answer in the affirmative with regard to the Maori people and their encounters with some European explorers.\textsuperscript{224} “I fear hitherto that our intercourse has been wholly disadvantageous to the nations of the South Seas”, he laments (VRW 121).

At another noteworthy point in \textit{A Voyage Round the World} Forster goes further in overturning traditional power structures of civilisation by sympathizing with the indigenous peoples’ perspective. Again, this approach was very likely influenced by Rousseau: in “Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men” also known as “Second Discourse” of 1752, Rousseau provides various examples to suggest that the way a savage lives “often makes his situation preferable to ours.”\textsuperscript{225} Likewise, Forster implies that in fact, they, the Europeans, may appear as the savages or, alternatively, equals, to the Tahitians of Matavaï Bay in the following: “when they [the Tahitians] found that the Britons were not more savage than themselves, they were ready to open their arms to them, they forgot they had a difference, and bid them to take kindly production of their isle” (VRW 177). One may then see how Forster’s displacement of traditional ideas of culture, and a focus on the (potential) equality of humanity (in place of the perceived superiority of civilised people), perhaps influenced later thinkers such as Mazzini as was the case with Herder. In \textit{The Duties of Man}, Mazzini reproaches the tendency toward ignoring humanity in favour of focusing on the nation: “[e]ach nation stigmatised foreigners as barbarians, regarded them as such and endeavoured to conquer or oppress them by force or fraud.”\textsuperscript{226} Again, Forster criticises the binary of civilised/barbarian peoples when it comes to discussing the highly stigmatised practice of cannibalism, in which he and Cook’s crew find the Maori people

\textsuperscript{224} Dippel elaborates on Forster’s approach to the ethnographic description of Maori and other indigenous peoples: “[a]uch wenn Georg Forster durchgängig den Konflikt zwischen Barbarei und Zivilisation betonte, benutzte er im allgemeinen diese Metaphern lediglich, um unterschiedliche Stadien der menschlichen Entwicklung zu beschreiben und nicht als Ausdruck von Werturteilen, 30. Thus rather than denigrating Maori as his father did, Forster believed they were simply at an earlier stage of civilisation than the European explorers.

\textsuperscript{225} Rousseau 138. In this case Rousseau is referring to the savage’s lack of medicine or reliance on nature when sick (which in itself shows Rousseau’s potential ignorance of indigenous medicines), but the quotation above can be fairly extended to convey Rousseau’s general argument that “savages” may in fact be better off than “civilised” people in many ways, as put forward in the \textit{Second Discourse}.

\textsuperscript{226} Mazzini 75, author’s italics.
engaging. Says Forster, “[a] New Zealander, who kills and eats his enemy, is very different from an European, who, for his amusement, tears an infant from the mother’s breast, in cool blood, and throws it on the earth to feed his hounds” (VRW 281). In the end, Dippel points out, Forster was left with an optimistic view for the future of a colonised New Zealand, based on cultural Bildung on the part of Europeans, that is if they learn to acknowledge the principle of human equality.²²₈

[I]f it were ever possible for Europeans to have humanity enough to acknowledge the indigenous tribes of the South Seas as their brethren, we might have settlements which would not be defiled with the blood of innocent nations. (VRW 283)

“Es ist kaum vorstellbar” writes Dippel, “daß Johann Reinhold Forster […] dieser Vision zugestimmt hätte.”²²₉

The Importance of Travel and Fieldwork

The observations of Georg Forster and his questioning of traditional ideas of culture may be viewed as indicative of an emerging generation. This generation, by way of travel, were open to change, and sought to experience the world, even if this was at the expense of potentially upsetting those who held to worldviews based on largely static perspectives (a risk that Rousseau also dared to take with the publication of his two “Discourses”). Forster took particular issue with “[p]hilosophers who have only contemplated mankind in their closets” (VRW 279), and even though Georg and Reinhold Forster’s views on the idea of culture were quite different, Johann Reinhold Forster certainly agreed with his son that travel was now a requirement for the validity of research. In Observations Made During a Voyage Round the

²²⁷ In a footnote Forster qualifies this point noting: “Bishop Las Casas says, he has seen this atrocious crime committed in America by Spanish soldiers”, VRW marked with “*”, 281.
²²₈ Noyes discusses Herder’s harsh criticism on the subject of colonial exploitation and adds that “Georg Forster, Alexander von Humboldt, and others joined the critical voices” John. K. Noyes, “Goethe on Cosmopolitanism and Colonialism: Bildung and the Dialectic of Critical Mobility,” Eighteenth-century studies 39.4 (2006): 443-62, 444. Noyes continues “And yet, even the anti-colonialists believed that there was a place for European activity associated with the moral improvement and modernization of other cultures. The keyword here was Bildung”, 444. Rather than referring to Georg Forster as an “anti-colonialist”, I argue that Forster acknowledged some of the negative impacts of the European encounters with Maori, while at the same time seeing a potential path forward with benefits for both cultures, given a willingness to accept tolerance and equality on the part of both Maori and Europeans.
²²₉ Dippel 38.
World of 1778, Johann Reinhold Forster writes: “It appears indeed, to be the general fault of these writers, to study mankind only in their cabinets.” Johann Reinhold Forster saw his and his crew’s role as making the most of their extraordinary opportunity to conduct fieldwork: “As we meet with many tribes in the course of our expedition, who had never seen any European or other polished nation, I thought it my duty to attend to this branch of the great study of nature, as much as my other occupations would commit.”

The travel and travel writing of the Forsters may be viewed against the background of historical and ideational processes taking place during the Sattelzeit: the growth of the British Empire resulted in the exploration of the South Seas, which generated supplementary ideas about culture, and a strong critique of those scientists who attempt to generate (cultural) knowledge without travelling.

3.4.3 Friedrich Nicolai’s Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781 (1788)

A Well-planned journey through Germany and Switzerland

Unlike the Forsters’ hasty addition to Captain Cook’s crew in 1772, or Herder’s last-minute, abrupt and unanticipated 1769 trip, Friedrich Nicolai’s journey through Germany and Switzerland in 1781 was the realisation of a long hoped-for and often-pondered trip away from his home of Berlin. Nicolai writes, “Schon seit mehreren Jahren hatte ich den Gedanken in mir genähert, Deutschland und die Schweiz durch eine Reise näher kennenzulernen” (BeR 3). Underlying both travellers’ journeys is the expression of a desire to travel, yet there are also notable differences in the ways in which they express this desire. Herder’s writing is strongly internal and emotional; as noted above, he concentrates on the

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230 J.R. Forster 143-4.
231 J.R. Forster 144.
232 When considering the proposition that the Sattelzeit writers pre-empted some of the contemporary travel text writers and filmmakers it is significant that Nicolai’s journey and his personal emergence into a mobile lifestyle began in Berlin, the same location in which the Fall of the Berlin Wall marked the opening up of a new phase of mobilities.
effect of mobility on thought, on self-reflection, and the way in which both are affected by
the experience of reading while travelling.\textsuperscript{233} His primary audience also seems to be himself
(“was muß ich tun, um es zu werden? was muß ich zerstören? Ich frage noch!” (BeR 19, my
emphasis)).\textsuperscript{234} By contrast, Nicolai’s focus is rather external and practical; as Martens
surmises: “Er erzählt nicht – er trägt vor, dokumentiert und urteilt.”\textsuperscript{235} Nicolai appears to be
handing out advice to an audience, he anticipates, of would-be travellers, (“Um auch zum
Nuten künftiger Reisenden beizutragen, will ich einige allgemeine Anmerkungen
hieherbefessen [sic]” (BeR 4) and of readers who (ostensibly) dwell, but need to be educated
on aspects of travelling life (“Vielleicht, daß viele Leser, die nicht gereiset haben, dieses
Detail für unnütz halten werden” (BeR 13))\textsuperscript{236}

Whereas Herder is caught up in the momentum of travel as a means to escape (“Ich
mußte also reisen […] so schleunig, […] als ich konnte”, cited above), Nicolai places great
importance on the traveller taking time to think about the purpose of his journey before he
begins. “Ein jeder Reisender sollte”, he declares, “ehe er die Reise antritt, den Zweck
derselben wohl überlegen und festsetzen; denn wer alles leben und thun will, sieht und thut
nichts” (BeR 13). One could potentially counter here that Herder had a specific purpose, i.e.
to flee the difficulties of his troubled dwelling-life in Riga. Still, the time Herder spent
thinking about this appears brief, especially when compared to Nicolai’s detailed travel
itinerary; before embarking on his trip, Nicolai made note of the people he wanted to visit in
each location and allotted the amount of time to be spent with each person, along with several

\textsuperscript{233} As mentioned above, there is an exception to Herder’s general inward-looking thought as he shifts his focus
from himself to the origins and universal history of humanity.

\textsuperscript{234} Here Herder is referring to ways in which he might improve the society of Livonia: “Livland du Provinz der
Babarei und des Luxus, der Unwissenheit und eines angemaßten Geschmacks, der Freiheit und der Sklaverei,
wie viel ware in dir zu tun!” (19).

\textsuperscript{235} Wolfgang Martens, “Bemerkungen zu Friedrich Nicolais Umgang mit der Kunst,” Friedrich Nicolai, 1733-
1811 : Essays zum 250. Geburtstag, ed. Bernhard Fabian (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1983), 99-
123, 99.

\textsuperscript{236} Here the detail Nicolai is referring to the importance of a good travel vehicle. He believes that even
experienced travellers can learn from him in this respect: “vielleicht, daß viele gereisete erfahrene Leser es
kaum für nöthig halten werden, weil sie glauben, daß solche Sachen sich von selbst verstehen, und daß sie
jederman wisse (13).
other details. Nicolai writes, “Ich hatte vorher den Zweck meiner Reise, und auch die Mittel, besonders die Zeit die ich darauf wenden konnte, welches etwa acht Monate waren, reichlich überlegt” (BeR 15). Nicolai’s attempts to keep his travel within a specific time frame are similar to the way in which post coach postilions of the Sattelzeit kept time: “[z]ur Kontrolle der Fahrzeiten führte […] der Postillion eine Satteluhr mit sich.”

On the one hand, this Satteluhr, a travel clock, which was carried in the horse’s saddle bag, is significant because it was ostensibly developed as a piece of portable equipment for travel (for example, it had a leather cover for protection from the elements). On the other hand, the purpose of the Satteluhr was to try to keep to strict times of departure and arrival. Despite the unpredictable nature of travel by coach: “Verspätungen wurden teilweise schwer geahndet”, and thus a similar approach to Nicolai was taken in order to maintain some sense of control in the period of emerging new mobilities.

The Importance of Technology for Travel

Overall, both Herder and Nicolai were very aware of the changes taking place around them as they travelled. These general changes include increases in movement and intensifications and fluctuations in time, which one may see as characteristic of the Sattelzeit period. Yet their responses are different: Herder attempted to think, feel and flow along in the current of the saddle period, whereas Nicolai tried to measure, understand, and make practical use of it. Travel in the Sattelzeit forced open a (cultural) space within which new ways of conceptualising the world emerged; and Nicolai’s pragmatic response was to take advantage of recently invented technology, as well as to create new devices to support this process. For example, in order to measure his journey Nicolai obtained, a Wegmesser, literally a path

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237 See BeR 15.
238 Gottfried North, Die Post: ihre Geschichte in Wort und Bild (Heidelberg: R.v.Decker, 1988), 71. While the Satteluhr was originally developed prior to the saddle period, I would still argue that its use took on particular significance in this period of emerging mobilities.
240 Perhaps Koselleck’s concept of the Sattelzeit was partly influenced by thinking about the Satteluhr.
241 North 71.
**gauge**, or a kind of odometer-like instrument used for measuring distance covered.\textsuperscript{242} Nicolai believed this was an indispensable piece of travel equipment in terms of its geographical surveying capabilities, accuracy and usefulness: “Mit einer geringen Mühe kann man dadurch der Geographie nützlich werden; und wenn oft wiederholte Messungen dieser Art geschahen, wurden wir von den Entfernungen der Oerter und folglich von der Größe der Länder richtigere Begriffe bekommen, als aus den meist noch sehr unvollkommenen Karten” (BeR 18). Thus, for Nicolai, travel within an emerging culture of mobilities involved taking advantage of mobile technology to update (and later, disseminate) gaps in knowledge, such as incomplete maps. Filling these gaps in knowledge would then contribute to the Bildung of would-be travellers. Perhaps by taking measurements and adapting technology to better serve a mobile lifestyle, Nicolai felt better equipped to control or manage life in an era of increasing uncertainty and unpredictability.

In addition to the discussion of new technology in the saddle period, transport and writing equipment, two practicalities were of key concern to Nicolai. He wrote extensively on the topic of carriages and spent much time selecting the most appropriate vehicle for his travelling purposes. Covering sufficient ground in relative comfort was imperative in this respect: “Die Hauptideigenschaft eines guten Reisewagens ist […] daß er sich bequem fortbringen lasse” (BeR 6). Nicolai also considered that the carriage was a vehicular space in which he was to spend a lot of his daily life: “Auf einer großen Reise ist ein bequemer Reisewagen, was im menschlichen Leben eine bequeme Wohnung ist” (BeR 5). This statement is particularly noteworthy because Nicolai makes a distinction between mobile (“auf einer großen Reise”) and what might be termed (“im menschlichen Leben”) yet, at the same time, he collapses this polarity by actualising the idea of a mobile apartment – a place in

\textsuperscript{242} Nicolai made a lot of effort in order to obtain a Wegmesser adequate for his travelling purposes. He devotes 5 pages to the discussion of this instrument (see 18-22). The piece of technology had to be able to reliably withstand the uneven movement of the carriage. For example, one piece of equipment he considered was dismissed for this reason: “Ich fand bey einem Uhrmacher in Berlin einen fertigen Wegmesser, aber so unvollkommen, daß er zerbrechen mußte, sobald der Wagen zurückgezupft ward” (19).
which to dwell on-the-move. In this way, one might argue, that Nicolai, writing in the late eighteenth century, was thinking along similar lines to new mobilities scholars some 200 years later such as Clifford, who discusses, “everyday practices of dwelling and traveling: dwelling-in-traveling and travelling-in-dwelling”, and Sheller and Urry who write about “material and sociable dwelling-in-motion” in their discussion of the new mobilities paradigm.

**Travel Writing and the Immediacy of Experience**

As a writer of the *Sattelzeit*, Nicolai was acutely aware that movement changes the way the traveller experiences time and that the traveller needs to change his thinking or planning accordingly. By way of careful planning and innovation, Nicolai intended not to waste any time that could be spent travelling or making and recording observations. He warns the prospective traveller, for example, that if one has an inadequate carriage or takes an inappropriate route: “[so] wird man viel Kosten, und was noch schlimmer ist, viel Zeitverlust dadurch haben” (BeR 8, my emphasis). Saving time and the physical act of writing in his own carefully-selected apartment-like travel coach proved to be a point of major difficulty for Nicolai. To him, *Beschreibung einer Reise* was exactly that – a factual description of his journey, which he believed represented his experience as accurately as possible, and so writing things down as soon as possible after they occurred was imperative. Nicolai provides travellers with the following advice:

> Ein Reisender muß nothwendig ein ausführliches Tagebuch von seinen Beobachtungen und Bemerkungen halten, und täglich fortführen; sonst wird die Menge von Gegenständen gewiß verursachen, daß er manches vergißt, und manches sich unter nicht völlig richtigen Umständen vorstellte. Es ist also nöthig, alles so geschwind aufzuschreiben, als nur immer möglich ist. (BeR 22-23)

He considered that delays in writing open up potential for the imagination to take over and for undesirable fictional elements to appear in place of factual observation.

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243 Clifford 108.

244 Sheller and Urry 214.
The challenges of trying to adequately represent the experience of travel and movement in writing during the *Sattelzeit* were not unique to Nicolai. Batchen refers to the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a friend and contemporary of three of the protophotographes, who, like Nicolai, faced “the problem of [working within] [...] a fixed form of representation (writing) that immediately becomes permanent and fixed in place.”

In the same way that Nicolai tried to capture the immediacy of his experience in his travel writing, Coleridge attempted in his poetry to “capture the instant of perception, that image that is in the eye for only a moment before it changes forever.” For Nicolai, dealing with this time/writing challenge was on-going; even after the publication of *Beschreibung einer Reise*, he was adding new information and making changes to subsequent editions to make up for the inaccuracies and inevitable dating of working with a fixed mode of representation.

Nicolai foregrounds the importance of these improvements in the preface of the text:

> Wenige Monate nachdem die beiden ersten Theile meiner Reisebeschreibung erschienen waren, war ich schon genöthigt eine zweite Auflage zu machen [...]. [D]ie unrichtigen Nachrichten habe ich geändert, was zu vebsenver war, verbessert, und die nöthigen Zusätze allenthalben eingeschaltet. Dies war eine sehr mühsame Arbeit, wodurch aber dieses Werk sehr viel gewonnen hat. (BeR 3)

Another way in which Nicolai tried to manage recording the ever-changing “Präsenz” of his *Sattelzeit* experience was by the invention and trial and error of technical equipment for writing. To begin with, he attempted to record the day’s events each evening, but quickly fell behind, so he resolved to find a way to write while on the move in the coach. Writing with pencil and going over this with ink was still too time-consuming. Finally he found a successful method, using a portable quill pen to write with ink:

> Im Anfange wollte es nicht glücken, aber nachdem wir einige dazu nöthige Bequemlichkeiten ausstudirt hatten, ging es sehr gut; besonders wenn wir nicht sehr enge schrieben. Wir haben durch

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245 Batchen 15. In 1817 Coleridge responded to this challenge by expressing a desire for a camera-like piece of technology: “[c]reation rather than painting, or if painting, yet such, and with such co-presence of the whole picture flash’d at once upon the eye, as the sun paints in a camera obscura”, cited in Batchen 15. While Coleridge is using the term “co-presence” in this context to discuss the relation between the image and the viewer, Sheller and Urry use it in a similar sense to talk about the relations between people in mobilities research: “Mobilities research is concerned first with the patterning, timing and causation of face-to-face copresence”, 217.

246 Batchen 15. It is interesting to note that Coleridge’s lifespan was approximate to the period of the *Sattelzeit*, i.e. 1772-1834.
This quotation reveals a number of noteworthy points when looked at from the perspective of mobilities. In Nicolai’s mind, in order to save time and produce accurate and factual accounts of travel experience, writing while travelling takes precedence over all else. Multiple writing methods are tested, corporeal positioning is adjusted accordingly and technology is developed for mobile requirements. Eventually, Nicolai perfected the art of writing in the coach by constructing a form of portable multidirectional shelf to write on: “Vermittelst eines am Schlosse befindlichen Gewindes kann man es umdrehen, und also, nachdem man es benöthigt ist, das Schloß rechts und links, innerhalb des Zimmers und auswärts anbringen” (BeR 25).

In terms of movement and transmission, his experience of journeying is transmitted to his travel journal. He can move to write within the moving coach; his text then moves itself as an object, and in turn, perhaps motivates readers to experience travel themselves. Ultimately, it seems, Nicolai felt he had perfected mobile time management, observational skills and the development of a technology to accurately represent his everyday travel experiences: “Wir haben gewiß dreymal mehr beobachtet, als mancher anderer Reisende in eben der Zeit hätte beobachten können” (BeR 16). Nicolai had thus become an exemplary figure in an Age of Enlightenment in how to deal (dispassionately) with the emerging culture founded on mobility.

3.4.4 Karl Phillipp Moritz’s Anton Reiser (1785-6)

A Negative Bildungsroman

By the middle of the Sattelzeit period, there were an increasing number of signs pointing toward an emergent culture founded on mobilities. Fundamental in this process was the spread of the idea of Bildung, which, as Noyes observes, may be generally understood as follows: “the doctrine of [education], formation, improvement and self-expression of
individuals and cultures that became a central concept in discussions on modernization as the [eighteenth] century progressed.\textsuperscript{247}

Building on this momentum was the emergence of the genre of the \textit{Bildungsroman}. In this new genre a young protagonist embarks on a challenging journey of social, moral and intellectual education, and returns home as someone who can find a place within society. Karl Philipp Moritz’s \textit{Anton Reiser} is commonly regarded as the first ever \textit{Bildungsroman}.\textsuperscript{248} However, in this narrative the protagonist does not so much find a place in society as find that he is misplaced everywhere in society. For this reason, remarks Yankova, “Karl Phillip Moritz liefert mit seinem “Anton Reiser” das Beispiel für einen misslungenen Bildungsgang und damit ein Werk, das als “negativer Bildungsroman” bezeichnet wird.”\textsuperscript{249} Despite the negative outcome for Moritz’s narrative figure, the idea of \textit{Bildung}, gained through reading, travel and general life experience, is what grounds the \textit{Bildungsroman} and ties \textit{Anton Reiser} to subsequent texts of the same genre.

The first three parts of Karl Philipp Moritz’s psychological and biographical novel \textit{Anton Reiser} were released in 1785-6 and provide an account of the author’s tormented life as a youth in Germany.\textsuperscript{250} Given the pseudonym of the book’s title, one may expect Anton Reiser’s experience to diverge from the actual experiences of Moritz’s life. However, in a foreword preceding the main text the writer assures his audience: “[d]ieser psychologische Roman könnte auch allenfalls eine Biographie genannt werden, weil die Beobachtungen größtenteils aus dem wirklichen Leben genommen sind”, so that one may assume (or, at least, be led to assume) that Anton’s experiences closely follow Moritz’s (AR 11). Anton, the protagonist, is brought up by parents who show him very little affection; he is sent to work as a hatter’s apprentice but eventually quits; he then goes on to study theology at university in

\textsuperscript{247} Noyes 444.
\textsuperscript{248} See, for example, Meyer Howard Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, \textit{A Glossary of Literary Terms} (Boston: Wadsworth Publishing Co, 2009), 229.
\textsuperscript{249} Genka. Yankova, \textit{Theater in Karl Phillip Moritz’Anton Reiser} (Germany: GRIN Verlag, 2006), 11.
\textsuperscript{250} The final two sections were published in 1790.
Erfurt but gives this up in order to pursue acting. The idea of travel is at the centre of Anton’s being and self-understanding of the world. This idea, indeed, is already anticipated in his family name, Reiser, and his first name, which refers to through the travelling figure of Antonius, as I set out below.\textsuperscript{251} It appears that Anton can never stay in one place long enough to complete a goal or fulfil a dream before acute Fernweh, or the strong desire to travel elsewhere, sets in.\textsuperscript{252} Accordingly, the third part of the novel finishes “mit dem Scheitern von Moritzens [und damit Antons] schauspielerischen Hoffnungen” (AR 484).

\textit{Escaping Immobility}

What enables Anton to escape his intolerable family life of poverty at the young age of 12 is his constant determination to travel. Lehmann expands on Anton’s exceptional motivation and Moritz’s, for he takes them to be one: “[a]us Armut und Niedrigkeit sind viele bedeutende Deutsche jener Zeit hervorgegangen. Reiser=Moritz aber hat sich geradezu aus dem Elend emporgearbeitet und dabei wenig äußere Förderungen gefunden, aber unerhört viele Hindernisse überwinden müssen.”\textsuperscript{253} Paradoxically, however, it is also Anton’s ambition to be mobile which leads him to constantly seek out the new and never allows him to settle or find long-term contentment, as each dream shatters, one after the next. Krupp expands on this point in relation to Moritz’s life: “Moritz is never settled, not well, not for long. […] [His] work can be viewed in part as an attempt to escape immobility, as well as an attempt to rationalize his compulsion to move, his dromomania.”\textsuperscript{254}

One should keep in mind that in the \textit{Sattelzeit} dwelling was the most commonly accepted or, at least, recognised way in which to lead one’s life, hence Moritz’s need to

\textsuperscript{251} Krupp discusses the issue of Moritz’s choice of name for his protagonist: “I would even like to speculate that Moritz’s choice of name for Anton Reiser might derive from his ideal of an autonomous traveler, an ‘Auton Reiser’, to mix Greek and German” Anthony Krupp, ”Karl Philipp Moritz’s Life and Walks,” \textit{Karl Philipp Moritz: Signaturen des Denkens}, ed. Anthony Krupp (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 11-18, 13. Interestingly, the series which this reference is part of, also takes texts of around the \textit{Sattelzeit} as its focus.

\textsuperscript{252} See Chapter Four, 142-7, for an in-depth discussion on the concept of Fernweh.


\textsuperscript{254} Krupp 12.
rationalise his incessant urge to change location. In addition, from childhood onward Moritz is seldom able to make meaningful connections with others, that is, if one is to accept that Anton’s and Moritz’s experiences are practically identical. As Krupp implies, by writing *Anton Reiser*, Moritz could explain his positive and negative life experiences during the saddle period, both to his audience and to himself. Overall, there is no moral of the story of Anton; Moritz simply records what happened to him. However, if Moritz did intend there to be a message to the reader and prospective traveller, I imagine it would read something like this: travel is enabling; it allows one to move beyond the local and experience the world, yet go forth being wary of the tormenting restlessness which travel may entail. In order to further understand what Krupp means by Moritz’s desire to “escape immobility” and to locate the roots of his “dromomania”, I examine here Anton’s experiences of early childhood.

As a young boy Anton has little control over his life and is relegated to a miserable dwelling-life. “Wenn er in das Haus seiner Eltern trat”, writes Moritz, “so trat er in ein Haus der Unzufriedenheit, des Zorns, der Tränen und der Klagen” (AR 18). Thus, to Anton, the family home becomes engrained as a symbolic place of melancholy and immobility and these negative experiences have long-term effects on him: “Diese ersten Eindrücke sind nie in seinem Leben aus seiner Seele verwischt worden” (AR 18). Anton receives some respite when his father is called out to war and he moves to a small village in the country with his mother: “hier hatte er ziemliche Freiheit und einige Entschädigung für die Leiden seiner Kindheit” (AR 18). One can therefore see how early on Anton wishes to “escape immobility” or, gain freedom from life in the family house and, as a result, how he develops long-lasting positive associations with travel. Unfortunately, as Anton grows older, his physical means of escape is taken away from him: he suffers an infection of the foot which leaves him unable to

255 Lehmann makes a similar comment in his comparison of Moritz and Goethe. Compared to Goethe’s “Meisterwerk” *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Moritz’s *Anton Reiser*, he claims: “zeigt kaum eine bewußte Technik, weist einen eigentlichen Aufbau nicht auf, sondern folgt einfach dem Entwicklungsgang des Autors und wiederholt dabei die gleiche Situation oder spinnt sie ins Breite aus”, 123.
walk. Housebound for four years, he turns to reading as a means of understanding the world, of compensating for social interaction, and of (vicarious) escape through the journeys of others. Moritz writes, “[d]urch das Lesen war ihm nun auf einmal eine neue Welt eröffnet, in deren Genuss er sich für all das Unangenehme in seiner wirklichen Welt einigermaßen entschädigen konnte” (AR 21). If he could not walk, at least his mind and imagination could take him places. The idea of movement, which becomes a central concept in Anton’s thinking and long-term view of the world, is partly influenced by the religious texts he reads: “Anton glaubte, wenn man einmal fromm und gottselig leben wolle, so müsse man es auch beständig und in jedem Augenblick in allen seinen Mienen und Bewegungen, ja sogar in seinen Gedanken sein” (AR 53, my emphasis). Bewegung is one of Anton’s main foci when he makes judgement on the character of others and gauges his own levels of (un)happiness. Unhappily immobile and lacking inspiration and positive influence in the people around him, Anton seeks this out instead in the characters of his books. In the following section, the narrator describes the way in which Anton idolises his namesake, the Greek hero Saint Antonius, and wishes to travel as Antonius does:

Er kannte eine Zeitlang keinen höheren Wunsch, als seinem großen Namensgenossen, dem heiligen Antonius, ähnlich zu werden, und wie dieser Vater und Mutter zu verlassen und in eine Wüste zu fliehen, die er nicht weit vom Tore zu finden sollte und wohin er einmal wirklich eine Reise antrat, indem er sich über hundert Schritte weit von der Wohnung seiner Eltern entfernte, und vielleicht noch weiter gegangen wäre, wenn die Schmerzen an seinem Fuße ihn nicht genötigt hätten, wieder zurückzukehren. (AR 23)

While reading opens up a world of ideas to Anton and allows his mind to travel, he also recognises its limitations as a means of escape, (as indicated above when he refers to the necessity to return home). However, the ideas of travel and movement become more tangible to him when he is again allowed to go on a trip away, this time to Pyrmont with his father for three months. Here, Anton is rather content, first, “weil er […] das Glück hatte, diese kurze Zeit wieder von seinen Eltern entfernt zu sein”, and, second, because he meets a traveller to idolise in the flesh, so-to-speak (AR 33). This traveller is an Englishman staying in the same
lodge who speaks German well. He teaches Anton English, goes for walks with him and
generally becomes, “der erste Freund, den Anton auf Erden fand” (AR 34). Anton’s positive
associations with travel grow as the Englishman, the ideal figure of the traveller or a real-life
Antonius of sorts, provides him with something his parents never give him at home, viz.
happiness and attention.

The Allure of New Places and Experiences

Finally, Anton’s foot heals: “Anton genoß zum ersten Mal in seinem Leben das Vergnügen,
zu wandern” (AR 58). With newfound enthusiasm he can now take advantage of his physical
mobility and, at just 12 years of age, he makes plans to travel to the city of Braunschweig in
order to become an apprentice to a hatter by the name of Lohenstein. To Anton, the ability to
move means the opening up of a new world of freedom spurred on by first, “[die] Reize […]
d[er] Veränderung des Orts” and, second, “[d] Reiz der Neuheit”, that is, the allure of new
people, places and things far-removed from his dwelling-life (AR 57; 60). Initially, Anton is
happy with his work at the Lohenstein hatter’s. For example, the narrator says, “[es] machte
ihm der ordentliche Gang der Geschäfte, den er hier bemerkte, eine Art von angenehmer
Empfindung, daß er gern ein Rad in dieser Maschine mit war, die sich so ordentlich bewegte:
denn zu Hause hatte er nichts dergleichen gekannt” (AR 61). Here represented conceptually
through the amalgamation of a moving machine with the realisation of his own mobility, one
can again see Anton’s positive association with movement and with being away from home.
Eventually, however, Anton grows wary of his apprenticeship in Braunschweig – as time
passes “d Reiz der Neuheit” begins to fade into the less appealing known and familiar.
Lohenstein’s behaviour starts to resemble that of Mr and Mrs Reiser as he becomes highly
critical of Anton: “[Lohensteins] Intoleranz erstreckte sich bis auf jedes Lächeln und jeden
unschuldigen Ausbruch des Vergnügens, der sich in Antons Mienen oder Bewegungen
Once again, Anton begins to feel trapped and rather than trying to better or accept his situation his mind turns again to “[die] Reize […] d[er] Veränderung des Orts.” The narrator comments on the ease of changing one’s location and thereby letting undesirable present circumstances fade into the background: “[i]st es also wohl zu verwundern, wenn die Veränderung des Ortes so vieles beiträgt, uns dasjenige, was wir nicht gern als wirklich denken, wie einen Traum vergessen zu machen?” (AR 93). Why not take advantage of the opportunities which the new mobility affords and move on, when even during short trips such as his earlier stay in Pyrmont, Anton is able to learn so much: “[D]och war er in dieser kurzen Zeit ein ganz anderer Mensch geworden und seine Ideenwelt um ein Großes bereichert” (AR 35). Krupp makes note of Moritz’s own tendencies to take off after short periods of residence: “[Moritz] would move from place to place in search of stability, but the moment he would get a job offer […] or would get an actual job […] he would immediately feel trapped and start planning his escape in the form of travel by foot.”

Despite Moritz’s proclivity toward a mobile way of life, there is evidence in Anton Reiser to suggest that Moritz is in fact sceptical that continually changing places will necessarily lead to long-term happiness or a sense of security:

In späteren Jahren, und insbesondere, wenn man viel gereist ist, verliert sich dies Anschließen der Ideen an den Ort in etwas. Wo man hinkommt, sieht man entweder Dächer, Fenster, Türen, Steinpflaster, Kirchen und Türme, oder man sieht Wiese, Wald, Acker oder Heide. – Die auffallenden Unterschiede verschwinden; die Erde wird überall gleich. (AR 93)

Perhaps in this respect Krupp’s characterisation (above) of Moritz as being afflicted with “dromomania” is not an overstatement: Moritz’s way of being in the world is, in simple terms, to move and to keep on moving. This incurable Fernweh stays with him, even though he knows (particularly in retrospect) that the allure of the new is always limited, and that one day, “die Erde wird überall gleich”, or there will be no newness left to discover.

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256 In this context Moritz also refers to Anton as the boy, “der ihm [Lohenstein] vielleicht nicht genug arbeiten könnte,” AR 65. Could Moritz be suggesting that perhaps Anton was sabotaging his apprenticeship himself, and finding an excuse to move on and discover some place more exciting?

257 Krupp 13-14.

258 See also, Chapter Four, 146.
3.4.5 Johann Wolfgang Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795-6)

*Travel and Self-formation*

After writing Parts I, II, and III of *Anton Reiser*, Karl Phillipp Moritz came into contact with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Moritz and Goethe met and had discussions in Rome in 1786-1788, and then again in 1788-1789, when Moritz stayed with Goethe in Weimar.259 The discussions between the two had an impact on the way in which Goethe developed his own work in the genre of the *Bildungsroman, Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795).260 In this novel the protagonist, Wilhelm Meister, who seeks to escape the life of a bourgeois merchant, fails in the world of theatre and is then led to his true calling by a group of enlightened aristocrats.261 In ‘Anton Reiser und die Entstehung des Wilhelm Meister’, Lehmann notes that Goethe was interested in both the real-life Moritz and the fictional Anton, and held Moritz’s work *Anton Reiser* in high regard. This is demonstrated in Goethe’s letters in which he explains, “Moritz erzählte Stücke aus seinem Leben” and “das Buch ist mir in vielem Sinne wert.”262 These statements indicate that Goethe was fascinated by the way in which Moritz foregrounded travel and autobiographical life experience as *Leitmotive* in his text. Goethe, it appears, decided to explore these ideas in his own work.

There are some easily identifiable connections between the plots of both *Anton Reiser* and *Wilhelm Meister*, starting with the fact that in each the protagonist is a young man who embarks on a journey and is drawn to the world of the theatre. At the same time, Lehmann

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259 Lehmann 122. Lehmann reminds the researcher that one should not overrate the outcome of Goethe and Moritz’s associations and go so far as to view *Anton Reiser*, “als literarisches Vorbild [des Wilhelm Meister]”, 126.
260 Here one may question why in my treatment of the topic of mobilities with regard to Goethe, I chose not to analyse his *Italienische Reise* of 1786–7. See Goethe 1897. My motivation for preferring to analyse *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* is the possibility it opens up for discussing the supplement of *Bildung* both stimulating and arising from the protagonist’s travel, as well as exploring the way in which Karl Phillip Moritz influenced Goethe’s way of thinking and writing in this area.
261 Lehmann 126. Further to this point Lehmann notes “[e]s ist nicht nur das Interesse für die Entstehungsgeschichte des epochemachenden Goetischen Romans, das diesem Ergebnis Wert verlieht, sondern vielleicht noch mehr die Tatsache, daß ein der Vergangenheit angehöriges Meisterwerk deutscher autobiographischer Kunst hierdurch wenigstens mittelbar ein dauerndes Leben erhält, und der früh verstorbene, zur Vollendung seiner reichen Persönlichkeit nicht gelangte Freund und Jünger Goethes mit einer unsterblichen Dichtung seines Meisters unzertrennlich verknüpft bleibt”, 134.
262 Cited in Lehmann 122.
contends that the most important point is, “daß die Übereinstimmung sich nicht nur auf den äußeren Vorgang erstreckt, sondern auf die psychologische Motivierung in den wesentlichen Einzelzügen.” Indeed, the ideas of travel and movement are central to the Weltanschauungen of both young men. Goethe’s work, for example, includes the often-quoted observation epitomising the philosophy underlying the Bildungsroman: “Die beste Bildung findet ein gescheiter Mensch auf Reisen” (WML 299). Another way in which to (re-)interpret this quotation, from a mobilities perspective, is ‘in order to dwell successfully, one must first travel’, and indeed, after a long journey, successful dwelling is the admirable endpoint for Wilhelm. As a result of his travel he ends up enlightened, content and humble, as conveyed at the very end of the travel text when he says, “ich weiß, daß ich ein Glück erlangt habe, das ich nicht verdiene und das ich mit nichts in der Welt vertauschen möchte” (WML 626).

What the reader is left with upon finishing Wilhelm Meister is an ideal state of Bildung as a mediating concept between the states of dwelling and movement. Only after first going out into the world may one dwell while enjoying both personal relationships and a knowledge of one’s (cosmopolitan) self in the world. In this ideal position the protagonist may enjoy the best of both worlds: the mind travels while the body stays. Thus, from a mobilities perspective, I put forward the view that Goethe takes up where Moritz left off, but, by contrast, Goethe applies some of the optimism of the enlightenment period to give the Sattelzeit traveller a positive end to his journey. If one is to regard Anton Reiser as a negative Bildungsroman, one might accordingly consider Wilhelm Meister as a positive Bildungsroman, that is, a Bildungsroman in which the young protagonist, after undertaking a challenging journey of social, moral and intellectual education, is able to return home as someone who can find a place within society. In their respective works, both writers explore

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263 Lehmann 127.
264 Lehmann 123.
the supplementary notion of Bildung, yet their outcomes are opposed, that is, the new mobilities ultimately has a negative effect on the life of one protagonist and a positive effect on the life of the other.

**Awareness of Global Movement**

Part of Wilhelm Meister’s Bildung, or personal education, includes taking on a global perspective by developing an awareness of his place in the world, as one already gleams from the quotation above (as indicated when he says, “das ich mit nichts in der Welt vertauschen möchte”). John Noyes analyses Goethe’s use of the concept of Bildung within the context of contemporary growing European colonialism and cosmopolitanism. Noyes advances the view: “[Goethe’s] major works address a world that is being radically restructured by Europe’s overseas adventures.” During the Sattelzeit, dwelling-life *at home* was in no way external to or unaffected by the mobilities of overseas travellers. For example, one of the more tangible outcomes of this overseas travel which Goethe draws on in *Wilhelm Meister* was marked expansion of the practice of importing goods from other countries. As international trade became more commonplace during this period, it brought with it an awareness of both the global circulation and movement of objects as well as the way in which people played a role in this process. Goethe engages with this idea in the following passage in which Werner, Wilhelm’s friend, gives the latter advice regarding his travels (and implicitly Wilhelm’s Bildung or education):

Besuche nur erst ein paar große Handelsstädte, ein paar Häfen, und du wirst gewiß mit fortgerissen werden. Wenn du siehst, wie viele Menschen beschäftigt sind, wenn du siehst, wo so manches herkommt, wo es hingehet, so wirst du es gewiß auch mit Vergnügen durch die Hände gehen sehen. Die geringste Ware siehst du im Zusammenhange mit dem ganzen Handel, und eben darum hältst du nichts für gering, weil alles die Zirkulation vermehrt, von welcher dein Leben seine Nahrung zieht. (WML 39)

Werner implies here that when Wilhelm travels to a trading town or port and makes a corporeal connection (“manches […] durch die Hände gehen”) as well as a visual link (“wenn

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265 Noyes 444.
du siehst, wo so manches herkommt”) to movements of people (“du wirst gewiβ mit fortgerissen werden”) and imported products (“[d]ie geringste Ware siehst du im Zusammenhange mit dem ganzen Handel”), he will not be able to help but will become caught up in and conscious the interconnectedness of global mobility. And this experience of international trading may be seen as an example of what Noyes terms the “[v]arious forms of trans-local experience”, which, during the Sattelzeit, “develop[ed] with remarkable rapidity in Germany” and “caus[ed] most intellectuals to experience their own lives as a dialectic of the local and the cosmopolitan.” Overall, it appears that Goethe viewed this new awareness of mobilities as a positive development: Werner speaks of visiting a place of trade “mit Vergnügen”, just as the enlightened Wilhelm acknowledges above “daβ ich ein Glück erlangt habe.”

**Travel and the Loss of Love**

At the same time, Goethe was certainly aware that while entering into a life of mobility brings education and improvement, it also inevitably involves sacrificing or at least putting strain on certain aspects of the dwelling-life, such as the closeness of human ties. In contrast to some of the other Sattelzeit travel writers such as Forster, Nicolai and Herder, the significance for a cultural analysis of mobility in Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre lies less in the mode of transport or the physical movement carried out by the protagonist and more in the contradictions underlying the emotional movements of his journey of self-discovery. Goethe explores the complexity of Wilhelm’s attempts to negotiate and maintain relationships while moving between his travelling life and his home life and, in so doing indirectly raises the question: do travel and the pursuit of Bildung inevitably entail the loss of love? On the surface, it is Wilhelm’s love of theatre, which encourages him to go out and seek experience in the world, and, concomitantly, his love for his girlfriend Marianne that anchors him

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266 Noyes 448.
emotionally to his hometown. However, at another level these two passions go beyond a simple mobility/dwelling delineation, as his love for theatre and for his girlfriend are unified and inseparable, as the narrator describes in the following: “er fand sich im Besitz einer Person, die er so sehr liebte, ja verehrte: denn sie war ihm zuerst in dem günstigen Lichte theatricalischer Vorstellung erschienen, und seine Leidenschaft zur Bühne verband sich mit der ersten Liebe zu einem weiblichen Geschöpf” (WML 14).

The illusionary power of the theatre is perhaps what led Wilhelm to falsely believe that he could indulge in his life’s passions simultaneously, i.e. a dwelling-life with his girlfriend as well as travel and a successful career in theatre. Wilhelm was certainly living under the false pretence that his lover was the one to help him escape his halting and sluggish bourgeois existence: “Er glaubte den hellen Wink des Schicksals zu verstehen, das ihm durch Marianen die Hand reichte, sich aus dem stockenden, schleppenden bürgerlichen Leben heraußzuziehen, aus dem er schon so lange sich zu retten gewünscht hatte” (WML 35). Yet, in reality it was actually this same bourgeois existence which was a springboard to a higher social and educated position: Wilhelm’s father, a merchant, gave him the opportunity, “sich in der Welt um[zu]sehen […] und zugleich unsre Geschäfte und fremden Orten [zu] betreiben” (WML 42). Noyes further explains this point: “For Goethe, political subjectivity is about mobility. The world of his major protagonists Werther, Wilhelm Meister, and Faust, is marked by class boundaries that either confine individuals or grant them privileges of crossing.”267 Goethe considers the rise of the previously immobile middle class through travel and education. Travellers such as Wilhelm become part of a group of “mobile intellectual[s]” who are given “access to a new and privileged experience of the modern world.”268 When looked at in this way the Bildung of Goethe’s mobile intellectual appears to involve letting go of personal relations and personal aspirations in order to realise his relative insignificance and

267 Noyes 447-8. I understand Noyes’ use of the term “political” here to refer to social class and the knowledge and power that come with one’s particular social position.
268 Noyes 448.
find his place in the world. One is reminded again of the statement cited above from the end of the narrative, “ich weiß, daß ich ein Glück erlangt habe, das ich nicht verdiente.”

To elaborate on Wilhelm’s negotiation (or perhaps better said, false expectation) of holding on to long distance love, I return for a moment to the context of Georg Forster’s voyage with Captain Cook. With regard to interpersonal relations and the selection and retention of crewmembers for the Resolution, Hough notes:

There was always a high desertion rate before sailing on a long voyage because of the sailors’ fear of the desertion of their women in their absence. Fifty-eight deserted from the Resolution, more than half of the complement, before she sailed. They were readily replaced.

One of the disadvantages of the emerging new mobilities was the distance that travelling put between people. In the Sattelzeit, possibilities for long-distance communication were comparatively minimal, and voyages such as Cook’s often required men to be away for months or even years at a time. In the case of Cook’s second expedition, fear was rife that women at home would replace men who chose to be mobile with men who chose to remain settled. However, there were always those men who were willing to join the expedition’s crew, thereby replacing the expedition’s deserters and either placing their relationship at risk, or, if unattached, putting off settling down. This indicates that, at least for some, the idea of travel was growing in popularity, or becoming more culturally acceptable. The experience of travel was becoming a life value potentially equal to or even beyond the value of love and personal relationships. In contrast to the perceptive crewmen of the Resolution, both deserting and committed, the rather young and naïve Wilhelm Meister did not see his situation as a choice between giving priority to either individual, unattached travel or dwelling in love. Wilhelm thought he could have it all. He would embark on a journey while his adoring

269 My emphasis.
270 Richard Hough, Captain James Cook: A Biography (Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994), 190, in footnote.
271 This is an interesting point in terms of gender and power relations given that men with appropriate sailing skills were empowered to travel, but that in some cases, it was the women who had the overall power as to whether they would travel at all.
272 Here “settling down” can be understood in the Heideggerian sense of dwelling, i.e. setting up a family home and remaining in that one place.
girlfriend, Marianne patiently waited to join him: “Er wollte unterzukommen suchen, sie alsdann abholen, er hoffe, sie werde ihm ihre Hand nicht versagen” (WML 44). He would eventually reach, “das hohe Ziel” becoming, “den trefflichen Schauspieler, den Schöpfer eines künftigen Nationaltheaters” (WML 35). As it turned out in the end, none of this came to fruition.273

**Negotiating Uncertainty**

In the manner of the *Sattelzeit*, I perhaps unexpectedly return to the beginning of the story here, as I began with a quotation from its end. As Wilhelm’s journey begins, so does his education – his idealised ideas about himself and the world begin to unravel. The stability of dwelling-life gives way to the blurry, unexpected and uncontrollable new reality of life on the move. First he goes to spend a night with a family known to his father, but is immediately caught up in the chaos that results after Milena, their daughter, runs away. Wilhelm is subsequently involved in the trial of the daughter and the lover she has eloped with, an experience he finds entirely unsettling:

All diese Dinge, die Wilhelmen sonst schön manche unruhige Stunde gemacht hatten, kamen ihm gegenwärtig wieder ins Gedächtnis, als ihn sein Pferd langsam nach Hause trug und er die verschiedenen Vorfälle, die ihm begegnet waren, überlegte. Die Bewegung, welche durch die Flucht eines Mädchens in eine gute Bürgerfamilie, ja in ein ganzes Städtchen gekommen war, hatte er mit Augen gesehen; die Szenen auf der Landstraße und im Amthaus, die Gesinnungen Melinas, und was sonst noch vorgegangen war, stellten sich ihm wieder dar und brachten sein seinen lebhaften, vordringenden Geist in eine Art von sorglicher Unruhe, die er nicht lange ertrug, sondern seinem Pferde die Sporen gab und nach der Stadt eilte. (WML 60-1)

The slow walk of his horse conjures up unsettling thoughts in Wilhelm’s mind, as he begins to realise that he and his plans are seemingly insignificant in the larger scheme of the world. He considers all the goings-on which affected a number of people – from himself, to Milena, to her family to an entire town in terms of a single, far-reaching movement, “[d]ie

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273 Wilhelm was oblivious to the fact that, despite her love for him, Marianne suffered immensely from the thought of his imminent departure, and that she had already secretly begun the process of securing herself a financially stable partner, Norberg, in order to lead a comfortable dwelling-life. She laments: “ich liebe ihn, der mich liebt [Wilhelm], sehe, daß ich mich von ihm trennen muß, und weiß nicht, wie ich es überleben kann. Norberg kommt, dem wir unsere ganze Existenz schuldig sind, den wir nicht entbehren können. Wilhelm ist sehr eingeschränkt, er kann nichts für mich tun”, WML 46. Obviously Marianne did not value the status of the mobile intellectual.
Bewegung.” Overwhelmed and dismayed by this experience his enthusiasm for travel ("seinen lebhaften, vordringenden Geist") is quelled. The state of anxiety this brings about ("eine Art von sorgliche Unruhe") causes him to want to escape these thoughts and hasten home, as he brings the horse to a gallop.

In *Wilhelm Meister* overall Goethe portrays Wilhelm’s expression of a desire to travel as a positive and valuable learning experience. Wilhelm learns from the failure of his relationship with Marianne, and the naivety of his self-focused goals. One cannot expect to travel without expecting some kind of harm to be done to one’s relationships at home. One cannot foretell all that will happen on the journey and how one will be emotionally moved by it. The traveller must be open to the experience and to learning from it. In this way, Goethe suggests, the traveller learns about himself and inevitably gains an important part of his life’s education, so as to go on as an enlightened dweller. Questions of travel, relationships and the effects of contingency are also relevant to the analysis of the following traveller, Heinrich von Kleist.

### 3.4.6 Heinrich von Kleist’s *Briefe I März 1793-April 1801* (1848)

*Love, Travel and Letters*

Heinrich von Kleist was born in 1777 into a family in which many of his relatives had served in the Prussian army. He continued this tradition by enlisting as a corporal at the age of 14. Later, in 1799, Kleist left the military as he felt disillusioned with the “fundamental contradictions between the ideals of enlightened humanism and the reality of Prussian
everyday life.”

He went back to his home town of Frankfurt an der Oder in order to enrol at university and to pursue an administrative position working for the state. It was during this time that Kleist gained a job tutoring the daughters of August Wilhelm Hartmann von Zenge, and initiated a romantic relationship with one daughter, Wilhelmine. Subsequently, while travelling between Frankfurt an der Oder and Würzburg, Kleist wrote a number of letters to Wilhelmine, now his girlfriend, and (unofficial) fiancée. These letters were his way of materialising and mobilising his journey with thoughts of her while being on the move himself. In a more general sense, notes Fischer, “[m]ore than anything they [the letters] document his [continued] plunge from a somewhat naïve belief in the ideals and conceptions of the early Enlightenment to a radically sceptical view of the world.”

Thus, generally speaking, one might conjecture, Kleist’s Bildung through travel was an education in the tumultuous, negative and potentially life-threatening aspects of the emerging new mobilities.

Like Herder, Kleist set off on travels after he found himself in a difficult situation, largely of his own creation. Kleist fell in love with Wilhelmine von Zenge and because he was of an aristocratic background, her parents approved of this partnership. At the same time, in order to ensure their daughter a secure future, the von Zenges insisted that he become professionally established in a position in the civil service. However, instead of carrying out

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274 Bernd Fischer, “Introduction: Heinrich von Kleist’s Life and Work,” A Companion to the Works of Heinrich von Kleist, ed. Bernd Fischer (U.S.A.: Camden House, 2003), 1-20, 3. Schneider specifies two of these fundamental contradictions: first “The fact that birth, in the sense of the pure givenness of the natural and contingent factors of human life, represented an insurmountable problem resistance to the enlightened quest for rational autonomy”, and, second, “the fact that the Enlightenment humanism appealed to the values of emotional intimacy bred by the new, close-knit family, with its characteristic close relationship between parents and children. […] To draw on this well spring of human emotionalism, therefore, also meant […] becoming fixed to that very origin from which it was civilization’s task to remove man” Helmut J. Schneider, “Kleist’s Challenge to Enlightenment Humanism,” A Companion to the Works of Heinrich von Kleist, ed. Bernd Fischer (U.S.A.: Camden House, 2003), 141-63, 150.

275 Fischer 4.

276 However one of the main differences between the two is a matter of timing; Herder left after becoming caught in a set of impossible circumstances, whereas Kleist made his circumstances much worse by the act of going travelling.
their wishes, Kleist decided to leave town and set off on a journey. Still a young man at this time, perhaps he was not yet prepared to lead such a prescribed personal and professional life. In any case, casting himself adrift had a number of negative consequences for the young traveller, such as the obvious consequence of losing the favour of his potential future parents-in-law. Hohoff elaborates: “Since a poor nobleman had no opportunities in civil life, Kleist suffered from his self-elected homelessness.” Whereas some Sattelzeit writers manage to find a way of coming to terms with life in the period of new mobilities - for Goethe, for example, this was through the mediating concept of Bildung - Kleist can never be satisfied just travelling or just dwelling. Through his writing plagued by restlessness, struggle and undulating emotions, Kleist reveals the potential ambiguity and perils of the emerging culture founded on the idea of mobilities.

A Mobilities Paradox

Like Goethe’s protagonist Wilhelm Meister, Kleist wanted to travel while at the same time maintaining his relationship with his girlfriend, Wilhelmine. And, like Wilhelm, romantic love and travel are tenuously connected in Kleist’s world – Wilhelmine appears to function as Kleist’s emotional anchor to his dwelling-place. The difference between these two young travellers is that Wilhelm naively thinks (at the beginning of his journey, in any case) that his relationship will not be affected by his travel, whereas Kleist is always painfully aware of the potentially destructive effects of his absence; he tries to overcompensate for this in letters professing his undying love for Wilhelmine, while at the same time informing her of his plans

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277 The exact motivations for Kleist’s travel at this time remain largely unknown. Samuel and Brown remark on this point as typical of Kleist’s life history, “[the] life of the great German dramatist Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811) is full of mysteries and uncertainties. Because of a dearth of evidence, whether emanating directly from Kleist himself or indirectly from his family, acquaintances, and authorities who had to deal with him, there are many gaps in his biography”, Richard H. Samuel and Hilda Meldrum Brown, Kleist’s Lost Year and the Quest for Robert Guiskard (Great Britain: James Hall Publishing, 1981), VII. Some theories attempting to explain Kleist’s trip to Würzburg suggest that Kleist was an industrial spy for the Prussian government, that he was on a secret trade mission, or that he was receiving medical treatment for a sexual affliction of some kind, Fischer 3. Despite this mystery Fischer reminds us, “we can [still] learn much about the inner development he [Kleist] went through from the extraordinary letters he wrote”, 3.

for their future dwelling-life together.\(^{279}\) A form of traveller’s regret or guilt is conveyed when Kleist ponders how she may mistakenly reprimand him for forgetting her, “sobald er aus ihren Mauern war, unwissend, daß er in jeder Stadt, an jedem Orte an Dich dachte, ja, daß seine ganze Reise nichts war als ein langer Gedanke an dich!” (B 323). He is preoccupied and distressed by the complexity of this relationship. On the one hand the relationship is characterised by stasis: Wilhelmine dwells at home and is walled in (“[innerhalb] ihren Mauren”) so-to-speak. On the other hand, the relationship is characterised by movement: Kleist travels from place to place (“an jedem Ort”). Hence, Kleist presents us with a kind of self-destructive mobilities paradox: on some level he feels the need to travel in order to escape the difficulties of dwelling-life and (re)gain the freedom and space to think, yet, during his entire journey he is consumed by thoughts of his fiancée and plans for their future dwelling-life together, so one might argue that, in a way, he is never free. If Kleist had not left Frankfurt an der Oder, would he have avoided the pain of such thoughts? Then again, if he had stayed in his home town, would he instead have suffered from a strong sense of Fernweh, that is, a longing to travel elsewhere? Either way, Wilhelmine chooses not to reply to these letters (or, at least, seldom). Her silence is perhaps due to the overwhelming intensity and at times accusatory tone of Kleist’s writing, or perhaps for the simple reason that Kleist has decided to travel against the instructions of the von Zenge family.\(^{280}\) Kleist suspects the

\(^{279}\) For example, when Kleist finally receives a letter from Wilhelmine to say that she has been away in Berlin, he disapproves of her travel and asks her to return to Frankfurt where he will soon be: “[S]ei auch vernünftig, u. kehre ohne Widerwillen nach dem Orte zurück. […] Auf eine kurze Zeit kann Berlin gefallen, auf eine lange nicht, mich nicht – Du müßtest denn bei mir sein […] kehre zur bestimmten Zeit nach Frankfurt zurück. Ich werde es auch thun”, B 331. Further, regarding their future dwelling-life together Kleist writes to Wilhelmine: “Dein nächstes Ziel sei, Dich zu einer Mutter, das meine, mich zu einem Staatsbürger zu bilden, und das fernere Ziel, nach dem wir beide streben, u. das wir uns beide wechselseitig sichern können, sei das Glück der Liebe. Gute Nacht, Wilhelmine, meine Braut, einst meine Gattinn, einst die Mutter meiner Kinder!”, B 344.

\(^{280}\) Another explanation for Wilhelmine’s lack of correspondence (which does not necessarily preclude the former) is that she never really loved Kleist. At least this is what she retrospectively implies in a letter about her relationship with Kleist to Professor Krug, the latter of whom she eventually married after her relationship with Kleist ended. Hohoff paraphrases her letter as follows: “She had not loved him [Kleist]. To begin with his brother Leopold had appealed to her more, for Heinrich, “was very melancholy and gloomy and spoke very little.” […] In the end she had yielded to his insistence and learned to treasure him. His ideals, his psychological grasp, which was admired even by the academic teachers and his noble notion of morality had fired her: she had tried to approximate his ideal”, 1977, 34.
latter reason, as indicated in the following extract from a letter to her: “Und warum erfahre ich nichts von Dir? […] Zürnst du vielleicht auf den Geliebten, der sich so muthwillig von der Freundinn entfernte?” (B 294). Overall, it is a complex and distressing situation of long-distance love confounded by the lack of co-presence as well as Kleist’s omnipresent anxiety and ambiguous, ever-changing stance toward movement and travel.

The Perils of Epistolary Romance

I now turn to examine the direct context of the mode of representation Kleist used to convey his travel experience, letter-writing. Kleist would have been aware that the German postal system, *die Post*, which delivered letters by coach, was the most advanced and increasingly the fastest form of communications technology available at the time. North explains the historical circumstances surrounding the technological advances in the speeding-up of the postal delivery network in the following:

Nachdem die Auswirkungen der Französischen und der nachfolgenden Kriege überwunden waren, konnten die deutschen Postverwaltungen den Postreiseverkehr planmäßig wieder ausbauen. […] Um die Geschwindigkeit der Personenposten zu erhöhen, mußte die Zahl der Sitzplätze eingeschränkt werden. […] Bessere Straßen schufen schließlich die Voraussetzung für eine schnellere Beförderung von Reisenden und Briefsendungen.281

As well as offering rapid mail delivery, post coaches were becoming a commonplace method for travellers to get around Germany and Kleist himself travelled in this way with mixed success. Similarly, when sending letters to Wilhelmine by post, Kleist’s interpretation of what was going on in his relationship was, to a large extent, determined by the reliability or otherwise and the timing of *die Post*. This is evident when Kleist writes to Wilhelmine: “[w]enn ich nur w[u]üβte, [sic] ob alle meine Briefe pünctlich [sic.] in Deine u. in keines andern Menschen gekomen [sic] sind. […] Immer bei jedem Briefe ist es mir, als ob ich ein Vorgefühl hätte, er werde umsonst geschrieben, *er gehe verloren*” (B 232, my emphasis). When viewed as mobile objects, Kleist’s letters are thus representative of the interrelated nature of first, physical movement, i.e. the physical transportation of correspondence by mail

281 North 70.
coach, and, second, emotional movement, i.e. the concomitant conveying of romantic sentiment. For this reason, the potential for break-down in the postal system (e.g. if the post coach crashed and the letters did not arrive) equates to the potential for a break in emotional ties. By conflating the technological with the emotional means, Kleist implicitly gives emphasis to what may be construed as a negative social consequence of the emerging new mobilities: the traveller’s inevitable dependence on flawed and sometimes dangerous new technologies and systems of communication. In sensing this connection he puts forward similar concerns to contemporary French cultural theorist Paul Virilio. Virilio warns that “[a]cquiring a tool means also acquiring a particular danger; it means opening your door and exposing your private world to minor or major hazards.”

Below I discuss an incident in which Kleist was exposed to physical danger when travelling by coach. However, in the context of letter writing, one could view the (new and improved) German postal system as a kind of tool with potential to cause, in this case, emotional harm. For example, Kleist withholds writing about some aspects of his “private world” after expressing concern that somewhere in the course of their transference, his letters could be “von irgend einem Neugierigen erbrochen worden” (B 323). He rather ambiguously explains to Wilhelmine that he has omitted some information in his correspondence, “was Dir zwar eben noch keinen Aufschluß, aber doch Stof zu richtigen Vermuthungen geben würde” (323). Here, it is difficult to deduce whether Kleist’s secrecy was primarily driven by his distrust of the postal system, his anxiety over his fragile relationship, his engagement in some kind of confidential activity, or some combination of these or other factors.

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283 As noted above, it was certainly not exceptional for there to be an element of secrecy concerning Kleist’s journeys. For example, Roger Jones, a translator of Kleist’s work, writes that the journey Kleist took to Würzburg in 1800 was “shrouded in secrecy”. Heinrich von Kleist, *The Broken Jug*, trans. Roger Jones (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), V.
Catastrophe and Contingency

It appears thus far, that Kleist was never quite able to find a place of peace or contentment within this period time of change, the Sattelzeit. This was perhaps due, in part, to the fact that he was quite willing to engage in thought about that which many would regard as the negative outcomes of the new mobilities; Kleist was not afraid to ponder the traveller’s potential for injury or harm, and, ultimately, as I set out below, death by travel. By contrast, other writers avoided facing up or giving much attention to some of the negative truths relating to life on the move in their travel writing. For example, Noyes suggests that in Wilhelm Meister, Goethe uses the idea of cosmopolitanism as a kind of avoidance tactic in order to “see the colonial world as if violence had no place there.”

Similarly, Lehmann suggests that, when composing Wilhelm Meister, Goethe was influenced by, “dem Optimismus des Aufklärungszeitlaters [in dem es] im allgemeinen eine Tendenz [gibt], das Weltbild zu verschönern.” Kleist, on the other hand, gives detailed accounts of the life-threatening accidents in which he was involved while on the move.

There is one particularly noteworthy “Katastrophenszene” or, more specifically, “Reisezwischenfall” (unforeseeable travel accident) in which he was involved while on the move. In an 1801 letter to his friend painter Heinrich Lohse, he describes this incident in which his travel coach was violently upturned. This letter begins with the daunting phrase:

284 Noyes 455. The full quotation on this point reads as follows: “The promise of cosmopolitanism is that it will allow Wilhelm to structure his life’s journey as if institutions have no effect on his movements. It is this banishment of territory as a disciplining category that allows Goethe (in most cases) to see the colonial world as if violence had no place there”, 455. Concerning travel, Bohrer makes a similar comparison between the positive outlook of Goethe as compared to the realistic outlook of Kleist (see 95).

285 Lehmann 123.

286 Similarly, Lehmann points out that by contrast to Goethe, Moritz’s style in Anton Reiser “ist unendlich viel herber” und “er mildert nichts”, 124. Lehmann attributes this, in part, to “die Verschiedenheit des Milieus”, 124.

287 Karl Heinz Bohrer, Der romantische Brief: Die Entstehung ästhetischer Subjektivität (München, Wien: Suhrkamp, 1987), 95; 94. There is another significant incident which Kleist writes about, a deadly storm he experiences while on a boat. He outlines this experience in an 1803 letter to his trusted half-sister, Ulrike. Perhaps he felt it best to spare Wilhelmine details of his life-threatening, travel-related accidents given the already tenuous nature of their relationship.
“[w]eißt du wohl, daß dein Freund einmal dem Tode recht nahe war?”\textsuperscript{288} In the small town of Butzbach, Kleist sits on the stationary coach while the horses, whose reins have been dropped, feed on hay. The carnage begins when a passing donkey lets out a terrible cry:

Unsere Pferde […] hoben sich kerzengerade in die Höhe, und gingen dann spornstreichs mit uns über das Steinpflaster durch. Ich griff nach der Leine - aber die Zügel lagen den Pferden, aufgelöst, über der Brust, und ehe wir Zeit hatten, an die Größe der Gefahr zu denken, schlug unser leichter Wagen um und wir stürzten - Also an ein Eselgeschrei hing ein Menschenleben? Und wenn es geschlossen gewesen wäre, \textit{darum} hätte ich gelebt?\textsuperscript{289}

The two \textit{Sattelzeit} foundations of change and movement are clearly expressed in the quotation above, as a series of rapid (“spornstreichs”) movements suddenly change Kleist’s experience from that of being “sorglos sitzen bleiben[d]” to “dem Tode recht nahe.” One might view the transition as the coach, with Kleist in it, went from still and upright to falling and crashing over, as a typical example of the “[p]lötzlich aufbrechende, schließlich anhaltende Veränderungen” of Koselleck’s \textit{Sattelzeit}.\textsuperscript{290} In a similar vein, Kleist tries to make sense of what happened by understanding his own life in terms of the idea of contingency.\textsuperscript{291}

Here, one human life, (his), appears at the mercy of the cry of a donkey. And, if this course of events was random, he further conjectures, could one then say that this was also the reason why he had remained alive? Theisen explains how Kleist drew on the experience of this incident and continued to explore such (\textit{Sattelzeit}) questions concerning movement, change, the immediacy of time and contingency in his later writing:

\begin{quote}
Kleist’s novellas and anecdotes are characterized by a style modelled on the news report; […] they are weighed down with incidental details to present an unheard-of event in \textit{all its immediacy}. Kleist’s writing dwells on the \textit{sheer contingency of the factual}; […] The unforeseen catastrophes and violent deaths in his fictional and journalistic writings repeatedly fed into the public’s taste for the sensational, the new, the uncanny, and the strange. The narratives circle around a “scene of suffering.”\textsuperscript{292}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{288} Cited in Bohrer 93.
\textsuperscript{289} Cited in Bohrer 93.
\textsuperscript{290} At the same time, perhaps Kleist is exaggerating the life-threatening or noteworthy nature of this accident. North explains: ”[b]ei dem schlechten Straßenzustand kam es nicht selten vor, daß ein Postwagen umgeworfen wurde”, 70. Perhaps the cause of Kleist’s accident, the cry of a donkey, was unique, but it appears in general that post coaches were upsetturned relatively often.
\textsuperscript{291} See Chapter Six, 253–4, for further discussion on Kleist’s notion of contingency.
While his readers were perhaps drawn to the sensationalist journalistic aspects of the catastrophes he described, I would argue that Kleist’s preoccupation with the idea of contingency was perhaps for him personally a way of coping with the new mobilities. In fact, I contend that he found solace in the unknown. With the exception of his relationship to Wilhelmine von Zenge, he seemed resigned to the reality of that which he could not control including dying at any moment (although he eventually gave up on this relationship, too, breaking their engagement in a letter to her in May 1802).²⁹³ Whereas someone like Nicolai attempted to control and be the master of the Sattelzeit, Kleist saw himself as a kind of victim of it, come what may. To this end Bohrer concludes: “Kleist verhält sich affirmativ zur Katastrophe. Sie widerlegt die Rede der Vernunft: das Menschenleben ist dem Zufall unterworfen, eines Esels Schrei ist folgenreicher als seine eigene mögliche Bestimmung.”²⁹⁴ To Kleist, the contingency of a human life in the face of catastrophe refuted the Enlightenment’s idealisation of (and reliance upon) reason.

Accepting Uncertainty?

John Keats expresses a similar idea to Kleist’s thinking about contingency in his concept of ‘negative capability’. Keats defines this concept in an 1817 letter to his brothers: “I mean Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason.”²⁹⁵ In other words, “negative capability” is the ability to live comfortably without always striving for a rational explanation. Keats provides the example of Coleridge: “Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half-knowledge.”²⁹⁶ Romantic writers such as Kleist, Keats and Coleridge generally responded to the uncertainty of the emerging new mobilities by being open to the

²⁹³ Fischer 4.
²⁹⁴ Bohrer 95.
²⁹⁶ Keats 43.
unexpected nature of experience, the contingency of events and not demanding an explanation for those occurrences that are beyond their control.\footnote{Coote adds weight to this argument when he says, referring to Keats’s concept of “negative capability”: “This famous passage draws on Keats’s own temperament, on impressions and ideas derived from those about him, and is above all a plea for […] receptivity and openness […] [F]reedom from the fixed, the rigid and the dogmatic”, Stephen Coote, \textit{John Keats: a Life} (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995), 115.}

Kleist in particular, as a result of his travels as well as his earlier life experience in the military, appeared to come to believe that, living in a period of transition and change, nothing was certain except uncertainty itself. He appears to have found no stability in love and relationships, in new technologies, neither in travel nor in a dwelling-life. In the following letter which he writes at the end of 1805 to his friend, Rühle von Lilienstern, just four years before he took his life, Kleist remarks: “Die Zeit scheint eine neue Ordnung der Dinge herbeiführen zu wollen, und wir werden davon nichts, als bloß den Umsturz der alten erleben.”\footnote{Cited in Julianne Dienemann, \textit{Kleist's Achill': Held oder Hilfskonstruktion?} (Norderstedt: Grinverlag, 2009), 12.} Perhaps contributing to his eventual self-destruction was the thought that his life-education and travels had (whatever their motivation), in the end, simply led him back to uncertainty.

3.4.7 Adelbert von Chamisso’s \textit{Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte} (1814)

Alienation at Home

Like Peter Schlemihl, the protagonist of \textit{Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte}, Adelbert von Chamisso spent much of his life trying to gain the acceptance of society. Born into an aristocratic French family, Chamisso had to flee France at the young age of 9, thus ending any chance of growing up with a stable long-term dwelling-life. With the threat of the French Revolution looming, the Chamissos were granted asylum in Berlin. Still, from an early age Chamisso felt a strong affinity with his new home of Germany: he changed his name from the more French-sounding \textit{Louis}, a name which was given to him in honour of King Louis XVI
of France, a potentially perilous association, to Adelbert. Later, Chamisso’s family were able to go back to France but he opted to stay in Germany. In 1812, Chamisso was studying natural sciences at the University of Berlin when the outbreak of the *Befreiungskriege* meant he had to take refuge again. A Frenchman by birth, he was not able to take up arms on the German side. It was during this period of asylum in 1813 that Chamisso wrote *Peter Schlemihl*, “ein Stück Prosa, das ihn weltbekannt machte” while he, ironically, was “[i]m Asyl von der Welt verborgen.”

Chamisso’s exile had devastating effects on the young scholar: “Die Ereignisse der Jahre 1813 und 1815, an denen er nicht tätigen Anteil nehmen darf, “zerreißen” ihn, wie es in einem von ihm selbst verfaßten curriculum vitae heißt. […] Wohin mit ihm? Er darf kein Deutscher sein und empfindet die französische Heimat doch als Fremde.”

Dismayed and in hiding, in what he now considered his home, Chamisso wrote: “Ich hatte kein Vaterland mehr oder noch kein Vaterland.”

Despite his obvious “increasing affection and loyalty” toward Germany, it seemed that at this time Chamisso’s fate and identity were to be determined by his place of birth. It is this feeling of being torn, neither being able to lead a dwelling-life nor to be able to travel as he wished, which first stimulated Chamisso to think along the lines of developing the protagonist of a man who becomes separated from his shadow. Additionally, Chamisso mentions two specific incidents which aided his imagination in constructing the characters and plot of *Peter Schlemihl*. First, on one occasion while

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300 Schleucher 103.
301 Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. IX (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1960), 41. Mann’s essay was originally entitled “Adelbert von Chamisso” and was published in 1911.
302 Schleucher 8.
303 Niklaus Rudolf Schweizer, *A Poet Among Explorers: Chamisso in the South Seas* (Bern: Herbert Lang, 1973), 14. This ambiguity of identification is further underscored in Thomas Mann’s memory of reading Chamisso as a child: “Der Dichter nun, dessen Name so frühzeitig zu uns drang, der deutsche Schriftsteller, der unseren Knaben als ersters, gültiges Muster vorgestellt wird, war ein Fremder, ein Ausländer. […] Nie brachte er es in unsere Sprache zu mündlicher Geläufigkeit […] und was zustande kam, war dennoch deutsche Meisterdichtung”, 37, my emphasis. It seems that the only way in which Chamisso could only ever try to be accepted as German was in terms of his exceptional poetic voice. Although, to project forward to the end of the *Sattelzeit* period, Chamisso did eventually almost accept his German status when he remarked in 1828: “Ich glaube fast, ich sei eine deutscher Dichter”, cited in Mann 39.
Chamisso was travelling, he lost all of his belongings and therefore his companion asked him, “ob ich nicht auch meinen Schatten verloren habe.” Second, Chamisso was browsing through a book by Jean de la Fontaine in which a very debonair man was pulling a number of unbelievable items out of a bag. From these examples, one can again observe the significant influence of being on the move and of reading on the development of a Sattelzeit writer’s ideas.

**A Traveller’s Search for Acceptance**

From the outset of the narrative Peter Schlemihl is, like Chamisso, an outsider, a young man arriving on a ship “from somewhere.” Peter seems to be unsure of himself from the start, as indicated by his ambiguous emotions when he docks “[n]ach einer glücklichen, jedoch für mich sehr beschwerlichen Seefahrt”, (PS 19, my emphasis). This is perhaps how Chamisso generally felt at the time, i.e. happy to be in Germany, yet exhausted by the experience of being an exiled French-born German in times of political and social turmoil. Chamisso explores the issue of feeling like a foreign traveller in a society which is slowly opening up to new mobilities, yet still predominantly focused on dwelling-life. How does the traveller of the Sattelzeit come to be accepted by a local society? What measures will he take in order to gain acceptance? Importantly, Chamisso places emphasis on such problems as general human issues, rather than nation-specific ones. Chamisso appears to be developing a supplementary notion of culture based on identifications of im/mobility and the social acceptance/rejection of these rather than of nationhood. The general feeling/state of being a foreigner or an outsider, irrespective of one’s national identification, he implies, has the capacity to render one emotionally and physically immobile. Chamisso consciously omits

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304 Cited in Mann 47.
305 Mann 47.
307 Chamisso’s predicament is more complex than Peter’s in this regard, as he deals with the issue of feeling like a local, but largely being perceived as a foreigner.
specific details of the country where Peter is from and where it is that he has arrived. Thus, the reader is somewhat confused, just as Peter is when he arrives at the rich merchant Herr John’s estate and cannot make sense of what is going on. There, a party is taking place and Peter cannot understand the jokes, gossip and general conversation of those present: “Ich war da zu fremd, um von alledem vieles zu verstehen, zu bekümmert und in mich gekehrt, um den Sinn auf solche Rätsel zu haben” (PS 22). Peter’s feelings of being an outcast have two sources: the people at the party do not make any particular attempt to sympathise with him or accommodate him, although he also admits that he is not trying very hard and is rather introverted.

After some time, Peter still feels overwhelmed by the situation and resolves to return to Herr John’s another day when he is approached by a mysterious man. During the party this man has amazingly produced many incredible items from his purse, including a large Turkish carpet, a tent and three harnessed riding horses (PS 25-6). The man asks Peter for his permission, “hier auf der Stelle diesen edlen Schatten aufheben zu dürfen und zu mir zu stecken” in exchange for his “Fortunati Glückssäckel” from which one can have anything one wants (PS 30). Despite his fears Peter agrees to the exchange; this is a measure he is willing to take in order to fit in to the new society. He does not give much thought to that which the loss of his shadow will entail, but rather is focused on the potential material and social gain from the magic lucky purse. His surname, Schlemihl comes from the Yiddish for a hopeless type or one who messes things up. Giving up of his shadow certainly does not have the desired effect on his life. Rather than feeling accepted it renders him even more isolated. As

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308 One may infer from the names that Peter Schlemihl is German and he is in England to see “Thomas John”, however the location is never explicit and Chamisso’s emphasis on travel also leads one to suspect that the two figures could be anywhere in Europe. In addition, Flores writes that when Peter loses his shadow, thereby becoming even more of an outcast in the local society “we would do well to view shadowlessness as a human phenomenon”, 573, my emphasis.

309 Flores picks up on this point with regard to Peter’s loss of shadow, and the fickle nature of both his as well as society’s reaction to his different appearance: “The shadow […] seems to represent an important part of the person, and Schlemihl, in under-estimating its value, underestimates the entire realm of mortal affairs; on the other hand, however, the shadow seems to be given social value only out of entrenched but foolish and narrow-minded prejudice”, 582.
soon as Peter leaves the party and heads in the direction of the town, an old woman yells at him, “Junger Herr! He! junger Herr! hören Sie doch! […] Sehe sich der Herr doch vor, Sie haben Ihren Schatten verloren” (PS 32). Dejected, Peter reacts as follows: “ich warf ihr ein Goldstück für den wohlge-meinten Rat hin und trat unter die Bäume” (PS 32). Hiding under the trees is the first move of many in an on-going effort not to be noticed. And the Fortunati Glückssäckel, while bringing him (material) fortune, does not ultimately bring him happiness.310 Here, for example, throwing a bar of gold to the woman does not establish a positive connection with her, but is meant rather to deflect her focus on Peter’s shadowlessness.

A Man with No Shadow

What exactly does this shadowlessness mean? Several scholars who have engaged in the analysis of Peter Schlemihl are sceptical of the rather non-reflective conjecture that Peter’s shadow is symbolic of his nationality or, alternatively, that his shadowlessness is akin to nationlessness.311 If one follows the argument I have set out above, i.e. that Chamisso wanted to focus on humanity as a whole rather than national identity in this text, it seems more likely that the state of shadowlessness is meant to signify a general human loss of the feeling of belonging, rather than to refer to any nation specifically.312 Perhaps it was simply impossible for some people, especially travellers, to live their lives in an acceptable way during the tumultuous Sattelzeit? Flores argues that in giving away his shadow Peter gives away a major

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310 One might say that Peter, as a kind of consumer, has been fooled by the fortunati branding of the purse. This kind of assumption follows an interpretation of Peter Schlemihl in economic terms, or as a critique of materialism. Pavlyshyn takes up this discussion referring to Swales’ interpretation that: “[t]he sale for money of his own shadow makes him guilty of alienating and degrading to the status of an exchange commodity something that is at once personal and non-material”, Marko Pavlyshyn, “Gold, Guilt and Scholarship Adelbert von Chamisso's Peter Schlemihl,” The German Quarterly 55.1 (1982): 49-63, 49. While there is not room here for a fuller discussion of the significance of the story in economic terms, for further discussion refer to Pavlyshyn and to Martin Swales, “Mundane Magic: Some Observations on Chamisso's Peter Schlemihl,” Forum for Modern Language Studies 12 (1976): 250 -62.

311 See Flores 567-8; Mann 54; Swales 250.

312 On this note Flores points out that “[T]homas] Mann, like most critics, is aware that Peter Schlemihl’s shadowlessness is not allegorical in any simple, specifiable sense; he discounts the notion that a man without a shadow must be a man without a country”, 567-8. Still, Flores does not leave the discussion there, arguing that “[w]e would do well to examine the meaning of shadowlessness (or of shadows) from as many different viewpoints as possible”, 569.
part of himself and thus suffers “incessant doubt and self-turmoil” for most of the story, in light of the fact that, “shadowlessness offers a grave breach of social decorum.” Accordingly, from a mobilities perspective, for Peter, shadowlessness means the inability to lead either a travelling or dwelling-life in the way that he would like to and in a socially-acceptable way, as the following examples show. After parting with his shadow more and more people shun Peter, so much so that he begins to lament his folly and feel separated from humanity: “ich [hatte] jetzt den Schatten für bloßes Gold hingegeben; was konnte, was sollte auf Erden aus mir werden!” (PS 33). At another point in the story, he is travelling with his loyal friend and servant Bendel, when they come across a choir of beautiful women. Peter wishes to approach one of the women with whom he has made a connection but is rendered immobile by his shadowlessness, despite her relative emotional and physical closeness: “Sie kniete noch immer zwei Schritte von mir, und ich, ohne Schatten, konnte die Kluft nicht überspringen. […] O, was hätt ich nicht da für einen Schatten gegeben!” (PS 51). Peter’s lack of a shadow also means he cannot dwell as he would like to. After being mistaken for an earl he begins to lead a relatively peaceful life in a small village and there falls in love with a young woman by the name of Mina. Peter asks Mina’s father for her hand in marriage: “[i]ch sagte ihm, ich wünsche in dieser Gegend, wo ich gelebt zu sein schien, mich anzusiedeln und ein sorgenfreies Leben zu führen” (PS 61). However, Peter is outed by Raskal, his servant, who refuses to work for “eine[n] Schattenlosen” and the wedding is off (PS 66).

313 Flores 572; 570.

314 I do not propose that this argument would necessarily replace others as to what shadowlessness means; it may in fact offer a supplement to them.

315 Interestingly, one way in which Bendel demonstrates his loyalty to Peter is by moving in such a way that Peter can be consumed by Bendel’s shadow. In this way Peter (temporarily) regains his socially-acceptable mobility by hiding the fact that he has no shadow. Bendel says: “ich werde um Schattenswillen meinen gütigen Herrn nicht verlassen […] ich werde bei Ihnen bleiben, Ihnen meinen Schatten borgen”, and Peter explains: “Überall war er vor mir […] mich schnell mit meinem Schatten überdeckend, denn er war größer und stärker als ich”, PS 45.

316 Alternatively one could say here that Peter is not able to or perceives that he is not able to be in charge of his movements, out of shame.
Seven-league Boots

After all this rejection, Peter says goodbye to Bendel, flees the town in shame and commits himself to a life of wandering, almost completely devoid of human contact:


It is hard to know whether Chamisso himself would have conceptualised the times in which he was writing in terms of a saddle period, or a period of transition. However, here it is almost as if Peter, having endured the turmoil of the Sattelzeit, extending from immobility to an inability to dwell, throws caution to the wind and resigns himself to the saddle, or the whim of the times, (“unbekümmert welchen Weg”), and submits completely to a life devoid of humanity. It is exactly at this point that he receives a pair of Siebenmeilenstiefel, seven-league boots, which provide him with an enhanced mobility, a compensation for the restrictive shadowlessness he has had to endure. Although fictional, one might think of these boots as representing a supplementary technological innovation arising out of the new mobilities in a similar sense to Nicolai’s portable writing shelf, which allowed him to write while on the move. When wearing the boots, Peter is able to travel vast distances, which he describes as follows: “[w]underbare veränderliche Länder, Fluren, Auen, Gebirge, Steppen, Sandwüsten entrollten sich vor meinem stauenden Blick; es war kein Zweifel, ich hatte Siebenmeilenstiefel an den Füßen” (PS 109). In place of human relationships, Peter now has an almost boundless ability to become educated and study nature in almost all parts of the globe (except for New Holland and the South Seas, which I discuss further below). He explains, “[d]urch frühe Schuld von der menschlichen Gesellschaft ausgeschlossen, ward ich nun zum Ersatz an die Natur, die ich stets geliebt, gewiesen, die Erde mir zu einem reichen

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317 This adds weight to the argument that Chamisso always allows for exceptions. Peter does not have completely unrestricted mobility with the seven-league boots; not all members of society shun him, Bendel remains a loyal friend throughout the narrative.
Garten gegeben, das Studium zur Richtung und Kraft meines Lebens, zu ihrem Ziel die Wissenschaft” (PS 110). Perhaps Chamisso felt that it was Bildung, the pursuit of knowledge, which was able to fill the gap in his own life that the rejection of society had created.

**Knowledge Gained, Relationships Lost**

In *Peter Schlemihl*, the ultimate message Chamisso leaves the reader with is as follows: “willst du unter den Menschen leben, so lerne verehren zuvörderst den Schatten” (PS 121).

Thus, broadly speaking, living in the Sattelzeit leaves one with a choice: dwell in a socially acceptable way or travel, gaining knowledge but giving up the closeness human of ties. Flores sums up the ending of the novella and provides a warning against the second of these choices: “Peter seems to have gained a “self,” but can there really be a self at all without a human world?] […]The chilling end of Peter Schlemihl is to be most alive when dead to the human world.”

If we accept this line of argument, we might then surmise that in *Peter Schlemihl*, Chamisso provides a social critique of the period in which he was living based on a reduced sense of humanity. On the one hand, he exposes the potentially de-humanising side of Enlightenment’s emphasis on rational autonomy, first, through the supplementary technological notion of the seven-league boots as objects of enhanced transportation for individual scientific research, and, second, by way of the separation of the human from his shadow, or innate humanity. On the other hand, Chamisso shows up the potential peril in valuing money and material items (represented by the Fortunati Glückssäckel) over the closeness of human ties (shadowness). As further evidence of this, in the foreword to a

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318 Strictly speaking, Peter addresses Chamisso when he makes this statement. While there has not been space here to discuss the interesting point that Peter directly addresses the author in the text, Flores sees both the man with the purse and the author Chamisso as two refractions of Peter’s personality, see 579 for further detail.

319 Flores 583. Flores’ conclusion is supported by the excerpt in the quotation above in which Peter says “[ich] entfernte mich unter dem Mantel der Nacht von dem Grabe meines Lebens.” Flores also points out that some people could see the end of *Peter Schlemihl* as a kind of happy ending: ““Romantic” elements mollify the story’s terror, but only for readers innocent enough to be content with saccharine gratifications. For such readers, the story ends well: Schlemihl has learned from his experiences, the “devil” is exorcised, Schlemihl has become “good” and “useful,” he has discovered his “true” self, he has made himself at home all over the world”, Flores 581.
French edition of *Peter Schlemihl*, Chamisso quotes a textbook definition of the shadow by Hauy, which includes the following passage: “Shadow, in itself […] represents a solid whose shape depends on the shape of the luminous body, by that of the opaque body, and by their luminous position to one another.” Chamisso goes on to explain the connection to *Peter Schlemihl*:

It is this solid indeed which is the topic of Pierre Schlémihl’s marvellous story. The science of finance teaches us about the importance of money, while the science of the shadow is generally less recognised. My imprudent friend lusted after money whose value he knew about, but he did not think about the solid. He wants us to gain from this lesson for which he paid dearly, and his experience screams at us: ‘think of the solid!’

Yet, despite this emphasis on “the solid”, and the intimation here that one might foremost expect to learn about the “science of the shadow” in a dwelling-life context, the unpredictability of the emerging new mobilities meant that Chamisso’s own travels were to extend beyond those of Peter Schlemihl, (even with Peter’s magically enhanced mobility). Shortly after the publication of the text, Chamisso was to become a member of the exploratory Russian brig *Rubrik*, his role being to collate information on new flora.

Schwiezer outlines the irony of this development below:

Curiously enough, he had already presaged his [global] circumnavigation in his short novel *Peter Schlemihl*, at a time when he could not have foreseen his voyage aboard the *Rurik*. Schlemihl, […] having acquired magic boots, *Siebenmeilenstiefel*, roamed the world from east to west and west to east, but ironically was barred from New Holland and the island of the South Seas, the very islands the *Rurik* was bound to visit extensively during the winter months of 1816 and 1817.

Thus Chamisso went on to play an important role as a botanist, just as Peter Schlemihl vowed to leave his scientific manuscripts with the Berliner Universität (PS 122). Perhaps as the events of his life unfolded, Chamisso eventually gave in to the seeming inevitability that even in these times of change, the world was not yet ready to open up to the idea of a traveller with strong social ties. “Chamisso, nachdem er aus seinen Leiden ein Buch gemacht [hat], beeilt

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320 Cited in Mann 55. Constantin Grigorut, "French Translation", Message to Anita Perkins, Email.
321 Cited in Mann 55.
322 Interestingly, Schweizer makes reference to Johann Georg Forster here stating that, “Chamisso was not the first German intellectual to sail around the world”, 15. To this end it is noteworthy that Chamisso is regarded as a German intellectual and that both Chamisso and Forster wrote the original accounts of their journeys in languages which were not their first, Chamisso in German and Forster in English.
323 Schweizer 14.
sich, dem problematischen Puppenstande zu entwachsen, wird seßhaft, Familienvater, Akademiker, wird als Meister verehrt.”

On completion of his Russian voyage he returned to Germany, settled in Berlin and had a family but continued to produce scientific works. In his life Chamisso made the transition from experiencing immobility in exile to a seven-league boot experience, the memories of which he held on to but eventually traded in for a life rich in shadow.

3.4.8 Joseph von Eichendorff’s Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts (1826)

Literary Dreams and the Separation of Father and Son

Joseph von Eichendorff was born into a noble Prussian family at Lubowitz Castle, Upper Silesia (then Prussia, now Poland), in 1788. Like his father, Eichendorff spent much of his life in the service of the Prussian army, including during the Napoleonic Wars of 1813-15. Before this period, travel and education were two main foci of Eichendorff’s life: he and his brother spent two years at the University of Halle, taking a walking tour of the Harz Mountains during the summer break and two then years at Heidelberg, followed by a Grand Tour of Paris, Nuremberg and Vienna. It was in Vienna that Eichendorff took his legal examination before enlisting in the army. This Grand Tour also included a stopover back in Lubowitz, where Eichendorff’s father, much to his dismay, realised that his two sons did not wish to take over the running of the family estate. This biographical context, in particular, Eichendorff’s travel experience as a youth and the family disagreement, sheds some light on the beginning of Eichendorff’s most well-known work Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts (1826). The narrative of this travel text, which was written while Eichendorff was working in the military, starts at the outset of a journey and with the separation of a father and son.

Like Kleist, Eichendorff perceived that the reality of everyday life in the Prussian army was

324 Mann 57.
325 There are some obvious differences here between the plot of Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts and Eichendorff’s life history (e.g. Eichendorff did not grow up a miller’s son), however, from a mobilities perspective, I argue that an important convergence here lies in the point that both sons did not wish to take up the dwelling-lives that their fathers had in mind for them.
something quite separate from particular philosophical ideals (in Kleist’s case, of Enlightenment humanism and in Eichendorff’s, of Romanticism). However, in order to deal with this tension, instead of quitting his profession as Kleist did, Eichendorff’s response was to escape into writing in his free time. “The restricted horizon of his public work was, as it were, annulled each evening by his literary dreams,” notes Cardinal. It was here that Eichendorff could travel in the most idealised, Romantic and nostalgic of ways. At the same time, this literary world, often landscaped with autobiographical events of Eichendorff’s life, was clearly marked by the movement, change and unpredictability of the Sattelzeit.

The narrative of *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* begins as follows: the Taugenichts is lying in the sun when his father, a miller, berates him thus:

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Du Taugenichts! da sonnst Du Dich schon wieder und dehnst und reckst Dir die Knochen müde, und läßt mich alle Arbeit allein thun. Ich kann Dich hier nicht länger füttern. Der Frühling ist vor der Thüre, geh auch einmal hinaus in die Welt und erwirb Dir selber Dein Brodt. (LeT 8)
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To which the Taugenichts replies:

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Nun, […] wenn ich ein Taugenichts bin, so ist’s gut, so will ich in die Welt gehen und mein Glück machen (LeT 8).
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To the miller, his son appears as an indolent fellow, a *Taugenichts* or good-for-nothing, when it comes to working hard and making a contribution to their established dwelling-life. The ensuing separation of father and son is not only in their physical parting, as the Taugenichts embarks on his journey but also in their view of the world. Käch explains: “[der Taugenichts] nimmt das Schimpfwort des Vaters als Grundlage einer neuen und diesem entgegengesetzten Lebenshaltung […] [als] Auf- und Ausbruch aus dem sozialen Umwelt […] [und] auch [als] eine weltanschauliche Position, […] die derjenigen des Müllers entgegen tritt,” Underlying the difference in each person’s way of thinking is the miller’s advocating of a dwelling-life as against his son’s desire to embark on a journey of personal discovery. Evidence supporting

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this contention lies in that which each man regards as basic, yet fundamental tasks of life: whereas the miller advises his son to go out into the world and “erwirb [sein] Brodt”, the Taugenichts’s aim of breaking away from home is “[sein] Glück [zu] machen.” As Mehigan points out, growing up in a mill house, the Taugenichts has been well exposed to the ideas of passers-by, as well as educating himself by reading an assortment of his father’s books. For this reason, he has developed a desire to travel and experience the world at first-hand, whereas for his father, the tales of travellers and writers suffice his thirst for knowledge; working the mill is of priority. Mehigan further explains how this clash of competing worldviews leads to the misunderstanding between and the parting of father and son: “[o]ur Taugenichts is […] not a “Taugenichts” at all. […] [He is] clearly no dull layabout but a youth of independent ambition whose incipient wanderlust can be traced back to an educated parental home and an array of social family contacts.”

Shortly after this conversation with his father, the Taugenichts simply gathers his things and sets out happily: “so schlenderte ich durch das lange Dorf hinaus […] in die freie Welt” (LeT 8). Cardinal conjectures that it is this particular movement of “unhurried meandering”, stems from Eichendorff’s happy memories of his summer walking holiday with his brother in the Harz mountains and that it became a favourite theme in his writings.

Moving Onward and Upward

The Taugenichts is soon thrust into adventurous travels. He ends up at an Austrian castle, where he gains a position as a toll gate officer and eventually falls in love with the count’s daughter. However, later, under the illusion that his love for her is unrequited, he decides

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329 Mehigan 60-2.
330 It is interesting to note that, as set out above, Herder uses the related term “schlendernd” when describing a positive movement.
331 Cardinal 135.
332 Eichendorff often draws on the motif of castles in his work, which is likely influenced by the nostalgia for his happy memories of growing up at Lubowitz Castle, see Cardinal 141-2.
to up and leave (in the manner of Herder, Moritz or Kleist) and head toward Italy. It is almost as if his sudden yearning to move again is beyond his control: “[i]ch weiß nicht wie es kam – aber mich packet da auf einmal wieder meine ehemalige Reiselust […] fort muß ich von hier, und immer fort, so weit als der Himmel blau ist!” (LeT 26). While a broken heart is the most obvious reason for the abrupt urge to depart, perhaps what the Taugenichts does not recognise (“ich weiß nicht wie es kam”) is that his job is also an indirect cause; as a toll gate officer he is, in a way, simply repeating life at home at the mill, i.e. remaining sedentary while others pass through, hence the need to (re-)mobilise.

On his travels, the Taugenichts eventually comes across two men who introduce themselves as Maler Leonhard and Maler Guido, two painters who allow him to ride with them on their coach in exchange for his work as a servant. In the following passage, the Taugenichts explains the grandiose experience of travelling aboard the coach, underscored by the speed and ease of movement:

Ich hatte eigentlich da droben ein prächtiges Leben, wie der Vogel in der Luft, und brauchte doch dabei nicht selbst zu fliegen. […] So war ich, ich weiß nicht selbst wie, durch halb Welschland […] durchgekommen. […] Was der Mensch doch nicht alles erfährt, wenn er sich einmal hinterm Ofen hervormacht! (LeT 39-40)

Certainly it appears here that travel has allowed the Taugenichts to move onward and upward from his original position as a young man, “without status and a social role but with the ambition to acquire them.” And this is due, in part, to his willingness to just go with and accept the unexpected changes (from walking to riding on a coach “und brauchte dabei doch nicht selbst zu fliegen”) and increases in movement (“wie der Vogel in der Luft […] durch halb Welschland”) of the Sattelzeit as positive new experiences (“Was der Mensch doch nicht alles erfährt, wenn er sich einmal hinterm Ofen hervormacht!”). Further, these saddle period characteristics seem to become part of the very movements (“Ich lief daher so schnell, als ich

333 Mehigan 62.
334 On this note, Mehigan also makes reference to “our young hero” as he is “tossed and turned by life’s vicissitudes”, 62.
nur konnte”), and thought processes (“Ich ärgerte mich über die langsame Zeit”) of the Taugenichts himself (LeT 70). Yet, caught up in the motion of things, it is exactly this uncritical acceptance of what is happening to him that often leaves the Taugenichts in the dark as to what he is actually experiencing. For example, it later emerges that the painters Leonardo and Guido already know the Taugenichts: they are from the Austrian castle and Guido is one of the ladies of the castle in costume. However, when they first introduce themselves they check whether the Taugenichts is sufficiently fooled by their disguise “‘Und daß Du’s weißt,’ sagte der Eine zu mir, – ‘aber Du kennst uns doch nicht?’ – ich schüttelte mit dem Kopfe. – ‘Also, daß Du’s weißt: ich bin der Maler Leonhard, und das dort ist – wieder ein Maler – Guido gehießen’” (LeT 37). In addition, the Taugenichts’s ignorance or naivety, to take a sympathetic view, means that he does not initially doubt or question the value of travel versus dwelling-life. There are constantly characters around the Taugenichts who cast doubt on the value of his wanderings, but it seems he does not sympathise with their perspectives or even consider the possibility of his own “maladroitness”, to borrow a term from Mehigan, as the following examples show.

First, as mentioned above, because of his unwillingness to participate in the dwelling-life activities of the mill, the Taugenichts’s father calls him a good-for-nothing. Rather than stop to think about the possible validity of this different opinion, the Taugenichts leaves home. Later, in Rome, the Taugenichts wakes up on the street, lost, disoriented and covered in flowers. A nearby parrot squawks *furfante* (rascal/scoundrel) at him. Rather than acknowledging his rather ridiculous state the Taugenichts rants at the parrot, “[w]enn es gleich ein unvernünftige Bestie war, so ärgerte es

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335 Eichendorff uses stylistic methods in his writing in order to reinforce this sense of the speeding up, slowing down and other sudden and unexpected changes in experience and time in the *Sattelzeit*, particularly through the movements of the Taugenichts. For example he writes: ”[i]ch sprang rasch auf und sah mich nach allen Seiten um”, LeT 58. “Ich lief […] und kletterte geschwind wieder an dem Gartenthor hinauf. Aber da blieb ich wie verzaubert sitzen”, LeT 59.

336 Mehigan 61.

337 Disorientation is a feeling the Taugenichts experiences often, e.g. “Ich konnte mich gar nicht besinnen, wo ich eigentlich war”, LeT 47. As such, perhaps Eichendorff is hinting that the traveller cannot always keep abreast of the speed and change associated with the *Sattelzeit*. 
mich doch. Ich schimpfte ihn wieder” (LeT 64). Again, in Rome, Herr Eckbert, a painter, tries to both warn him and get him to contemplate the aimlessness of the life of a wanderer: “Gehe in Dich, und bedenke dieses gefährliche Metier! Wir Genie’s – denn ich bin auch eins – machen uns aus der Welt eben so wenig, als sie aus uns, wir schreiten vielmehr ohne besondere Umstände in unsern Siebenmeilenstiefeln, die wir bald mit auf die Welt bringen, grade auf die Ewigkeit los” (LeT 69). The Taugenichts’s response?: “Mir aber graute schon lange vor ihm und seinem wilden Gerede” (LeT 70).338

A Noble Homecoming

However, a turning point comes for the Taugenichts as his travels lead him back to the castle and all his beliefs about everything that happened to him on his journey begin to unravel. He is welcomed at the castle for, what he finds out, is to be his wedding. The woman he loves loved him all along and he is able to marry her because she is not the countess’s daughter but an orphan adopted by the count and countess. The Taugenichts’s journey, it turns out, has, to a great extent, been a carefully orchestrated set of events in order to get him to return home to be married. The following scene takes place as he approaches the castle:

Da […] erhob sich plötzlich in dem Gebüsch ein rasender Spektakel von Pauken und Trompeten, Hörnern und Posaunen. […] [Der Portier] kam ganz aus dem Concept. ‘Nun wahrhaftig und wenn der bis ans Ende der Welt reist, er ist und bleibt ein Narr!’ (LeT 89)

The Taugenichts “hat sein Glück gemacht” it seems and no longer needs to roam the world or deflect the warnings and criticisms of others who disapprove of his lifestyle. A noble dwelling-life awaits, as his fiancée tells him: „das weiße Schlößchen, das da drüben im Mondschein glänzt, das hat uns der Graf geschenkt, sammt dem Garten und den Weinbergen, da werden wir wohnen” (LeT 90).339 In direct contrast to the Taugenichts’s earlier statement, “Was der Mensch doch nicht alles erfährt, wenn er sich einmal hinterm Ofen hervormacht!”, the musicians now sing, “Beatus ille homo!/ […] Qui sedet in sua domo/ Et sedet post

338 Here it appears that Eichendorff raises the issue that those with seven-league boots on their feet, or incessant wanderers, face the danger of becoming separated from humanity, see Chapter Three, 113.
339 The vineyard or tending to vines appears here again as a recurring ideal image of dwelling-life.
Indeed, shortly after publishing this book, Eichendorff himself moved to Berlin with his family, where he stayed for 12 years after a life of much travel. His 28-year career in the Prussian military included periods living in Breslau, Danzig, Berlin, Königsberg, among other cities.

**The Impossibility of Returning to the Original**

By the end of the *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, the Taugenichts has come around to his father’s way of thinking about the value of dwelling and of the potentially negative aspects of travel. However, had the Taugenichts not left home and been on this journey, he would not have ended up with this happy outcome; in a way he did “earn a crust”, as his father wished; he just took the long way round to do so. Travel also remains part of his life beyond the narrative: he has a permanent home in which to dwell as well as company with whom to travel. “Gleich nach der Trauung,” says the Taugenichts’s fiancée, “reisen wir fort nach Italien, nach Rom, da gehn die schönen Wasserkünste, und nehmen die Prager Studenten mit und den Portier!” (LeT 91). And although he perhaps did not foresee it at the time of publishing *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, after a reasonably settled period in Berlin retiring in 1844, Eichendorff returned to a life on the move. He went from Moravia to Vienna to Köthen, to Dresden and then back to Berlin again and finally to Neiße, where he died. Neiße was situated in his home province of Silesia. Nevertheless, just as the Taugenichts never returned to his (original) home, so Eichendorff never again returned to Lubowitz Castle.

Cardinal explains this reluctance to return home. He refers to the strong sense of nostalgia present in Eichendorff’s work, which, as demonstrated above, draws on memories of his youth (or pre-military experiences), such as growing up at Lubowitz castle.

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Thus, generally speaking, it is almost as if Eichendorff, writing closer to the end of the Sattelzeit, can see the potential benefits as well as the disadvantages of the emerging new mobilities (e.g. social ascension, yet possible loss of human ties) while at the same time recognising that one can never go back to dwelling-life as it was before. Eichendorff’s nostalgia for a dwelling-life, a simpler and more fixed world, represented nostalgia for something that was no longer there. If one regards Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts as a variation on the Bildungsroman, one also sees a development of the supplementary notion of Bildung.\footnote{Mehigan discusses whether or not one can apply the label of the Bildungsroman to Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts in the following: “The question is whether the story that unfolds is the simple tale of the education of a youth in the manner of a miniature Bildungsroman, which on one level of course it is, or whether this novella of education can, on closer analysis and at greater depth, tell us a lot about the social changes occurring at the beginning of a modern era”, 60.} As previously noted, Moritz’s Anton Reiser may be regarded as a negative Bildungsroman. After embarking on a journey of self-formation, Anton simply finds that he misplaced everywhere in society; by contrast, Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister travels, gains an education and returns home to find a place within society. The Taugenichts is different again; he is able to travel and eventually to find a place within society but here, at the end of the Sattelzeit, it is no longer possible for him to return to his original home. The origin has itself changed and the only way in which it was now possible to go back to mobility-singular, so-to-speak, was in one’s mind or imagination.

3.5 Conclusion

From Travail to Travel

Concerning the concept of travel Waskul and Waskul observe: “Travel is derived from the French travalien (to make a journey), the root of which is travail – “to labor or toil.”\footnote{Dennis D. Waskul and Michele E. Waskul, “Paddle and Portage: The Travail of BCWA Canoe Travel,” The Cultures of Alternative Mobilities: Routes Less Travelled ed. Phillip Vannini (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 21-37, 33.} The

\footnote{Cardinal 136.}
*Sattelzeit* is a foundational historical period in the migration of the concept of travel from *travail* to *travel*. In my analysis of the *Sattelzeit* writers’ travel texts, I have demonstrated the ways in which the writers’ discursive desire to travel reflects a change in focus from fixed origins, i.e. travel in the sense of *travail* or travel as a means to an end, to that of the present moment, i.e. travel is about the journey, the experience, an end in itself. By way of comparison, early on in the period of mobility-singular, one may observe the *travail* of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, as he suffers immense hardship while trying everything he can to return to his home of Ithaca. Odysseus’s experience contrasts strongly with the *travel* of Goethe’s young Wilhelm Meister during the *Sattelzeit*: Wilhelm’s social acceptance is dependent on undertaking a journey in order to gain life experience. Odysseus’s experience also diverges starkly from the *Sattelzeit* explorers Georg and Johann Reinhold Forster: the Forsters share the conviction that *travel*, in the form of fieldwork, is vital in order to produce valid ethnographic literature.

Following Koselleck’s approach of looking to changes in semantic contents as indicators of wider social, political and historical transition, in order to locate further evidence for the change in meaning of the term *travel*, I survey briefly here English etymological dictionary entries published at the beginning of the *Sattelzeit* period, and then again near the closing of the nineteenth century. In Scott’s 1772 *New Universal Etymological English Dictionary*, we can observe the stirrings of a call for a semantic separation between the notions of *travail* and *travel*. It is implied that at this time both are still commonly regarded as synonymous concepts. The entry for *travel* begins as follows: “This word is generally supposed to be originally the same with *travail*, and to differ only as particular from general. In some writers the word is written alike in all its senses: but it is more convenient to

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write travail for labour, and travel for journey.”  By using the term “convenient”, perhaps the lexicographer means, *so as to reflect the current state of things more accurately*, that is, that some people are beginning to regard the experience of travel as meaningful in itself. If we flash forward just over one century to Skeat’s *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* 1882, an entry on travel includes the phrase: “[t]he word forcibly recalls [sic] the toil of travel in former days.”  Skeats’s entry thus marks a clear shift away from that notion that travel is something to be necessarily endured in order to achieve some laborious purpose. Further, in Davidson’s *Chambers’s English Dictionary: Pronouncing, Explanatory, Etymology*, published in 1898, the primary entry for travail is given as “excessive labour: toil”, whereas the primary entry for travel is given as, “to walk, to journey, to pass, to move.”  This also indicates that a clear separation in meaning between the two words has occurred.

*Emerging Mobilities and the Generation of Supplements*

Thus, it has been shown from different perspectives that travel in itself becomes an important and increasingly socially acceptable part of life during the *Sattelzeit*, and has, as Schlemihl’s outcome suggests, become part of the *work* of the new era. In addition, the experiences of saddle period writers generate supplements, which have been postulated here as correlates to the idea of travel that drive concept formation within the context of an increasingly mobile world. I now consider the three main supplements discussed in this chapter, namely, technology, (that is, the supplement of new travel technologies as material supplements to mobilities discourses), the idea of *Bildung*, and the idea of culture. While I discuss each concept in turn, it is also noted here that these three notions cannot be clearly separated from one another – each supplement clearly has an influence on the emergence, shaping and, in

345 Scott 487.
some cases, limitations of another. Without the development of certain navigational equipment, for example, Georg Forster could not have travelled to the other side of the world and, as a result, develop new ideas about culture.

The development of technology during the saddle period allows for the unprecedented movement of people and objects, and this results in entirely new experiences (or new views of old experiences) and new ways of conceiving and discursively representing the world and one’s (mobile) place within it. With regard to the movement of objects the readers of Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister* and Chamisso’s *Peter Schlemihl* are both reminded of the fact that developments in transport technology, communication systems and the desire for material objects originated from abroad has led to the expansion of international trade: as consumers, everyone is connected in some way to the emerging new mobilities. The ways in which improvements in technology are conceptualised also play a role in the way in which emotional movement is tied to physical movement, as is demonstrated when Kleist, while travelling, utilises the upgraded German postal system to send letters to his fiancée. As the speed and reliability of *die Post* increases, so, too, does Kleist’s reliance on this communication system which he views as fundamental to the maintenance of his long-distance relationship with his fiancée. Conversely, Kleist also fears the detrimental emotional consequences that could result in the event of a breakdown of this system: should a letter not arrive, she may think he does not care. The practical benefits of major advancements in navigational equipment and technical knowhow are exemplified when Georg Forster calculates that as a member of Cook’s second expedition to the Pacific and Antarctic, he has been able to sail a distance equivalent to circumnavigating the globe three times. Similarly, on Nicolai’s journey through Germany and Switzerland, a custom-made *Wegmesser*, or odometer, enables him to charter regions previously unmapped for the benefit of future travellers. Nicolai’s general invention, adaptation and use of technologies to charter, measure
and quantify while on the move, include the added benefit of helping him to counter some of
the uncertainty and unpredictability of the new mobilities.

Well-constructed transport has the potential to heighten feelings of social ascension
gained through travel in the *Sattelzeit*. Eichendorff’s Taugenichts, a miller’s son, catches a
glimpse of “ein prächtiges Leben” while aboard a swift and comfortable royal travel coach.
The hasty movement and relative comfort of a travel coach are also advocated by Nicolai. He
devotes much time to selecting the right kind of vehicle, “ein bequemer Reisewagen [wie]
eine bequeme Wohnung”, so that he is able to dwell and write while on the move. This
capability no doubt plays a pivotal role in Nicolai’s implication that, by the end of the
journey, he and his travelling companions are superior travellers. He asserts that they have
been able to make three times the number of observations on their journey than anyone else
in the same timeframe possibly could have, he asserts. Still, perhaps some of the most
interesting ideas pertaining to mobile technological developments relate to the creations of
the *Sattelzeit* writers themselves and how these creations impact on the way in which the
writers represent their reflections on their own or their protagonist’s travel experiences. These
include Nicolai’s own invention of a portable multidirectional writing shelf and Chamisso’s
imaginary invention of *Siebenmeilenstiefel*. Both of these inventions are designed to make the
most of mobility for a specific educational or scientific purpose. The shelf is for writing while
on the move, so that Nicolai may most efficiently capture the immediacy of his experience
and reduce the chance of fictional elements appearing in his travel journal. The seven-league
boots provide the wearer with an enhanced level of mobility for the purpose of collecting
scientific data on flora and fauna all around the world. At the same time, both inventions also
reveal the potential limitations or drawbacks of the traveller’s ability to cope with life in the
*Sattelzeit*. Nicolai’s struggle is with the new way in which time is experienced, its fleeting
nature and trying to accurately capture the moment in his writing before it disappears into
potentially non-factual figments of imagination. Peter Schlemihl finds that gaining the ability to travel vast distances and carry out research also entails being largely cut off from humanity. He must live in the knowledge that he has most likely lost the chance of ever again experiencing the closeness of relationships. Generally speaking, an examination of the supplement of technology provides a telling lens through which to view the ways in which the Sattelzeit writers’ experiences were transformed by their interaction with and development of the technological material around them.

The idea of Bildung, while on its own a rather complex notion, is well contextualised in the Sattelzeit idea of travel or the journey as being a valuable experience in itself. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, travel opens up the possibility for the generation of new knowledge, and secondly, travel allows for the education and formation of the individual, culturally and socially. Examples of writers who consider travel as a vital means to generating knowledge include Nicolai, Georg Forster, Johann Reinhold Forster, and Chamisso. Nicolai directly refers in his writing to would-be travellers and prioritises activities such as improving on the deficiencies of cartographic records; both the Forsters and Chamisso advocate the idea that long-distance international travel is necessary for effective scientific observation and recording. We thus gain the impression that the expansion of knowledge and of the mind is not possible in a life in which one only dwells. Accordingly, the genre of the Bildungsroman emerges from the idea that a youth can embark on a journey and expand his horizons by travelling beyond the domain of dwelling. Anton Reiser and, one assumes, his creator Karl Phillipp Moritz, are able to escape an oppressive family life at a young age by travelling to another town and taking up an apprenticeship. Unfortunately for Anton, he becomes the sufferer of a perpetual Fernweh: while he certainly gains an education through travel, he is still unable to find a permanent place of contentment within society. Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister, by contrast, is able to find a place within society as a result of his
travel and self-formation. Whereas Moritz’s/Anton’s feelings of belonging or satisfaction in a
certain place are only ever temporary Goethe employs Bildung as a mediating concept
between dwelling and travel: in order to dwell happily as an adult, Goethe infers, one must
first embark on a journey of formation in youth. At the close of the Sattelzeit, one is left
with the figure of Eichendorff’s Taugenichts, who, after undertaking a journey, is able to find
a home in higher social position. However, this is not in his original home but somewhere
else. Eichendorff seems to imply that the overwhelming force of the emerging new mobilities
has now rendered it socially impossible to ever return to the original idea of dwelling. With
regard to the supplementary notion of Bildung it appears reasonable to conclude that travel
inevitably entails Bildung and that there are certain vital elements of Bildung that may only
gained by way of travel.

Georg Forster’s writing provides a clear example of how travel and in particular
intercultural encounters, can change and expand one’s idea of culture. Through his contact
with the Maori of New Zealand Forster begins to question the superiority of so-called
“civilised” peoples over “barbarians” and also to doubt the existence of a clear delineation
between the two groups. Near the end of his journey, he is convinced that Europeans require
some education in matters of cultural outlook: they need to learn to acknowledge
humanitarian principals of equality and the idea that indigenous peoples of the South Seas are
their brethren. In making such claims, Forster opposed the traditional notions of European
cultural dominance as well as represented in the cultural opinions of his father. A sea voyage
also leads Herder to emphasise cultural identifications based on humanity as a whole and to
think about the relative insignificance of nations, which he literally cannot see. In one sense,
all of the Sattelzeit writers generate supplementary notions regarding the idea of culture
simply by expressing a desire for travel; they write about cultural mobility by narrating their

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348 One may infer that this was more of an ideal rather than an absolute or permanent solution to the problem of
mediating or finding a balance between dwelling and mobility, as indicated by the above cited quotation: “Das
Streben nach dem Ausgleich einander wiederstrebender Mächte sollte ihn [Goethe] zeitlebens beschäftigen.”
journeys, their daily experiences and their trials and tribulations maintaining familial and romantic relationships from afar. At the same time I argue that one Sattelzeit writer, Chamisso, brings a particularly new perspective to the idea of culture by paying close attention to the human experience of dwelling vis-à-vis mobility. Through the story of Peter Schlemihl and the images of the loss of shadow and the seven-league boots, Chamisso explores the implications of what it means when one can neither dwell nor travel as one would like through the reactions of society to such a person, as well as to the social consequences of enhanced mobility. In this way, Chamisso brings issues of im/mobility to the fore while allowing the definition of culture as defined through the nation-state fade into the background.

Generally, one of the positive aspects of the new mobilities of the Sattelzeit is the way in which travel expanded peoples’ knowledge and view of the world. The mere act of moving itself brought about changes in how one carries out activities such as reading. Herder finds a completely new way of understanding the canonical texts such as Homer’s Odyssey while reading on the move. Travel in the sense of travail entailed hardship, toil, labour and was something endured in order to fulfil a purpose. Later, in the Sattelzeit, travel was able to be experienced as travel – as a meaningful thing in itself. In this way, individual travellers were given the choice to go beyond their pre-determined dwelling-life and embark on a journey of education, of self-realisation or scientific discovery. Hence, the world opened up to unprecedented opportunities and possibilities, as well as new dangers and challenges. New ideas emerged with regard to technology, Bildung and culture, and the world could never return to the way it once was.
Part III: The Contemporary Period of New Mobilities

Chapter Four: The Turning Point 1985-1995

4.1 Introduction

This argument now moves forward in time from the period 1770-1830 to an examination of examining the contemporary period in two parts. Chapter Three, 1985-1995 focuses on the turning point of 1989/90, and Chapter Four, on the unfolding of this transformation from 1995 to 2010. This temporal leap raises the question: why take up the examination of mobility more than a century and a half after the Sattelzeit came to an end? In short, it is in this contemporary period that the next most dramatic and far-reaching changes in the idea of travel and the way in which (im/)mobility affects everyday life take place. In this first contemporary chapter I provide illustrations from a number of travel texts in order to compare how the concept and experience of travel have either endured or changed from the Sattelzeit period to this period of newer mobilities.

During a protest held at the Alexanderplatz on 4th November 1989, around half a million East German protestors called for reforms in the Socialist state, and “above all, […] the unhindered right to travel abroad.”349 Both as an historical event and as a metaphor, the Fall of the Berlin Wall is highly significant in terms of signalling a further major change in the idea of travel. Leaving behind the Sattelzeit concept of travel as a meaningful experience in itself travel now comes to be thought of as a fundamental human right and is thus closely associated with the notion of cultural and personal freedom.

I begin with two travel texts set in the period before the Fall of the Wall; Erich Loest’s novel Zwiebelmuster (1985), based on events of approximately the early to mid-1980s, and Friedrich Christian Delius’s novella, Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus (1995) which depicts events from approximately 1981-1989. At the centre of each of these

travel texts is an East German protagonist who feels imprisoned in his walled-in State and is plagued by an overwhelming desire to travel to the West. Following this I turn to Andrei Ujica’s documentary film *Out of the Present* (1995), which documents events from 1991/92. This film conveys a post-1989 view of mobilities and embodies a literal and cognitive expansion of mobility beyond the earth in the form of space travel.

Here I seek to answer two questions: first, why is the *Wende*,\(^{350}\) and more broadly, the year 1989, a major (cultural) turning point for mobilities?, and, second, what has changed or what has stayed the same in the contemporary period following the *Wende* when it is compared to the *Sattelzeit*, and how is this being represented in travel texts? I focus first on the transitional time period around the year 1989/90, with a particular focus on the *Wende* in Germany, while comparing the effect of travel and increased mobility on peoples’ lives between the *Sattelzeit* and the contemporary periods. I augment and provide a critique of existing analyses of this contemporary period, in particular, the arguments put forward in Fukuyama’s essay “The End of History?” (1989), and Huntington’s article “The Clash of Civilizations?” (1993). My diachronic comparative approach historicises mobilities and provides a critical dimension that is lacking in many existing studies of contemporary mobilities.

4.2 Moving from the *Sattelzeit* to the Contemporary Period

To advance from the *Sattelzeit* to the contemporary period in the history of mobilities is methodologically advantageous in that it provides the opportunity to develop a sharply comparative view of a dramatic shift in the experience of travel and to make a significant contribution to the wider theme of contemporary discussions on globalisation. When looked at comparatively, the intensification of mobilities over time and the speed and disorientation of this change entails a shift in the perception or focus of travellers. In the previous chapter, I

\(^{350}\) The term *Wende* refers to the transition period in German social and political history around the years 1989/90, during which the Berlin Wall fell, socialist rule ended and the process of German unification took place.
have argued that expressions of travel in the *Sattelzeit* are commonly anticipatory in nature; travellers ask questions of *what if?*, and set out, by various means, to discover what travel, and the associated supplementary notions of technology, *Bildung*, and culture, can make possible in their lives or in the lives of their protagonists. In contrast, I consider here the contention that travellers as represented by writers and filmmakers in the contemporary period are more concerned with how to deal with the often overwhelming nature of mobility and questions of *how* to live with or against such forces of movement. If this proposition holds true, then it follows that speaking of a *desire for* travel and of the generation of supplementary ideas concerning technology, *Bildung*, and culture, as befits a productive approach to the analysis of the *Sattelzeit*, is problematic in the contemporary period. This gives rise to such questions as: what does the discursive desire to travel now mean and how is this (re-)produced in film and writing about travel/mobility?, and, do the supplementary notions of culture, technology and *Bildung* retain their significance in relation to the experience of travel in the contemporary period, or are they now irrelevant, or being taken over by new supplementary forms? It may be in some cases, that the overwhelming nature of mobilities in the present results in nostalgia for a return to earlier times in which travel was still generally exceptional and desiring, anticipating and generating were more possible as will be shown in *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus*. However, these analyses show that the changing political and social circumstances of the contemporary period in most cases render the re-living of earlier (*Sattelzeit*) travel experiences impossible, as the new mobilities reach a point-of-no-return.

### 4.3 Framing Concepts

Before I begin the analysis of travel texts here, I contextualise this chapter with a discussion of concepts of mobility which are productive for the interpretation of more recent travel texts. I then provide an overview of the historical significance of 1989/90 and the transition to the
period of new mobilities. With regard to the conceptual framework set out here, I contend that the compression, complexity and networked-nature of the new mobilities is such that it is not adequate simply to investigate the potentially new ways in which the supplements of technology, Bildung, and culture are generated in the contemporary period. Although the question of the development of these Sattelzeit supplements is important, I add concepts of mobility which are required in order to see how people’s experience of movement and travel are mediated, vitiated, interconnected, enhanced and globally-situated. To this end, I introduce the concepts of globalisation, movement, Republikflucht, Fernweh, and mobile places.

Globalisation

Given that the world in the contemporary period is increasingly spatially and temporally “compressed”, technologically augmented and globally defined, globalisation as an umbrella term is of central importance to the present discussion on mobilities. In his book ‘Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange’, the globalisation studies researcher Jan Nederveen Pieterse emphasises the evasive and highly contested nature of the term globalisation. After surveying definitions from a number of different disciplinary perspectives, he offers a “compromise position” with an emphasis on experience and perception, in the following definition:

Globalization is an objective, empirical process of increasing economic and political connectivity, a subjective process unfolding in consciousness as the collective awareness of growing global interconnectedness, and a host of specific globalizing projects that seek to shape global conditions.

352 On this point Nederveen Pieterse writes: “[i]t’s not always clear which globalization is being talked about […] and there are wide discrepancies in the basic understandings of globalization”, 17-18. Although this emphasis on the ‘slippery’ nature of defining globalisation may, at first, appear counter-productive to a concrete analysis, he provides a clear framework for his approach to thinking about global issues. For example, he places the beginnings of contemporary processes of globalisation in the 1970s, and the study of the relation of culture to globalisation in 1992, 16:1.
353 Nederveen Pieterse 16-18, author’s emphasis.
From a mobilities perspective, Nederveen Pieterse’s definition of globalisation might usefully be modified to read: the way in which people experience, think about and shape global movement. The intensification of movement leads to a stronger sense of feeling connected to people across the world. In this way, Nederveen Pieterse’s understanding of globalisation may be taken as an augmentation of Benedict Anderson’s often-cited idea of the nation as an imagined community. In 1991, Anderson concluded that the nation “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”

By 2004, Nederveen Pieterse acknowledges that as a result of increased mobility, the nation loses significance and may now be regarded as simply “a grid that has been temporarily superimposed upon a deeper and ongoing stratum of human migrations and diasporas.”

What is now (re)imagined is connectedness on a world scale, and thus globalisation is seen as “a subjective process unfolding in consciousness as the collective awareness of growing global interconnectedness” (cited above).

One might ask, how have various theorists understood the process of globalisation as “growing global interconnectedness”? Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Robert Holton summarise three broad conceptualisations or paradigms of globalisation, in a very similar manner. I paraphrase their three paradigms in relation to the potential consequences of each outlook for im/mobility. First is the “homogenization thesis” (H) or “McDonaldization/cultural convergence” (NP): this is the idea that under the influence of multinational corporations, global culture is becoming standardised or universalised around a Western and especially a

355 Anderson 6.
356 Nederveen Pieterse 34.
North American pattern. As mobility increases, the world becomes more and more culturally uniform. Dwelling as a way of life may be encouraged in order to reinforce local/national cultural uniqueness and resist change. Travel may seem meaningless, even undesirable in light of the similarity between countries. Second is the “polarization thesis” (H) or “Clash of Civilizations/ cultural differentialism” (NP): this is the idea, largely attributed to Samuel Huntington’s 1989 essay ‘Clash of Civilizations’, that cultural groups have strong traditions which reinforce boundaries and create rivalries with other civilisations, for example, between the Islamic East and the United States West. Such a thesis relies on the assumption of cultures as internally stable/sedentary, and accordingly reinforces us/them cultural binaries. Tourism marketers frequently draw on polarization discourses, for example, to promote travel as the opportunity for an adventurous insight into the culture of an exotic Other, before returning safely to one’s fixed home.358

The contention that places and cultures should be regarded as static is often critiqued, as in the following example: “tourist attractions change as places reinvent themselves. The quest for new experiences, novelty, beauty, and exclusivity is fashioned by politics, the current consumer style, the travel industry.”359 Third is the “hybridization thesis” (H) or “ongoing cultural mixing” (NP): this is the idea “that cultures borrow and incorporate elements from each other, creating hybrid, or syncretic, forms.”360 The hybridisation thesis assumes that cultural influence, while uneven in terms of power, is multi-directional, rather than sweeping and uniform or clearly delineated between polar civilisations. Nederveen Pieterse emphasises the potential change in perspective brought about by the hybridisation thesis: “we have been so trained and indoctrinated to think of culture in territorial packages of assorted “imagined communities” – i.e. in terms of fixed nations of dwellers and internal

360 Holton 140.
stable cultures – “that to seriously address the windows opened and questions raised by hybridization in effect requires a decolonization of imagination”\textsuperscript{361} – i.e. to reimagine, on a global scale, distance, change, and placelessness as normal.\textsuperscript{362}

The hybridisation thesis of globalisation thus offers the most productive outlook for a cultural analysis of travel texts from a mobilities perspective, because it acknowledges the realities of a world on the move and of intercultural encounters and growing mutual awareness. At the same time, this approach neither assumes as normal, nor discounts dwelling as a possible way of life. It is important also to take the homogenisation and polarisation theses into consideration, as these perspectives can be regarded as forms of resistance to the acknowledgement/acceptance of the contemporary new mobilities. For example, Holton explains why hybridisation elements of culture are resisted or ignored: “Cultural actors may not recognize, or want to recognize, the significance of exogenous elements in their cultural repertoire, since it is more reassuring to indigenize that which has been borrowed.”\textsuperscript{363}

This point may be illustrated with reference to the recent naming of the Ford Focus as New Zealand’s Car of the Year, 2011.\textsuperscript{364} The New Zealand Motoring Writers’ Guild president, David Linklater, explains how the judges came to their decision. Throughout the article he makes no reference to the car’s design or to the origins of its manufacturer however, he does emphasise the apparent \textit{New Zealandness} of the vehicle:

\begin{quote}
[W]ether it is urban or highway motoring, or covering ground over the country’s secondary roads, the latest Focus is always impressive. This is a point that the NZ Car of the Year is uniquely able to take
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{361} Nederveen Pieterse 55.
\textsuperscript{362} Sheller and Urry 208. One can see how the idea of belonging to a fixed placed is reinforced as normal or natural, for example, in the discourse of so-called experts, such as Simon Anholt, “the leading authority on managing and measuring national identity and reputation, and the creator of the field of nation and place branding”, Simon Anholt, \textit{Places: Identity, Image and Reputation} (Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), back cover. Anholt writes, “[t]he identity and image of the places we inhabit are really a seamless extension of the identity and image of ourselves; it is a natural human tendency for people to identify with their city, region or country”, 157.
\textsuperscript{363} Holton 151.
account of, because it embodies the opinions of professionals in their field from across the country […]]. The car that comes out winner must excel from many different perspectives, and in a range of Kiwi-specific conditions. Linklater discursively constructs – by what he mentions and perhaps even more importantly, by what he does not – the Ford Focus, an automobile driven around the world, as something uniquely Kiwi. In his 2004 article, “Automobility and National Identity,” Tim Enderson discusses “the persistence of the national resonances of car cultures” in terms of a hybridisation model of globalisation. He explains that certain models continue to be imbued with national significance despite being made up of “components from far-flung origins.” “[I]nstead of understanding globalization as eclipsing the national”, Enderson concludes, “we might instead consider it the means by which national identity is redistributed.” Through nationalist discourse, the significance of new syncretic forms, of which we might consider the Ford Focus, an example, the products of globalisation are diminished as essentialist rhetorical attempts to “indigenize the exogenous” or temporarily contain mobility. Whichever understanding of globalisation one subscribes to – homogenisation, polarisation or hybridisation – the key force underlying such processes is undeniably movement.

Movement

In the contemporary world, imagining the smooth continuation of pre-Sattelzeit cultural stability or dwelling-life stands in direct opposition to acknowledging the centrality of

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365 “Ford Focus”

366 A very similar example to this marketing of the Ford Focus can be found in Toyota’s 2012 press release entitled, "Hilux Celebrates 30 Years as Kiwi Favourite," *Toyota New Zealand*, 28 Dec. 2011, <http://www.toyota.co.nz/AboutUs/Press+Releases/2011/84A6D1F4FA1943BEA8BCC7ABB03EDD8A.htm?category=0>. The Hilux is placed in the context of significant events in New Zealand’s culture history: “1982 wasn’t a bad year: the All Whites’ […] got […] to the World Cup finals in Spain, […] Daniel Carter was born, Prince Tui Teka’s catchy tune put Patea on the map, and Toyota Hilux became New Zealand’s top-selling light truck for the first time.” A further comment highlights the tendency to indigenize ‘foreign’ products: “Toyota’s ‘local best fit’ programme for Hilux means the version sold here is specifically intended for Kiwi drivers.”


368 Enderson 118.

369 Enderson 118, author’s emphasis.
movement. Roberson underscores this point in the introduction to *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions*:

> Travel, movement, mobility – these are some of the essential activities of human life. Whether we travel to foreign lands or just across the room, we all journey and from our journeying define ourselves. [...] As your eyes travel through this introduction, as you read my words going across the page, keep track of how often you get up from this reading to move about the room and refresh yourself from your otherwise stationary task. Then you will have a sense of how basic movement, journeying, travel are to human life and why travel books continue to be among the most popular types of literature.\(^{370}\)

It is almost as though Roberson simultaneously deconstructs and expands on Herder’s *Sattelzeit* idea of mobile reading, that one can better understand the characters of literature if one reads while on the move. In the contemporary period, the idea of im/mobility is so intrinsic to our everyday sense of meaning-making that one is not necessarily required to go to sea or read epic novels in order to become truly enlightened by the words of others. Reading, it appears, is now an inherently mobile practice; the act of reading, (“your eyes travel […] across the page”) or walking through a room as part of this process, (“basic movement”) is sufficient to constitute “journeying.” This brings to light one of the apparent paradoxes of the contemporary period with regard to the distances people move in relation to the kind of information or experience they wish to gain. On the one hand, the virtual movement of international information, news and images facilitated by telecommunications technologies may result in people with access to and reliance on such technologies becoming more physically sedentary.\(^{371}\) On the other hand, those who interpret global culture as undergoing a process of convergence or differentialism may actually travel further in order to try to find the culturally unique, untouched or uninfluenced, or to experience the so-called Exotic East or Golden West. A critical mobilities perspective with an emphasis on globalisation as hybridisation can problematize this paradox relating to movement in two ways. First, the information and images which supposedly give the sedentary computer user access to a view of the world, are, to varying extents ideologically selected, limited and

\(^{370}\) Susan L. Roberson, ed., *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions* (Jackson: University of Mississippi, 2001), XI.

\(^{371}\) See Sheller and Urry 221.
locally controlled. For example, considering the issue of virtual information censorship in China, MacKinnon notes, “[w]hile the Chinese government has supported the development of the Internet as a tool for business, entertainment, education, and information exchange, it has [so far] succeeded in preventing people from using the Internet to organize any kind of viable political opposition.” With regard to the movement of people, in order to gain a more realistic understanding of certain peoples/situations one may, in fact, still be required to travel and to accept that a so-called worldview is always subjective and fragmentary. Second, with regard to the motivation of the traveller, instead of setting out to locate and experience cultural authenticity, one will potentially be more satisfied to search for uniquely mixed, mélange aspects of a culture.

This latter point raises the issue of movement control, that is, the tension between travel seen as a fundamental human right and the capacity of governments to maintain control over flows of people and information. Writing on the topic of globalisation, governance and migration, Tyler claims: “Western immigration policies operate globally to control and inhibit the movement and settlement of refugees, asylum-seekers and economic and ‘illegal’ immigrants from the Southern and Eastern hemispheres to the West.” Still, to what extent can governments exercise control over movement? In my analysis of travel texts in this chapter I examine questions such as: what are the limits of patrolling national borders?; what happens when people (here, primarily East Germans) are contained and information is censored?; and, how do people, and (here specifically writers and filmmakers), develop strategies in order cross these borders physically and mentally? In order to answer such questions and consider movement in terms of physical and cognitive traversal, I draw on three concepts related to mobility, namely Republikflucht, Fernweh, and mobile places.

373 See also Sheller’s and Urry’s comment, cited on page 15.
Republikflucht

Republikflucht is a term from the criminal code of the former GDR which literally means “flight from the Republic.” The term refers to the act of unlawfully escaping from East to West Germany, or, as set out in the 1979 DDR Handbuch:Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen Republikflucht, “das ohne behördliche Genehmigung erfolgende Verlassen der DDR.” The concept of Republikflucht is useful to an analysis of travel in the contemporary period because it situates itself at the intersection of an individual’s desire to travel without restriction, on the one hand, and, on the other, a government’s power and authority to control individual movement. In this sense, Republikflucht is what occurs when the individual’s will to travel transgresses the boundaries imposed by the state. For example, in East Germany in 1989, the government was finally forced to relinquish control of movement and submit to the demands of people wanting to travel – this is the point at which Republikflucht becomes obsolete. Still, it would be incorrect to assume that Republikflucht necessarily involved a rejection of dwelling-life. More to the point is that it involved a rejection of enforced dwelling or of not having the freedom of choice to travel. This is one of the major themes of Friedrich Christian Delius’s travel text Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus (1995). Der Spaziergang narrates the real-life journey of Klaus Müller (called Paul Gompitz in Delius’s version), an East German living in Rostock. Müller/Gompitz escapes the GDR illegally in a sailboat with the simple wish see another part of the world – “nach Syrakus auf der Insel Sizilien zu reisen” – and then return to his life of dwelling in the GDR – “auf jeden Fall nach Rostock zurückkehren” (SvR 7). In order to do so, he must, against his expressed intentions, commit Republikflucht.

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376 Peter Christian Ludz, DDR Handbuch: Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1979), 208.
The legal repercussions of such an escape attempt were grave. After August 1961 in the legal vocabulary of the GDR, attempts at *Republikflucht* are subsumed under the category of “Terrorismus”, allowing border patrol officers to shoot an offender as a so-called “Feind und Verräter” of the State.\(^{377}\) Over time, the government took increasingly stricter measures against defection, for example, by increasing potential imprisonment terms to a maximum of eight years and by including “Versuch und Vorbereitung der R[epublikflucht]” as punishable crimes. As a result, between 1961 and 1989 half of all political prisoners were considered “Republikflüchtlinge.”\(^{378}\) With this in mind, part of Müller’s/Gompitz’s initial preparations to leave East Germany is an examination of the legal framework pertaining to *Republikflucht* or “ungesetzlichen Grenzübertritt.”\(^{379}\) He finds a kind of loophole; if he travels alone, without damaging the border, carrying weapons or a falsified identification card, then the worst punishment he can receive is two years in prison. He feels that the potential prison sentence he may receive for carrying out *Republikflucht* is a risk worth taking in order to carry out his journey.

**Fernweh**

If the concept of *Republikflucht* relates more to the physical act of movement in defiance of governmental control in the form of threatening legislation and physical borders, then the concepts of *Fernweh* and mobile places can be understood as cognitive cognates to *Republikflucht*: they relate to the way in which one thinks about the idea of travel and longed-for destinations and the way in which one develops one’s own subjectivity in response to an im/mobile experience. In the previous chapter, I briefly introduced the idea of *Fernweh* as a yearning for faraway places; a strong desire to be or to travel elsewhere. I used this concept to describe the experience of Karl Moritz/Reiser who seems to suffer a kind of perpetual

\(^{377}\) Ludz 909.


Fernweh, as he can never be satisfied in one place for long and compulsively moves on to the next.

In the contemporary period, one might argue, this concept becomes of even greater relevance in light of two main points. First, travel has become far more possible and commonplace, so that the desire to be elsewhere is more valid or more readily realised than in the Sattelzeit. Second, because the world has become more mobile, there are other more motivating factors for wanting to travel to a faraway location: tourism discourses and images of exotic places beamed onto television and computers screens around the world give greater exposure to otherwise unfamiliar places; people who sense a loss of culture in the wake of what they perceive as the universalising tendencies of globalisation, may idealise a destination with a solid, traditional or exotic culture; those who feel overwhelmed by the rat race of urban living may long to travel to a place with a slower-paced society, a sublime landscape; on the other hand, those who come from a developing area may wish to go legally or otherwise to a place with more opportunities. Overall, one might summarise the emotion of Fernweh as a state resulting from negative feelings toward aspects of one’s current location and in many cases a desire for adventure.

In the Sattelzeit, the concept of leaving home and embarking on a journey was rather adventurous in itself. However, in the contemporary period, Bell and Lyall argue, there is a striking difference in longing for adventurous travel, namely, the key element of acceleration or travel in a sped-up world. They comment on this in their reflections on “mountainous terrains where adventure-loving tourists test their own skills against the challenges of the physical environment”.

It seems that for the modern-day tourist to quietly observe nature is insufficient engagement. As more and more tourists roam the globe, the agenda is not just to see but to do: to transform oneself into a thrill-seeking adventure hero on foreign terrain. […] [D]escendants of the grand tourists viewing the

381 Bell and Lyall XII.
“sublime” landscape, no longer meander but accelerate through an increasingly compressed and hyperinscribed space. The passive viewing of nature has evolved to kinetic experiences within this accelerated nature. [...] [As a result,] only a moving image device can adequately encode the white-water-bungy-paragliding experience.\footnote{Bell and Lyall XII. Refer to Chapter Five, 247, for a discussion on Felix Baumgartner who accelerated through space in a world record sky dive.}

Bell’s and Lyall’s traveller is an extreme example of one who longs for the accelerated elsewhere, a place which allows one to go beyond one’s everyday self and simultaneously record the experience. However, their imagery certainly helps to explain the transition to the modern day traveller’s accelerated world, be it desired or inescapable. This transition and its relation to the concept of \textit{Fernweh} can be explained in two steps; first, by comparing the connection between the circumstances of the \textit{Sattelzeit} to the context of pre-1989 East Germany and, second, by comparing the circumstances of pre-1989 East Germany to the contemporary period following the \textit{Wende}.

Gompitz is inspired to travel to Syrakus in order to retrace the steps of a \textit{Sattelzeit} travel writer, Johann Gottfried Seume, whose work \textit{Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre 1802}\footnote{Johann Gottfried Seume, “Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre 1802,” \textit{Mein Leben}, ed. Jörg Drews (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1993).} he read at age 19. Müller says, “das [Seume’s journey] wollte ich nach machen, das habe ich als mein Menschenrecht angesehen.”\footnote{“Spaziergang nach.”} His \textit{Fernweh} arises from negative feelings towards an aspect of his current location, the denial of what he believes to be his basic right to travel, which even people almost two centuries earlier were able to do, coupled with the strong desire to have an adventure like Seume. Similarly, the sentiment that GDR citizens, who face travel restrictions, are given less privilege than German travellers of the \textit{Sattelzeit} is also expressed by the East German writer Peter Wulkau.\footnote{In 1978 Wulkau was sentenced to a term of four and half years for his political satire, the novel \textit{Noch nicht und doch schon} (1977), before eventually gaining amnesty and moving to West Berlin. In the documentary film \textit{Behind the Wall}, Wulkau tells of his plan to smuggle a copy of this novel to the West via a diplomat friend who was able to freely cross checkpoints, 28:20. However, this friend gave a copy of the novel to the secret police, \textit{Behind the Wall: ‘Perfectly Normal Lives’ in the GDR?}, dir. Mary Fulbrook, University College London, 2007. Like Müller/Gompitz, Wulkau made several applications to immigrate to the West legally.} Wulkau was interviewed by the historian Mary Fulbrook in her 2006 documentary film \textit{Behind the Wall: ‘Perfectly Normal Lives’ in the GDR?}.
Lives’ in the GDR?’ The following is his response to the question of whether or not one could define life in the former East as normal:

It depends on how you define ‘normal’. If you think of a person who is un-political, who is relatively uncritical of the government, who would perhaps see it as ‘sovereignty’, who is content with modest well-being, a regular job, enough to live on, occasional holidays in another socialist state, a ten or twelve year wait for a car,…Then you could live a relatively normal life. But if you wanted more than that – if you say, for example, it can’t be right that at school I read Goethe’s Italian Journey [of 1786 – 1788] but, in my short life I will never have the chance to visit Rome or Venice; there’s something wrong there. If you suppressed this contradiction, then you could live a quiet life, I think.386

In the former East Germany, then, Fernweh is realised as attempted Republikflucht by those citizens who are dissatisfied with their dwelling-life situation and cannot have adventures and experience new places as Sattelzeit writers such as Seume and Goethe were able to. After the Wende, the omnipresence of mobilities means that although Fernweh still carries strong associations with the desire to be elsewhere and the need for adventure, it becomes enmeshed in processes of contemporary accelerated globalization. The ability to travel becomes normalised and thus the traveller’s expectations of what he or she may gain from the experience intensify. To paraphrase Bell and Lyall, the traveller may now expect not just to see but to do, not only to observe but to be transformed, and no longer to simply meander but to accelerate through an increasingly compressed and hyperinscribed space.387

Alternatively, the advocates of dwelling-life and/or slower movement will resist the transition to an accelerated lifestyle. The reasoning behind this may be that leading one’s life at a fast pace is regarded as detrimental to one’s physical and emotional well-being as well as to the environment. Journalist Carl Honoré, the author of the bestseller In Praise of Slowness: How a Worldwide Movement is Challenging the Cult of Speed (2004), warns that “[i]n these early years of the twenty-first century, everything and everyone is under pressure to go faster. […] When you accelerate things that should not be accelerated, when you forget how to slow

386 Fulbrook.
387 The satisfaction of earlier travellers to observe is indicated, for example, in the title of the earlier analysed text Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahr 1781.
down, there is a price to pay.”

Honoré gives advice on how to slow down in various aspects of one’s life: food, mind/body, medicine, sex, work, leisure, and children. Similarly, travellers rediscovering more traditional, slower ways of moving may divest themselves of some or all of the technologies enabling accelerated mobility.

One illustration of such decelerated travel can be found in the experience of New Zealand adventurer Robert Thomson, who holds a Guinness World Record for the longest journey by skateboard (12,159 km, carried out from 2007-2008). In the following, Thomson explains why he prefers to travel by skateboard rather than by faster modes of transport:

The raw connection with my surroundings is what I really love about out of the way remote places. This journey is about experiencing such environments. If I was to travel by car, I would alienate myself from my surroundings. [I feel] the same about trains, busses, and airplanes. That’s why I travel human-powered. The vast majority of human-powered vehicles are open to the surrounding environment.

For Thomson, then, speed equates to loss of experience and an unnecessary blurring of the environment through which he travels: excessive speed equates to missing out. Thomson’s approach is similar to that of Seume who associates a slower pace with a heightened capacity to take in and understand the objects one sees along the way: “Wer geht, sieht im Durchschnitt anthropologisch und kosmisch mehr, als wer fährt.” Furthermore, scholars David Bissell and Gillian Fuller take a step beyond the advocacy of slowness, by foregrounding the idea of stillness or still, in their text Stillness in a Mobile World (2011). They write:

[H]ow can life emerge through the cessation of accumulation, intensification and promotion? […] Stillness has a capacity to do things, illustrated by its potency as a figure of desire and as an imperative for a moral life. In each of these expositions, still is packaged as a solution. […] In short, still here is posed as a solution to the problems of consumption, movement and activity. Still becomes enrolled as a powerful trope for environmental, economic, political, and ethical sustainability.

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389 See Virilio 2009, 23; 33; 44 & 160.
392 David Bissell and Gillian Fuller, Stillness in a Mobile World (London: Routledge, 2011).
393 Bissell and Fuller 5-6, author’s emphasis.
For advocates of dwelling, slow travel or stillness, then, Fernweh may manifest as a desire for the decelerated elsewhere or to experience again the way things were in an idealised past, in an idealised place.

**Mobile Places**

The concept of Fernweh is thus useful in order to understand the reasons why people in different time periods strongly desire to be elsewhere. Fernweh is a concept expressing a fluid form of mobility. It expresses a cognitive adjustment which allows one to be in two places at once; in one’s current location and in an additional desired location. It follows that places themselves can be thought of as mobile or travelling, concerning which point Sheller and Urry conclude:

> Places are presumed to be relatively fixed, given, and separate from those visiting. The new mobilities paradigm argues against this ontology of distinct ‘places’ and ‘people’… [Instead], [p]laces are like ships, moving around and not necessarily staying in one location.

The historian, Simon Schama conveys the same idea in a different way: “Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imagination projected onto wood, water and rock.”\(^{395}\) Places or landscapes themselves move and change, as they are experienced by different people. In some cases the imaginary of a place and the expectations of what being there would feel like are of more significance than the physical place itself. This is certainly the case for Junior, the protagonist of Gerhard Köpf’s contemporary travel text *Bluff, oder das Kreuz des Südens*.\(^{396}\) In Köpf’s narrative the idea of New Zealand is mobilised through the personal journey of the protagonist. Although he is travelling through Germany he longs to reach a point at the other end of the world, Bluff, New Zealand, and his mind is constantly in both places, as the following example demonstrates: “In unserem größenwahnsinningen Land krümmt ein Raubvogel den Schnabel, und der Pleitegeier spreizt sein Gefieder.”

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394 Sheller and Urry 214.
395 Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Random House, 1995), 65. This quotation is foregrounded in the cover page of Lyall and Bell.
396 Gerhard Köpf, *Bluff oder das Kreuz des Südens* (Weinheim und Basel: Beltz Verlag, 1991). This text is fictional although the author did spend extensive periods in New Zealand.
Neuseelând aber hat das Kreuz des Südens im Wappen." To Junior, New Zealand is a highly desirable destination as it symbolises freedom and infinite possibility, as opposed to life in Germany, which he views as dull and repressive. His imagination is full of constructs of the New Zealand landscape: “In Neuseeland soll man noch aus den Bächen trinken und stundenlang an endlosen Stränden allein sein können.”

In Köpf’s narrative Junior never does reach New Zealand and in one sense, the concept of mobile places points to the futility of trying to reach an idealised unique or untouched location. Bell and Lyall provide a similar viewpoint with regard to the contemporary traveller and that which they call “the accelerated sublime”, which I interpret to mean fast movement through an idealised landscape. On the one hand, it appears that despite modern technological developments, the traveller can only truly experience the sublime in person: “The products of representation of the sublime can be consumed through the internet. But to be in awe of its sheer vastness and beauty, one has to go there.” Yet, paradoxically, in the course of processes of that which Nederveen Pieterse calls “contemporary accelerated globalization”, “[t]hat truly untouched sublime has accelerated away from us”, and can never be reached.

This raises the question, are mobile places the same as processes of globalisation in that they are “everywhere and nowhere”? or is there really only one mobile place? On this point Enderson states, “[m]uch hyperbole insists that the world is becoming a single place, a ‘borderless world’.” Huggan notes the negative outcome for contemporary travel writing, if indeed the global village has become the nowhere of today: “It may well be that

397 Köpf 10.
398 Köpf 8.
399 Bell and Lyall XII.
400 Bell and Lyall 199.
401 Nederveen Pieterse 16.
402 Bell and Lyall 199.
404 Enderson 101.
contemporary travel writing is ultimately condemned to reflect self-ironically on its own belatedness because there is precious little chance for innovation in the world it wearily reimagines, still less opportunity to explore. On the other hand, given the ease of modern travel and the fact “that cultures borrow and incorporate elements from each other, creating hybrid, or syncretic, forms” (cited above), it would seem there is no end to the opportunities to reimagine the cultures and places of today in interesting, exciting and innovative ways. This nowhere/everywhere debate raises questions addressed in part by the writers of the travel texts analysed in this chapter, such as, is the journey more important than the destination?; to what extent are places fixed, and to what extent are they imaginary?; and importantly, is it actually possible now to go home, in the way that Odysseus went home to Ithaca, or must one be content with floating about in the non-home of the global village? In the next section, I expand on these concepts with reference to historical events that occurred around the world in 1989, with a particular focus on the cultural impact of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. I look at various interpretations of the causes and consequences of these events, including those of Fukuyama and Huntington, and indicate how a mobilities perspective can offer an alternative understanding.

4.4 Historical Context

The Significance of 1989 as a Turning Point

Drawing on the notions of citizenship and globalisation, Urry refers to some of the general similarities and differences between historical events in the Sattelzeit and contemporary time periods. First he comments on the repeated occurrence of the class struggle for human rights: “1989 in many ways represents the year of the citizen, falling, as it does, some two hundred years after the subjects of Paris took to the streets in 1789, demanding themselves to

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405 Huggan 7.
406 I do not mean to imply here that Urry uses the same concepts of periodization which I employ, e.g. the Sattelzeit, however, in spite of this, his comparative comments on diachronic change in citizenship struggles are relevant to the current analysis.
be citizens.¹⁰⁷ Thus one can see a link between the two time periods as significant for social change, through the events of the French Revolution in former times, and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the USSR, and the pro-liberal democracy uprising in China, in the contemporary period. Urry then goes on to locate one of the major differences in the nature of the transition to the contemporary period in 1989. In the Sattelzeit, the development of literacy and the proliferation of reading material resulted in the spread of knowledge and the education and social ascension of the middle classes. In the contemporary period, Urry notes, it is new media and communications technologies which facilitate a new immediate and far-reaching outlook on world events:

One central feature [of the period around 1989] […] was the sense that people had that they were living in a global village, as the struggles for citizenship themselves were brought instantaneously and ‘live’ into their homes wherever they were located. The struggles for citizenship, most strikingly seen in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the crushing of the Pro-Democracy movement in China, were increasingly globalised, instantaneously transmitted through the global media communication systems.¹⁰⁸

Urry’s statement alludes to a seemingly paradoxical change of perspective in the late twentieth century, that is, “both a progressive shrinking of the world and its simultaneous enlargement as people became aware of events in ever more distant parts of the world.”¹⁰⁹

For people in the contemporary period with access to these technologies, the overcoming and reduction of distance and time is no longer a challenge, thanks to developments in transport and communication technologies. Our view is thus extended to the world and to seeing those events happening in it as they happen.

David Harvey, in his 1989 book, *The Condition of Post Modernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*,¹¹⁰ refers to this process as “time-space compression”, which he explains as follows:

I mean to signal by the term processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves.

¹⁰⁸ Urry 1999, 311.
[...] As space appears to shrink to a ‘global village’ of telecommunications and a ‘spaceship earth’ of economic and ecological interdependencies [...] to the point where present is all there is [...] so we have to learn to cope with an overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds.\footnote{Harvey 240, author’s emphasis.} In the *Sattelzeit*, travellers’ world views are extended by their increased mobility. For example, Herder, while at sea, perceives himself to be in a nationless space; Forster re-thinks culture in terms of humanitarian principles, after travelling the equivalent of encircling the globe three times. In contemporary times, one could argue, the traveller’s perspective is (technologically) enabled to go from beyond nations to beyond the earth itself. In this way, concepts such as the *global village* and *spaceship earth*, which are theorised in the 1960s primarily in an anticipatory sense, are now mobilised in the contemporary period in which new technologies work to shrink time and space.\footnote{In reference to the use of the term “global village”, see Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 1967). In reference to the use of the term “spaceship earth” see Kenneth Boulding, “The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth,” *Environmental Quality in a Growing Economy*, ed. H Jarrett (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1966), 3-14.} On the one hand, this has the consequence of opening up opportunities for new ways of conceiving of the world. However, as Harvey points out above, the “overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds” exposes the traveller to so much potential that “present is all there is.” In some cases, one almost loses the ability to anticipate what will happen or be possible next, because it seems as though this *next* or the future is already here. For example, the freedom of East Germans to be mobile following the Fall of the Wall is not necessarily as liberating as might first be projected and brings with it its own set of complexities and often unmet expectations. Sarotte succinctly puts it: “[o]n November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall opened and the world changed.”\footnote{Mary Elise Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 1.} Further, McFalls comments in general terms on the swift and confusing nature of German reunification in 1990: “German unification on 3 October 1990 came with confusing speed. Even just a year before, no one had expected it, and since then
The period around 1989 can thus be seen as the time of transition in which an intensified, mobilised experience extends one’s view across the earth and beyond, while at the same time potentially reducing one’s perspective to dealing with principally the present moment. International relations expert, Mary Elise Sarotte, notes of this period: “[t]here are unique periods in history when a single year witnesses the total transformation of international relations. The year 1989 was one such crucial watershed.”

Fukuyama and Huntington: History Ends and Civilizations Clash?

Undoubtedly, then, the historical events of the period around 1989 have had major repercussions for nations around the world. Still, many analyses of this time, while viewing it at a turning point, fail to account for the mobilisation aspect of this large-scale socio-political transformation, that is, they lack consideration of the movement of cultures. One outcome of this line of thinking is that the transition from restrictive communist policies to more transparent liberal policies based on democratic ideals is viewed as a universal linear process, disengaged from individual human experience. This is where a critical mobilities perspective can contribute insights by re-emphasising the impact of travel and mobility.

From this viewpoint one can reconsider Francis Fukuyama’s well-known thesis entitled “The End of History,” written in the summer of 1989, for the journal The National Interest. In this article, Fukuyama puts forward the argument that “[w]hat we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is the endpoint of man’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human

415 Sarotte book cover.
government.” At the time of publication Fukuyama’s article sparked major controversy. He addressed his critics in the introduction to his 1992 text *The End of History and the Last Man Standing* as follows: “Many people were confused with my use of the word “history” […], and yet what I suggested had come to an end was not the occurrence of events, but […] history understood as a single coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experiences of all peoples in all times.” One of Fukuyama’s strongest challengers, the literary theorist Terry Eagleton, did not accept this defence. Eagleton took particular issue with the thought process behind Fukuyama’s concept of the universalization of Western liberal democracy. Eagleton writes:

> [U]niversality doesn’t exist at present in any positive, as opposed to merely descriptive or ideological sense. Not everyone, as yet, enjoys freedom, happiness and justice. Part of what prevents this from coming about is precisely the false universalism which holds that it can be achieved by extending the values and liberties of a particular sector of humankind, roughly speaking Western Man, to the entire globe. The myth of the ‘end of history’ is the complacent belief that this has either now happened or is well on the way to happening.

Indeed, how can one possibly take into account, to use Fukuyama’s own words, “the experiences of all peoples in all times?”

On first inspection, Samuel P. Huntington’s essay “The Clash of Civilizations?” of 1993, which he wrote in response to Fukuyama’s article “The End of History?,” appears to provide a viable alternative. Huntington emphasises the importance of culture in his take on the world, post-Cold War:

> It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily individual or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations.

Huntington’s theory has been criticised for taking a fixed view of culture – put simply, he looks at the world as though there were almost no travel taking place. For example, he states: “civilization is a cultural entity […] The culture of a village in Southern Italy may be

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419 Huntington 1993, 22.
different from that of a village in northern Italy, but both will share in a common Italian culture that distinguishes them from German villages.”


Said, who describes himself as, “someone who has lived within the two cultures [Arabic and North American] all my life”, argues against the fixity of Huntington’s approach in the following:

Huntington is an ideologist, someone who wants to make “civilizations” and “identities” into what they are not: shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and counter-currents that animate human history, and that over centuries have made it possible for that history not only to contain wars of religion and imperial conquest but also to be one of exchange, cross-fertilization and sharing.

Here, Said gets to some of the core issues of a cultural mobilities analysis of travel in the wake of the turning point of 1989. Generally, people have been not shut down or sealed off, as Huntington tries to make them, but in fact opened up and (over-)exposed to mobility, to an even greater extent than since during the time of the Sattelzeit. The Fall of the Berlin Wall is an ideal illustration of this point. In a similar vein, Huntington’s approach treats stability as normal, almost universal, and thus it does not allow for a perspective on dwelling as a form of political resistance or, conversely, as a form of political containment. A comparison might be made between Heidegger’s idealised notion of dwelling places and Huntington’s idealised notion of civilisations. The researcher must exercise caution not to treat the process of the intensification of mobilities over time in a Fukuyamian way, as linear, universal or

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420 Huntington 1993, 24.
424 I use the qualifying term almost here with regard to Huntington’s concept of “civilizations”, because he does acknowledge people’s ability to change their cultural identification, as indicated in the following quotation: “People can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the composition and boundaries of civilizations change”, 1993, 24. However, I would still argue that Huntington comes from a position condoning dwelling as an ideal state. He uses the following example of a “resident”: “A resident of Rome may define himself with varying degrees of intensity as a Roman, an Italian, a Catholic, a Christian, a European, a Westerner”, 1993, 24.
affecting “all peoples in all times” to the same degree. Sheller and Urry underscore this argument in the “New Mobilities Paradigm”:

[D]iverse yet intersecting mobilities have many consequences for different peoples and places that are located in the fast and slow lanes across the globe. There are new places and technologies that enhance the mobility of some peoples and places and heighten the immobility of others, especially as they try to cross borders.\textsuperscript{425}

Huntington’s and Fukuyama’s arguments tend to overlook this point. This is exposed in a comparative perspective of the terminology they use to describe global society. Rather than speaking of cultural movement in terms of “the myriad of currents and counter-currents” (Said) or the “fast and slow lanes across the globe” (Sheller and Urry), Huntington speaks of “[t]he fault lines between civilizations [that] will be the battle lines of the future”, and adds, “while the lines […] are seldom sharp, they are real.”\textsuperscript{426} In a similar vein, Fukuyama writes: “[t]he state that emerges at the end of history is liberal insofar as it recognizes and protects through a system of law man’s universal right to freedom.”\textsuperscript{427} Said, summarises the counterargument when he contends: “it is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities [e.g. more mobile and less mobile], […] than to wander off in search of vast abstractions that may give momentary satisfaction but little self-knowledge or informed analysis.”\textsuperscript{428}

\textit{Travel Texts and the Wende Experience}

This assertion can be contextualised by looking at those travel texts which deal with the experiences of a seemingly “powerless community”, the citizens of East Germany before the Fall of the Wall. This provides a context for the analysis of the first two travel texts in the following section, Erich Loest’s \textit{Zwiebelmuster} and Delius’s \textit{Der Spaziergang von Rostock}

\textsuperscript{425} Sheller and Urry 207. Chambers make a similar comment while taking a comparative look at the cities of London and Lagos: “They may share certain goods, habits, styles and languages, […] but also remain sharply differentiated in economic, historical and cultural terms. Nevertheless, such differences are not always and inevitably instances of division and barriers. They can also act as hinges that serve both to close and open doors in increasing global traffic” Iain Chambers, \textit{Migrancy, Culture, Identity} (London: Routledge, 1994), 2.

\textsuperscript{426} Huntington 1993, 22; 24.

\textsuperscript{427} Fukuyama 2006, 108.

\textsuperscript{428} Said 2001, 13.
nach Syrakus. In his article “Die Wende in Deutschland im Spiegel der Zeitgenössischen Deutschen Literatur” Hans-Georg Soldat, claims that the main reason why so many German writers choose to engage in this transitional period as the theme of their work is because “sie von dieser Wende existentiell betroffen wurden.”\footnote{Hans-Georg Soldat, "Die Wende in Deutschland im Spiegel der zeitgenössischen deutschen Literatur," \textit{German Life and Letters} 50.2 (1997): 133-54, 133.} Generally speaking, the enforcement of 28 years of immobility in East Germany and the sudden overnight Fall of the Wall undeniably had far-reaching consequences for the lives of all East and some West Germans and provided ample material for literary production. However, at the same time, to avoid a universalist approach, one must also consider that each person’s particular memory of this period of transition is individually defined by their own personal experience and this perceived cultural memory. Soldat explains:

Ein genauerer Blick zeigt weiter, daß die Wende meist nicht als Ereignis wahrgenommen oder zumindest dargestellt wird, das genau lokaliert oder präzise zeitlich definiert werden kann. Was Wende ist, hat in der Literatur eine enorme Spanne; mir scheint die Schlußfolgerung erlaubt, daß Wende eher als Prozeß denn als etwas Punktuelles empfunden wird.\footnote{Soldat 133-4.}

One may argue that an analysis of travel texts from a mobilities perspective is one of the most productive ways in which to shed light on these processes of Wende experience. Such an approach is borne out by Steinecke’s contention: “Was wir von der Geschichte der untergehenden DDR wissen, sagen uns die Protokolle, die Akten, die Geschichtsbücher; was die Menschen dachten und fühlten, wovon sie träumten, wovor sie fürchten, das zeigt uns die Literatur.”\footnote{Steinecke 217.} By looking at two extreme cases of life in the GDR as conveyed by Loest and Delius, one of a writer’s pronounced immobility and the other of a waiter’s exceptional travel experience, I wish to achieve two aims. First, I provide a nuanced perspective on two unique individual stories, but at the same time I hope to draw out some general connecting ideas about the challenges people faced in this walled-in social situation. Second, I intend to give
some explanations as to why the 1980s was a period of discontent, a transitional period which led to a major shift. This new paradigm that emerged may be termed the *new mobilities*.

4.5 Travel Text Analysis: Turning Point Narratives

4.5.1 Erich Loest’s *Zwiebelmuster* (1985)

*Restrictions On Travel and Writing*

The life of writer Erich Loest was conditioned by a tension between his desire to write freely and the restrictions placed on both the content of his work and on his freedom of movement by the government of the German Democratic Republic. His experience is similar to that of many writers, intellectuals and artists living in East Germany before the Fall of the Wall who struggled with travel restrictions (vis-à-vis State-imposed exile) and strict censorship regulations. Heike Wolter, an expert on tourism in the GDR, comments on Loest’s travel text *Zwiebelmuster* and his focus on the idea of travel and loss of freedom: “Schließlich war Reisen auch ein Thema, das sich an keinem bestimmten Ziel festmachen musste. Es konnte auch für das Gefühl einer Freiheit stehen, die in der DDR verwehrt wurde. So ist bespielsweise Erich Loests Roman *Zwiebelmuster* zu verstehen.”

Whereas at first glance it may seem erroneous to call a novel in which the protagonist never actually manages to travel a travel text, the following analysis will show that this wording is justified, as imaginative travel and *Fernweh* were of great significance to the lives of people in the GDR. Kawohl expands on this point in the following:

> Der Roman dreht sich zwar um eine Reise, diese wird aber nie angetreten. Gerade das macht ihn für die Thematik ‘Reisen in der DDR’ so interessant, da sich viele West-Reisen nur im Kopf abspielen konnten und jeder DDR-Bürger sicher einer Anzahl Reisen mehr durchdacht und geplant als wirklich durchgeführt hat.”

432 Heike Wolter, *Ich harre aus dem Land und geh, ihm fremd*: Die Geschichte des Tourismus in der DDR (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2009), 344.

Further, although Loest was living in the West by the time Zwiebelmuster was published, one can see from the details of his life experience how he was so convincingly able to convey “die Sicht ‘von innen’”, or an insider’s perspective.\(^{434}\)

Loest’s professional writing career began in 1947, aged 21, when he was employed as a journalist for the Leipziger Volkszeitung. From 1950, he worked as a freelance writer and student of literature. During this time he struggled to write within the limits of strict censorship.\(^{435}\) This was a precarious time for writers and performers who had to juggle the need to survive financially with the inner drive to express their opinions, feelings and socio-political criticisms through their work. Although not directly connected to Loest, the case of Wolf Biermann is a well-documented example of one co-eval who was punished for openly criticising the State through his song lyrics and poetry.\(^{436}\) Biermann was served the punishment of Ausbürgerung or deprivation of citizenship. He was stripped of his GDR citizenship while on tour in West Germany in 1976. Biermann’s expatriation was strongly opposed in a letter to Erich Honecker signed by 12 prominent writers as well as being condemned by international media.\(^{437}\) It also caused a spike in the number of GDR writers who went to West Germany, as referred to in Zwiebelmuster: “Tröpfelnd in den fünfziger Jahren, fast versiegend nach dem Mauerbau, dann diese Springflut nach 1976” (ZM 111).

\(^{434}\) Wolter 344.
\(^{436}\) See Birgit Adolf, “Wolf Biermann: Germany’s Controversial Coeval,” Deutsche Welle, 16 Nov. 2006, <http://www.dw.de/wolf-biermann-germanys-controversial-coeval/a-2240251>. Wolter points out that there were a variety of responses to the tightening up of censorship and artistic freedom, in particular, following Biermann’s expatriation: “Zahlreiche Personen siedelten in die Bundesrepublik über. Andere schrieben weiter, angepasst und die Bedingungen, die der Staat stellte (Zensur und Selbstzensur). […] Einige […] bewegten sich in einer subversive Literaturszene”, 337.
\(^{437}\) Mitchell notes that although Wolf Biermann’s expatriation from East Germany produced a large-scale media reaction Loest was not directly involved: “Twelve prominent writers addressed a petition to Erich Honecker, sending copies not only to Neues Deutschland but also to a French news agency, thus ensuring that the affair found its way into the Western media. Dozens of artists added their voices to the protest, and a subsequent flurry of Party meetings led to expulsions from the Party ranks as well as a great deal of mud-slinging, accusations, and counter-charges. As for Loest, he was relieved to be well out of it in Leipzig. He had never met Biermann, and no-one came to ask him to take a stand on one side or other of the argument”, Ian Mitchell, “Erich Loest and the ‘Fourth Censor,” East Central Europe 14-15 (1987): 381-424, 395.
Loest himself similarly suffered under the regime. In 1957, he was sentenced to seven and a half years’ imprisonment for supposedly forming a counter-revolutionary group which held discussions about destalinisation.\(^{438}\) During this period of incarceration, Loest was also sentenced to a *Schreibverbot*. He discusses his futile efforts to protest this punishment in his autobiography in which he refers to himself in the third person: “jedes Jahr im Sommer stellte er beim Generalstaatsanwalt den Antrag auf Schreibgenehmigung, wobei er nicht die geringste Hoffnung hatte.”\(^{439}\)

**Emotionally Consuming Fernweh**

However, Loest’s *Schreibverbot* did not curb his enthusiasm for writing: on his release from prison in 1964, Loest wrote “Leipzig” as his place of release and “Schriftsteller” for his intended occupation.\(^{440}\) Immediately he started writing again: “Unbändig freute er sich aufs Schreiben, und einen Tag später setzte er sich wirklich früh um fünf an die Tasten.”\(^{441}\)

Accompanying Loest’s return to literary production was a strong desire to travel in the years after his release from jail. Perhaps for Loest, returning to an East German society in which literary censorship and travel restrictions still existed, was in one sense merely a slightly different, milder form of imprisonment. Mitchell comments on the link between this period in Loest’s life and the material of his novel *Zwiebelmuster*:

> For years, he [Loest] had been trying to find convincing arguments to back his repeated applications for a trip to West Germany, and always to no avail. Now, out of the blue, word came from Berlin that perhaps it would be possible for him to travel to Frankfurt on January 23 [1976], although the decision would be reached only on that day. The whole agonising bureaucratic procedure involved in this sort of thing is vividly portrayed in Loest’s novel, *Zwiebelmuster*.\(^{442}\)

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\(^{438}\) This is an experience he conveys in *Zwiebelmuster* through the fictional character of writer Sigmar Hand, ZM 111.

\(^{439}\) Erich Loest, *Durch die Erde ein Riss: Ein Lebenslauf* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe Verlag, 1981), 400. Loest refers to himself in the third person throughout his autobiography. Mitchell contends that this tactic gives Loest “the opportunity to examine critically, even with irony, his own actions and reactions”, 385.

\(^{440}\) Loest 412. Ironically, once Loest was “freely” living in the West, he had similar feelings of homesickness for Leipzig as he did when he was in prison. On this point, Mitchell writes: “That Loest felt acutely the loss of his beloved Leipzig emerges distinctly from his output since 1981,” 422.

\(^{441}\) Loest 414.

\(^{442}\) Mitchell 392. Mitchell adds: “In contrast to the central figure of that work, Loest did manage to undertake the trip, on the 24th, for five days”, 392.
With this in mind, one can make connections between Loest’s life experience and the main character of his travel text *Zwiebelmuster*, Hans-Georg Haas. Haas is an East German historian and writer who is married and has two grown up children. Throughout the narrative Haas becomes increasingly consumed by his *Fernweh*, his need to travel beyond the GDR border. He does not necessarily want to leave East Germany for good; he is simply overcome by the desire to somehow get out, and to travel to somewhere in the West. Haas is continuously experimenting with different ways to do so within an extremely limited legal framework: “Er wollte eine Schiffsreise ins westliche Ausland machen, da konnte man nicht noch Sonderwünsche einbringen” (ZM 11). In order to try and gain permission to travel, Haas, like Loest, makes several applications. Haas puts together various proposals for publications requiring offshore research, and thus a travel visa for himself and his wife, that he thinks will be accepted by the State: “Er hatte einen Vorschlag nachgereicht “Über die Nationalbildung nach der Ablösung der Kolonialherrschaft” […] Als er sich aufs Mittelmeer umstellen mußte, wollte er den Aufstand der Rifkabylen in den zwanziger Jahren als Thema anbieten” (ZM 11). It seems that Haas does not consider the possibility of committing *Republikflucht* – he finds the idea of the large number of GDR writers who have defected to the West “erschreckend” (ZM 111), and never takes part in any form of public protest: “er hatte niemals Opposition getrieben, hatte keine Unterschrift auf ein Papier gesetzt, […] hatte sich an keine Rampe und auf keine Barrikade gestellt” (ZM 112). He is, however, infatuated with the elsewhere of the West in general and he is sure that his writing skills will somehow get him there.

*Imprisoned at Home*

Günter Kunert, a writer who left the GDR in 1979, three years after he signed the petition against Wolf Biermann’s *Ausbürgerung*, explains the link Loest makes between emotional *Fernweh* and physical/geographical imprisonment: “Wem das Hinausreisen aus dem eigenen
Lande verwehrt wird, für den verwandelt sich die nie erblickte Welt in ein Sehnsuchtsziel, das ihn nicht zur Ruhe kommen läßt.\textsuperscript{443} Kunert then goes on to place the frustrations of the imprisoned individual within the context of a fallible political system that falsely assumes its citizens are contentedly immobile:

\begin{quote}
Es gehört zu den gängigen Irrtümern anzunehmen, Menschen gewöhnten sich daran, die Existenz einer Zimmerpflanze zu führen. Dafür sind wir nicht geschaffen, auch wenn wir irgendwo fest verwurzelt scheinen. […] Heimat. Sie nicht verlassen zu dürfen, kurzfristig oder auf Dauer, verändert sie zur Un-Heimat, zum Unheimatlichen bis zum Ungemütlichen und Unheimlichen hin. Dem in sie Eingesperrten entfremdet sie sich, obwohl sie um ihn umgibt. Ein psycho-pathologischer Vorgang, den Millionen Menschen nur zu genau kennen und von dem auch Erich Loests Reise-Texte auf ihre Weise Zeugnis ablegen.\textsuperscript{444}
\end{quote}

Kunert indicates that the claustrophobic feeling of not being able to leave, which increases over time, renders comfortable dwelling impossible as, rephrasing the terms above, “Menschen” become “Eingesperrten”, and the place once thought of as “Heimat” becomes the inescapable “Unheimatlichen.” Drawing on writer Peter Wulkau’s comment above, one could say that for those people who were not able to suppress the contradiction that they could never hope to visit the places they read about in the \textit{Sattelzeit} travel texts they were given at school, the GDR was experienced as a kind of immobile place. The narrator in \textit{Zwiebelmuster} says, “Zweiundzwanzig Jahre stand die Mauer und würde halten bis in alle Ewigkeit, zumindest, solange sie lebten”, and it is conceivable that at the time of writing, Loest himself believed this (ZM 36). Kunert implies here that the frustration of being locked within one’s own country, a sensation that Loest is able to put across through the character of Haas, is something that was felt by millions of people. Similarly, Wolter comments with reference to \textit{Zwiebelmuster}, “[z]ahlreiche Details aus dem Werk machen das Gefühl des Eingesperrtseins und des Fernwehs von Hans-Georg Haas nachvollziehbar.”\textsuperscript{445} More

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{443} Günter Kunert, "Einführung," \textit{Erich Loest, Saison in Key West: Reisebilder} (Albert Knaus Verlag, 1986), 7-12, 7.
\item\textsuperscript{444} Kunert 7.
\item\textsuperscript{445} Wolter 345.
\end{footnotes}
generally, Brandt argues, “Loest gelingt es, die Summe nicht nur der direkten, auch indirekten Einflüsse zu erfassen, die im Leben der Menschen in der DDR wirken.”

**Negotiating Family and the Desire to Travel**

At the same time, it is apparent that in *Zwiebelmuster* Loest implicitly emphasises the point that East Germans were affected to different degrees by this feeling of wanting to have the freedom to travel. The experience of entrapment or enforced immobility, though common, was not uniform. Loest brings this to light by demonstrating the ways in which Haas’s total absorption in his *Fernweh* – his ever-changing travel destination wish-list and his disappointment, when his visa applications and writing proposals are constantly rejected – both differs from and affects the way in which he relates to family members and friends. Haas’s daughter, Marion, a student, and his wife, Kläre, the director of a department store, know that to speak positively of Haas’s chances of travel lifts his mood and builds solidarity with him. One banal, though telling, example of this occurs when the three of them are having dinner. Prior to the meal, the family has been discussing potential travel destinations. The atmosphere is convivial: “Sie hatten […] an diesem Abend alles richtig gemacht, fand er [Haas] jetzt, es war genau die Mischung von Ernst und Herzlichkeit und Fröhlichkeit, die angebracht war” (ZM 12). Marion makes the most of this opportunity to raise a toast: “Prost, Vätcherchen. Die Hauptsache ist, du fährst überhaupt! *Ihr* fahrt überhaupt” (ZM 12). At another point in the narrative, Kläre attempts to connect with her husband by making him a promise she cannot keep: she reassures him that his proposed journey will be approved. Kläre says, “ich bin fest davon überzeugt, daß es mit der Schiffsreise etwas wird” (ZM 54). She goes on to underscore her certainty, appealing to his writerly imagination with a vivid visual description of the exotic nature they will encounter on their journey together: “Ich seh den Felsen von Gibraltar ganz genau. Jeden Affen drauf einzeln” (ZM 54). Haas is sexually

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446 Cited in Kawohl 64.
stimulated by his wife’s presence at this point. Hence there is a direct association between the promise of Haas’s dream to travel being realised through the words of his wife and his sexual desire for her. Through the dynamics of Haas’s and Kläre’s relationship, Loest is able to demonstrate that in the GDR a person who attempted to go beyond the country’s borders, whether by legal means or otherwise, inevitably ended up affecting those around them, even if those others were not so intent on escape.

Kläre often takes a subservient role, for fear of losing Haas – she fears that Haas’s *Fernweh* could tear them apart: “Beim Griechenlandprojekt würde sie selbst draußen bleiben. […] Man fragte sich, ob sich Hans-Georg vielleicht auch auf andere Frauen freute” (ZM 53).

While Haas constantly talks to everyone around him about his travel plans, Kläre conceals from him her less ambitious ideal travel experience. In contrast to the exotic nature of Gibraltar she speaks of, inwardly her dream trip away involves going to unrestricted regions in the Soviet States. This is revealed in a daydream which she has while at work:


This statement exposes three main points about Kläre’s private thoughts that remain largely unnoticed by or undeclared to, Haas: first, one could say that she is not emotionally connected to the idea of movement (“Bewegung, die sie nicht berührte”); second, that she is not particularly troubled by the travel restrictions placed on normal local people and would be content simply travelling to the permitted Soviet Bloc destinations (“die dem hiesigen Normalmenschen möglich war”); and, third, that she would happily spend her retirement quietly as an unimposing writer’s wife (“[e]ine hilfreiche, sich nicht in den Vordergrund drängende Schriftstellerinfrau”). In short, she is covertly satisfied with dwelling-life in the run-of-the-mill GDR but must live out Haas’s seemingly unrealisable dreams of mobility in
order to stay connected to him physically and emotionally. “Dabei geht es gar nicht um mich”, she confesses, to Dr. Schnippchen, the Secretary for Culture, “[a]ber für Hans-Georg wird es zum Problem der Selbstachtung” (ZM 42).

**The Porcelain Metaphor**

The title *Zwiebelmuster*, refers to a perhaps unexpected metaphor which Loest draws on throughout the text. *Zwiebelmuster* known in English as *blue onion*, is a porcelain design pattern made in the East German Meissen factory since 1739. Broadly speaking, at a societal level, *Zwiebelmuster* serves as a symbol of East German dwelling-life which is characterised by both outward superficiality and inward fragility. This double-edged image is reinforced by the symbol of the Meissen factory, two crossed swords: Haas refers to “das gute Schwerter-Porzellan” (ZM 30). More specifically, *Zwiebelmuster* (re-)emphasises the differences between Kläre’s acceptance of enforced dwelling-life and Haas’s preoccupation with getting out of the GDR. In the former German Democratic Republic, the Meißen porcelain factory was a highly-regarded *V.E.B. Volkseigener Betrieb*, i.e. nationally owned enterprise, and owning a set of *Zwiebelmuster* porcelain was a traditional sign of a wealth or distinction.  

In the opening lines of the novel the reader sees that Kläre is particularly fond of her *Zwiebelmuster* collection:

> Der Tisch war so, wie Kläre Haas ihn gewünscht hatte: Zwiebelmuster, Meißen, versetzte sie jedesmal in Feierlichkeit, von der sie glaubte, sie rührte nicht vom Wert jeder Suppentasse oder jeden Tellers her, sondern von der Schönheit und dem Material. […] Meißner Porzellan lag anders in der Hand. (ZM 5)

To Kläre, *Zwiebelmuster* evokes feelings of joy, beauty and privilege. However, from a different perspective, i.e. that of the omnipresent reader who is privy to the thoughts of all

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447 Mitchell notes that Loest himself had extensive dealings with the Ministry of Culture who held the power to grant or withhold permission to print works, 385.
449 This stands in direct opposition to her emotional detachment to a scene of movement, as mentioned above.
characters and details of the historical context in which the novel is based, *Zwiebelmuster* porcelain simultaneously evokes images of fragility. If one relates this metaphor to GDR society it is clear that despite the regime’s outward image of success, inwardly many people from unrealisable *Fernweh*, for example, as Haas does in the novel, and were to varying extents psychologically broken. For Haas, *Zwiebelmuster* porcelain has predominantly negative connotations. This is made apparent during a scene in which he eats at the home of his friend, Sonja Schulze:


**Relationships with Women and the Greatest Privilege**

*Zwiebelmuster* thus reminds Haas of the differences between two of the women closest to him in his life, Kläre and Sonja. Kläre’s desire to collect Meissen porcelain indicates a fixation on keeping up with appearances and pleasing others, as also demonstrated by her ongoing act of support of Haas’s travel applications. Sonja’s personality is very different (“hier wurde kein Aufwand getrieben” cited above) and Haas finds this attractive (“[d]as Gegenteil von Zwiebelmuster” cited above). The narrator explains, “[d]er Reiz, der für Haas von ihr ausging, war, daß bei ihr so vieles offensichtlich war” (ZM 31).

Perhaps unconsciously, Haas associates Sonja’s easy-going and open personality with the freedom of travelling beyond the Wall, whereas he links Kläre to the repressed but outwardly socially-acceptable immobile place in which he is stuck. The following example would support this contention. Haas is offered the job of writing a book about the history and production of Meissen porcelain (ZM 29). Kläre encourages him to take up this opportunity because it may enable him to acquire some valuable *Zwiebelmuster* pieces, because, she reasons, “den Schriftsteller,  

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450 It is revealed that Haas and Sonja spontaneously kissed three years earlier: “beim Spazierengehen und ohne Vorbereitung und Vorankündigung […] Sie waren beide überrascht gewesen von der Plötzlichkeit und noch mehr von dem Gefühl von Wärme füreinander”, ZM 30.
der da über Meißner schrieb, könne man ja nicht völlig vom Erwerb der von ihm gerühmten Schätze ausschließen” (ZM 29). Haas takes his wife’s suggestion into consideration: “Da bliebe er im Lande Sachsen und näherte sich redlich – warum in die Ferne schweifen, wo das gute Schwerte-Porzellan so nahe lag?” (ZM 30). However, the most telling part of this sentence is the question mark. It indicates that while Haas temporarily considers the offer of a well-paid job that would afford him the chance of a financially secure dwelling-life, ultimately, he doubts that this is what he wants. One of the greatest signs of privilege the GDR has to offer from Kläre’s point of view is Meissen porcelain. For Haas, by contrast, “das größte Privileg […], das dieser Staat zu vergeben hat […], [ist] eine Westreise” (ZM 32-33).

The Problems of a Non-travelling Writer

Another major focus for Loest in Zwiebelmuster is illuminating the everyday problems of the writer who struggles to feel significant in a society which condones conformity and dwelling and represses creativity and mobility.451 In Zwiebelmuster, there are two explicit illustrations which depict the impact that not being able to travel has on, first, Hans-Georg Haas’s ability to write, and, second, his sense of self-worth at a personal and professional level. He struggles to set narratives in foreign locations because he cannot travel abroad to do research. When, for example, Haas attempts to develop the story of a man called Nikos in Greece, he quickly runs into difficulties because he lacks knowledge of particular linguistic details of the imagined setting:

Haas drehte den Bogen hoch, las, das sollte in Athen spielen – wie war das mit diesem Wort: Taverne? Hieß das so in Griechenland oder Italien oder Spanien? Das war es wieder, so ein Wort mußte sich wie selbstverständlich erfinden, er mußte in einem griechischen Fischerdorf vor einer Hafenkneipe sitzen, den Block vor sich, mußte schreiben, der Wirt mußte ein Glas vor ihn hinstellen, womit? (ZM 56-57)452

451 As Peter Wulkau says above, GDR citizens typically had to wait ten to twelve years to for a car and travel beyond the GDR borders was strictly controlled through state-approved travel agents.
452 Haas tries asking a friend who is well-travelled if she can help him with these dilemmas, but this tactic does not work as she has not been to Greece.
Similarly, Haas is perplexed when it comes to cultural references or knowledge of common local practices: “Was werden sie trinken auf einer griechischen Gefängnisinsel? Essigwasser. Aber vielleicht ist Essig dort teurer als Wein? Wein nun doch nicht. Also Wasser” (ZM 59).

For Haas, it is as though the physical restrictions placed on him in terms of not being able to cross the border lead to mental imprisonment – he cannot even go places in his imagination. It is almost as if this intense frustration drives him in a downward spiral within himself, searching to find something he can possibly write that excites or interests him, but being walled off at every turn or new thought. The narrative continues:

Auf einer kleinen Brücke […] kam ihm [Haas] eine Idee, einen Roman im Roman zu schreiben, wie ein Schriftsteller, also er, sich, um Reisen zu erzwingen, an einem exotischen Stoff versuchte, die Nikos-Geschichte in die Haas-Geschichte verpackt, und am Ende scheitern beide. Das wäre literarisch reizvoll und natürlich bei keinem DDR-Verlag unterzubringen, da brauchte das Ministerium gar nicht erst einzugreifen, so etwas strandete schon auf jedem Verlagstisch. (ZM 61)

This passage can be understood from three main perspectives, namely, that of the protagonist, of the author and of the reader. It reveals perplexing levels of embedding – stories within stories and realities within realities. First there is Haas, the GDR writer, who imagines a story about a GDR writer, who is writing a story about a Greek protagonist in order to try and gain a permit to travel. For him, the only possible outcome foreseeable is complete collapse (“scheitern” cited above). Then there is Erich Loest, the writer who is writing this novel about a writer: “die Loest-Geschichte in die Haas-Geschichte verpackt”, one might say, a novel he knows would never have been published by a GDR publishing company. In this way, this passage gets to the heart of Loest’s own frustrations as a censored, physically and mentally imprisoned writer. Finally, there is the perspective of the reader, who presumably sympathises with the frustrations of Haas at not being able to write, at having every application to travel turned down at the last minute, and, over the course of the text, giving up hope that his dream to travel will ever eventuate.

453 Loest eventually opened his own publishing company which relocated to Leipzig in 1989.
The second main example which Loest provides to demonstrate the frustration felt by Haas as an under acknowledged East German writer has to do with the power of mobility to stratify society. One of the apparent paradoxes of im/mobility in East Germany is that while writers were part of a social class sometimes referred to as the *intelligentsia* who were significantly affected by censorship and travel restrictions, in general, they were far more likely to gain travel permits than many other citizens of the working class.\(^454\) Assuming this identity as a writer, Haas has a sense of entitlement to travel, however, this is constantly challenged. He is aware of the travels of other East German writers to the West, both legal and illegal, as well as those important writers who are still in the GDR. This is demonstrated when he listens to a show on West German based Radio RIAS Berlin, called “Die, die gingen, die, die bleiben – Schriftsteller in und aus der DDR” (ZM 111).\(^455\) A list of important writers is read out: “Dreiβig Schriftsteller, und er [Haas] nicht darunter” (ZM 113). At another point, Haas is incensed to learn that his acquaintance, the writer Krollhoft, has just been to the West, again.

Krollhoft, der Kinder- und Jugendbuchautor, steuerte bei wie er letztens dreimal in West-Berlin gewesen war, zweimal für einen, einmal für drei Tage: Er hatte angegeben, im Schloß Charlottenburg einen Katalog einsehen zu müssen […] in Wirklichkeit hatte er seiner Schwiegermutter beim Umzug geholfen. […] Anstandslos, betonte er, anstandslos hatten die Grenzer ihm damit geholfen […] Haas saß still dabei und beobachtete, wie in ihm der Neid wuchs, dieser fressende, böse Neid auf jemanden, der das größte Privileg genoß, das dieser Staat zu vergeben hatte, eine Westreise. (ZM 32-33)

Haas is jealous at the ease with which Krollhoft is able to achieve the one thing he cannot (“anstandslos, betonte er”). To Haas, travel to the West is the greatest privilege that can be bestowed on an East German citizen (“das größte Privileg […] eine Westreise”), yet Krollhoft seems to travel with no struggle whatsoever. Krollhoft enflames Haas’s jealousy by treating this great privilege with indifference; he does not even utilise the travel opportunity

\(^454\) One could of course offer the counter-argument that their struggle was simply more visible than other social groups in the representations of it that emerged following the Fall of the Wall or when they shifted to the West.

\(^455\) RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), is a radio station founded by the United States of America in Berlin in on 7 February, 1946, *History and Purpose of RIAS Berlin and the RIAS Berlin Comission, 2012*, Rias Berlin Comission, <http://www.riasberlin.de/rias-hist/rius-hist-history.html>. Here Loest implicitly reinforces the point that the East German government could not control the flow of information received from the West via the airwaves.
for research purposes but for a mundane, insignificant task (“[um] seiner Schwiegermutter beim Umzug [zu] [hel]fen”).

**Breakdown**

Kläre is distressed at her husband’s progressively deteriorating mental state after he hears this news; Haas is dismayed at the idea that his immobility renders him a second-class citizen. Kläre appeals to Schnippchen to see what he can do in order to get Haas a travel permit: “Inzwischen sei es ja geradezu üblich geworden, daß Schriftsteller reisten, manche beinahe jedes Jahr. […] und Hans-Georg klebte jedes Jahr für Jahr zu Hause. Verstehst du, daß er sich allmählich als Mann zweiter Klasse vorkommt?” (ZM 42-43). At a later point, Haas temporarily gives up on the idea of becoming a *Reisekader* an East German who is given the right to travel, and accepts his identity as an immobile normal citizen: “Alles vorbei, was hatte er nur geglaubt, hätte doch wissen müssen […] Dr Hans-Georg Haas war kein Reisekader, war nur Normalbürger, nicht geweiht, nicht gesegnet” (ZM 266). In these examples, Loest reveals the perhaps unexpected reality that even in the highly immobile context imposed by the GDR state privileged travellers exist and social stratification based on mobility may, in fact, be even more intensive than in a country which promotes more mobility.  

Concerning Haas’s motivations for travel, Kawohl argues, “[w]enn es ihm auch immer um das Erleben fremder Länder ging, so war seine Hauptmotivation doch vielmehr prinzipieller Art. Es ging ihm darum, endlich zu den Privilegierten des Landes, zum Reisekader, zu gehören” (ZM 70). I would argue that while for Haas there is no specific destination which he remains focused on for long, the object of his *Fernweh* is simply being elsewhere. He is primarily consumed by the idea of travel itself; the way in which his mobility will be perceived as a form of social privilege by others is of lesser importance.

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456 At the same time, in *Zweibelmuster*, I would argue the overall focus is more on the consuming nature of one man’s obsession with travel, and the unnoticed or unintended affects this has on his relationships with others, rather than on the potential effect of mobility as a form of social privilege.
As the narrative of *Zwiebelmuster* continues, Haas’s and Kläre’s situation becomes increasingly desperate. On many occasions they come close to leaving the GDR and just as many times they are turned back at the last minute. This undulating process is emotionally and psychologically draining. Kläre is at the point of desperation, torn between helping Haas finally travel and simultaneously worrying over their waning sanity: “Ist das nicht alles verrückt? Is denn das nicht zum Verrücktwerden?,” she asks (ZM 176). For Haas, the importance of writing and his identity as a writer lose significance as the idea of travel takes over completely. Kläre explains: “Mein Mann meint […] dass es uns nicht in erster Linie um ein Ziel geht, sondern um eine Reise. Um Reise schlechthin” (ZM 176). For example, Haas receives the news that he and Kläre have a place on a ship called *Halberstadt* that is sailing to Hamburg. He is elated: “Ob er etwas über die Reise schreibe, sei letztlich gleichgültig, und wer einmal in den Westen reise, reise auch ein zweites und ein drittes Mal, jetzt sei er Reisekader” (ZM 129). However, when Haas and Kläre are in Rostock ready to board the ship, they must face the distressing reality that they have missed the boat by just two hours. Haas suffers an emotional breakdown; it is as though all his frustrations from the recent period culminate in one unbearable moment:

> Alles was er in den letzten Monaten gedacht und getan hatte, war auf einen Punkt zugelaufen, nun stimmte von einer Minute zur anderen nichts mehr. […] Ein Wunsch drängte durch andere wirre Bewußtseinschichten: sitzen bleiben, die Leute nur anschauen, stundenlang, tagelang. Mochten sie ihn für verrückt halten. […] Sanatorium – bitte. (ZM 172)

Haas cannot stand the mental anguish for much longer and unfortunately this passage presages his wretched fate.

**Auslandstrauma?**

Haas is finally granted a visa for a short trip to Munich. However, he suffers a nervous breakdown, falls and loses consciousness on the platform just as the train is about to leave and never makes it on board (ZM 277). Dr Schnippchen provides an explanation for what happened to Haas:
Die Ärzte sagen, [...] daß ein Auslandstrauma zu vermuten ist. Einmal kam der Gedanke auf, ihn mit seiner Frau nach Bulgarien zur Erholung zu schicken, die Möglichkeit dafür hätte bestanden. Auch die Genossin Haas war der Meinung, so was ihm gegenüber gar nicht zu erwähnen. Begriffe wie Päβ, Visum, Schiffsplatz, sogar wie Fahrkarte und dergleichen sollten vorerst außerhalb seiner Begriffswelt gelassen werden. (ZM 283-284)

This raises the question: who or what causes Haas’s final state?, (”am Ende scheitern”)? Was it the foreign world beyond East Germany, the politicians and rule makers of the GDR, or Haas the individual? From the viewpoint of the doctors and state representatives, it is the dangerous outside world or the reality of finally going into the unknown foreign West that is to blame for Haas’s incapacitation, in a word his “Auslandstrauma.” The approach to supposedly helping Haas recover is typical of GDR censorship practices: remove all words relating to travel from his conceptual world.457 This is a particularly immobilising approach, when one considers Haas’s occupation as a writer.458 Then again, one could argue that the cause of Haas’s breakdown is primarily internal or caused by the State: Haas was so worn down by enforced immobility that in the end he did not have the mental stamina to go through with the journey. This argument is supported by Kunert’s comment above, that trapping people inside their own country, “[e]in psycho-pathologischer Vorgang [ist] den Millionen Menschen nur zu genau kennen” (ZM 7). Then again, perhaps Haas predetermines his own failure, when, earlier in the story, he writes his own personal narrative (“die Haas-Geschichte”) which results in his own downfall (“am Ende scheitern”, both cited above). These various possibilities give rise to the question, if Haas had been allowed to travel to the West at an earlier stage, would such an outcome have been avoided?

Kawohl implies that this kind of ambiguous interpretation is exactly what is intended by Loest, when the reader is led to consider who is at fault in Haas’s breakdown. She comments here with regard to the relationship between the state and the individual in this case:

458 Again, one is reminded here of Loest’s own punishment of a Schriebverbot, in which his words were also taken away from him.

Hence, through his portrayal of common suffering Loest is successfully conveying some of the subtleties, complexities and ambiguities of the East German experience to West German readers.460 Riehl-Heyse, for example, calls Loest “ein gesamtdeutscher Schriftsteller”: “Wir haben ja nicht viele Schriftsteller, die unser Land umständehalber so gut kennengelernt haben, wie Erich Loest das getan hat. […] Leute wie er sind es, die für uns alle den Horizont weiter gemacht haben, der über Bayern zum Beispiel sehr schön weiß-blau ist, aber manchmal eben auch ein wenig eng.461 In spite of this communicative ability, Loest himself, through the words of Haas, implies that, generally speaking, life in the GDR is something that no one will ever completely understand, unless they have experienced it for themselves:

Ob sich den in der Bundesrepublik, in Schweden oder Frankreich jemand überhaupt vorstellen könnte, was hier mit ihm, mit ihnen angestellt wurde, ein ganzes Volk wurde in die Depression getrieben, die Leute rannten sich in die Köpfe ein oder zogen die Köpfe ein schwer zu sagen, was schlimmer war. (ZM 178)

Kunert contends that this principle also applies to East Germans who, unlike Haas, did manage to travel to the West: “Ein Schriftsteller, der die DDR verläßt und in die ihm lange verwehrte Ferne zieht, erlebt sie anders als der niemals von Staats wegen am Reisen Gehinderte.”462 Despite moving to the West, it seems that Loest’s heart remained in the East. His sense of freedom was mixed with feelings of loss and guilt for those he left behind. Accordingly, in 1987, Mitchell describes Loest as:

[A] man conscious not only of his own relief and sense of freedom at being able, these past five years, to travel wherever his fancy has taken him, but also of his sense of loss at the fifty-five years where this, and much more, had been denied him, and, finally, of his sadness for those who shared his isolation from the world but who are unable to share the experiences resulting from this release into it.463

459 Kawohl 71.
460 Kawohl 71.
462 Kunert 8.
463 Mitchell 423.
Thus, perhaps one of the most important things that Loest is able to put across in *Zwiebelmuster* is the great significance of the idea of travel itself in East Germany, of the *Fernweh* or imaginative travel that would never be realised, and of the immeasurable consequences for those who suffered under the regime is enforced immobility.


*A Journey that Begins in 1802 and 1981*

The narrative of Friedrich Christian Delius’s *Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus* spans a period of around eight years. This begins in the summer of 1981, during which the protagonist, waiter Paul Gompitz, (in real life, Klaus Müller), decides to travel from Rostock to Syrakus to follow the 1802 journey of writer Johann Gottfried Seume, a writer from the period which I have designated as the *Sattelzeit*. In another sense, this travel narrative may be considered to actually begin with Seume’s adventure in 1802. Taking this alternative viewpoint into account allows for an analysis of the ways in which the Germany-Syracuse journey is reinterpreted according to various travellers/storytellers, including the authors of the travel texts, within the contemporaneous socio-political context of mobility. Thus, one may compare aspects of the travel experience of Seume, in the *Sattelzeit*, with that of Gompitz, in the period leading up to the *Wende*: both have the same travel destination in mind, yet the circumstances of the time in which they live with regard to mobility means that their journey cannot be carried out in the same way. Similarly, in light of the previous section, one may draw comparisons between Loest’s protagonist Haas with Delius’s main character, Gompitz: both are East German figures who are dissatisfied with the travel restrictions imposed by their state, but their reactions to this enforced immobility contrast starkly.

One may thus regard the travel text *Der Spaziergang von Rostock* as an analytical yardstick for mobilities due to the comparative perspectives it opens up which help to shed
light on the idea of travel in the GDR. Moreover, the narrative of this travel text provides
details that are important to understanding the context of East Germany in the lead up to the
Fall of the Wall. These include the seven years that Gompitz spends meticulously preparing
for his escape from East Germany (while hiding these plans from the Stasi, or secret police),
which takes place in June 1988, his experience abroad, his return to the GDR approximately
four months after his escape, followed by his attempt at reintegration into GDR society.

The Travel Chronicler’s Search for Balance

*Der Spaziergang von Rostock* is the re-telling of a true story. Thus one of the interesting
aspects of the writing process concerns the formation of the traveller’s subjectivity, in
particular, its relationship to the way the author Friedrich Christian Delius views his role in
the representation of the experience of Klaus Müller. Delius, who grew up in West Germany,
finds himself at times having to defend his position as a travel text chronicler. Questions
regarding his legitimacy as an appropriate author for this text arise, one may argue, because
notions of authenticity are often bound up with an idealisation of dwelling-life. What is it that
motivates Delius, an Italian-born West German, to write the story of an East German, in spite
of his background? This seems to be the implied question behind the following *Rheinische
Post* book review extract:464

464 Steinecke writes in regard to Delius’s motivation for writing *Der Spaziergang von Rostock*, “[d]ie Kentniss
der ‘Anregung’ trägt auch wenig zum Verständnis des Werkes bei”, 208. However, I would disagree because analysing the context in which Delius came across this story and the perceptions of others on why he would want to write it reveal some of the varying beliefs about mobility and how this relates to the inception, production and consumption of travel texts.

The authenticity or legitimation of the travel text for this reviewer ironically lies in the
assumption that the writer can deceive the reader into believing that he has led a dwelling-life

unerwahnscheinliche Reise*, 29 Oct. 1995, Friedrich Christian Delius,
in the setting of the novel. Delius refers to this particular challenge and, more generally, to the difficulty of conveying someone else’s story in a fair and convincing manner as: “[d]ie Schwerigkeit, wie ein Chronist die Balance zwischen Nähe und Distanz zu finden, […] dem Aufbrechen der emotionalen Verleugnung weder triumphierend noch bußfertig zu begegnen.”

Steinecke, who provides a detailed analysis of Der Spaziergang nach Rostock, refers to one of the ways in which Delius attempts to achieve this precarious balance between proximity and distance in the very first line of the narrative. The voice of the narrator says: “Heute wäre die Geschichte einfach zu erzählen, ungefähr so” (SvR 7). Steinecke analyses this opening line as follows: “Damit wird […] deutlich, daß es um eine “ungefähre” Erzählung handelt, also nicht um die “protokollarische” Wiedergabe des Gehörten.” In this way, Steinecke suggests, Delius provides a kind of disclaimer to any responsibility for authenticity before the story has even begun. Similarly, in many interviews Delius feels the need to take a defensive, repudiatory stance; he is quick to distance himself from any accusations of flavouring the narrative with his own opinions: “Ich bin ja nicht Gompitz! Ihm hätte ich meine Sicht auf die DDR-Literatur […] doch nicht aufladen können! […] Aus dem, was Klaus Müller mir berichtet hat, sollte einfach ein gutes Buch werden, mehr nicht.”

Delius’s Border-crossing Experiences

Rather than questioning Delius’s authority as a non-East German dweller to compose Müller’s story, one can more productively from a mobilities perspective see how his experience and interests as a traveller and as a writer influence the way in which the text is

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466 In other words, some people believe that one must live in the place (and time) in which they write about in order to represent it realistically. Delius has found this to be the case in West Germany: “Nur im Westen werde ich gefragt: Wie kommen Sie als Westler dazu, so etwas zu schreiben?”, Gespräch mit Friedrich Christian Delius über Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus, 2006, Zum-Wiki, <http://wiki.zum.de/Friedrich_Christian_Delius/Bericht_ueber_seine_Arbeit>.
468 Steinecke 210.
written, or, at the least, initially pique his interest in *Der Spaziergang von Rostock*. The mobilities researcher might reformulate the question mentioned above and ask instead: What is it that motivates Delius, an Italian-born West German, to write the story of an East German, as a result of his mobile background? Like the protagonist Paul Gompitz, Delius does not appear to let geographical borders stop him from travelling during his lifetime. Delius was born in Italy in 1943, but grew up in the former West Germany and he currently lives in Berlin and Rome. Despite being a West German citizen, Delius identifies strongly with the divided Germany and with the experience of crossing the border into East Germany:


Between 1963 and 1989, Delius estimates that visits to his GDR friends meant that he crossed the border “ungefähr dreihundertsechzig mal.”471 As a result of his experience, Delius believes that individual stories rather than general abstract notions are most useful in understanding the period of German history leading up to the Wende: “ich schreibe Geschichten und denke dabei nicht an Begriffe wie “innere Einheit”.”472 He clarifies this point with reference to his own experience in the following interview extract:

[Es] ist ja nicht abstrakt das Ost-West-Thema, sondern mich interessieren Personen, mich interessieren Geschichten. Ich bin seit Anfang der 60er Jahre in Westberlin, habe aber immer von Anfang an eigentlich Freunde aus der anderen Seite der Mauer gehabt. Das war mir immer selbstverständlich, auch die Menschen, die auf der anderen Seite lebten, genauer kennen zu lernen und deren Dinge zu verstehen. […] Ich sehe es einfach als Leute, die in verschiedenen Gesellschaften aufgewachsen sind, […] und das ist für einen Schriftsteller immer wieder ein wunderbares Thema.473

In a similar vein, referring specifically to *Der Spaziergang von Rostock*, Delius notes that one of the biggest discoveries he made during the process of writing was that: “[e]s ist viel mehr als eine Ost-West-Geschichte, es ist die eines Einzelgängers, eines letzten klassischen

471 Delius 1999, 9.
472 Vogt.
deutschen Italienreisenden." In this last statement, there is a sense of urgency in the need to record Müller's highly significant story: Delius suggests here that after 1989, the need to overcome intense barriers in order to undertake the Germany-Syracuse journey and the risk and adventure that entailed ceased to exist, as access to mobility increased.

**Translating Travel Experience: from Paul Gompitz to Klaus Müller**

It was not until after the reunification of Germany that Delius learnt of Klaus Müller. During the Easter holiday of 1992, on the island of Rügen, he came across a newspaper article from the *Ostsee Zeitung* detailing Müller’s remarkable story and felt a sense of duty to (re)tell it, which he describes as follows: “Die Zeitungsseite aufgehoben, immer mal wieder angesehen: das ist eine Geschichte. Ich erzähle sie andern, ich merke, sie setzt sich in meinem Kopf fest, sie bleibt oben auf dem Zeitungsstapel. Sie will etwas von mir.” Coming across stories to retell rather than inventing them is typical for Delius, as Steinecke points out “[w]enn man Delius Arbeitstechniken kennt, weiß man, daß er Geschichten selten erfindet, meistens hingegen findet.” One could perhaps conceive of this technique as *mobilising stories*: Delius comes across stories which he finds significant and retells them in such a way as to make them more accessible to a particular audience (in this case, it appears, a West German readership, as Müller's comments below would indicate). Almost one-and-a-half years after reading the article, Delius sat down with Müller in Müller’s apartment in Rostock for extensive interviews about his escape from the GDR. The next challenge for Delius was translating the experience of his interviewee, Klaus Müller, into his literary interpretation of Müller, Paul Gompitz. A 2006 article in the *Stadtblatt Heidelberg* emphasises the ambiguity between the figures of Müller and Gompitz in the perplexing statement: “Klaus Müller ist...”

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474 Delius 1996, 69.
475 Delius 1996, 69, author’s emphasis.
476 Steinecke 207.
Paul Gompitz. Und ist es doch nicht.  

The interviewer asks Müller for clarification on this issue:

STADTBLATT Worin unterscheiden sich Paul Gompitz und Klaus Müller?

Müller: Im Namen und in den persönlichen Beziehungen. Ich wollte meine Lebensgefährtin aus der Geschichte ganz rauslassen, aber Delius meinte: „Im Westen muss eine Beziehungskiste dabei sein, sonst verkauft sich’s nicht.“ Alles andere in der Erzählung ist authentisch, wenn auch verkürzt.

Müller’s partner is a doctor and Gompitz’s partner, “Helga”, in the story, is a librarian. The anticipated way in which West German readership would react to the text’s content also had some influence over the way it was told, Müller notes. However, it appears that either in spite of or as a result of, Delius’s personal mobility and engagement with individual stories of the divided Germany, he has written a travel account which Müller, the traveller himself, regards as largely authentic.

**Gompitz’s Sattelzeit Travel Inspiration**

In addition to examining the relationship between Delius and Müller in terms of the production and reception of Der Spaziergang von Rostock, it is also useful to consider the connection between Gompitz and Johann Gottfried Seume. In doing so, one may attempt to uncover what it is that Gompitz finds motivating or attractive about the Sattelzeit traveller’s experience and thus why he wishes to emulate it himself, despite the risk of imprisonment for Republikflucht. Gompitz contemplates the dangerous nature of this crime in the following:

“Republikflucht. […] Jeder, der auffällt, wird verdächtigt zu fliehen, weiter denken die Stasileute nicht, fixiert auf das Staatsverbrechen Nummer I: Grenzdurchbruch” (ZM 27).

Delius provides an explanation for Gompitz’s attraction to Seume in the context of the political constraints of life in the GDR:


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478 “Nicht zurückkehren?”

479 Vogt.
Delius contends that GDR citizens read literature from the period around the *Sattelzeit* as a temporary antidote to the restrictions of daily life, a legitimate form of armchair travel. However, unlike most people, Gompitz goes one step further; he idolises a literary figure whom he thinks he can actually imitate (“ein reales Vorbild” cited above). In the following passage from *Der Spaziergang von Rostock*, Delius emphasises Gompitz’s decision to go to Syracuse alone:

Zwanzig Jahre steht die Mauer, zwanzig wird sie noch stehn und die Welt zerrt dir an den Nerven, das Westfernsehen, die Bücher, die Kinderträume. Die sollen mich nicht mehr fertigmachen, ich geh meinen Weg allein, dahin, wo ich immer hin wollte, nach Syrakus wie Seume, und niemand darf davon wissen, auch nicht Helga! […] Weit, verrückt weit muß das Ziel sein, Seume das richtige Vorbild. (ZM 12)

In a similar way to Erich Loest’s protagonist Haas, one can deduce two motivations for Gompitz’s travel: first, the belief that the Berlin Wall will never fall (and thus he would be kept eternally enclosed in the GDR), and, second, exposure to the exciting West, via telecommunications (for Haas, by way of radio RIAS, for Gompitz, by way of West German television). However, Gompitz, in contrast to Haas, plans to keep his travel intentions secret in order to avoid being discovered by the secret police or incriminating others. Whereas Haas’s travel destination is constantly changing, Gompitz remains fixated on following in the footsteps of Seume. This point raises two questions: what is it in particular about the character and journey of Seume that excites Gompitz?, and, how similar or different is each traveller’s journey?

Seume, born in the year 1763, may be regarded as a figure typical of the *Sattelzeit* writers, as he shares some aspects of his experiences and viewpoints of the period with the writers discussed in the previous chapter. From an early age, Seume had a strong desire to travel independently. He broke off his studies in theology at the University of Leipzig with the intention of going to Paris. This was a decision of which, he believed, many disapproved:

It is conceivable that Delius may have read Erich Loest’s *Zweibelmuster* in preparation for writing this novella, especially when one considers the similarities between this quotation and Loest’s quotation cited above: “Zweiundzwanzig Jahre stand die Mauer und würde halten bis in alle Ewigkeit, zumindest, solange sie lebten.”
“Als ich als ein junger Mensch von achtzehn Jahren [...] in die Welt hineinlief konnte man den Grund der Entfernung durchaus nicht entdecken und hielt mich für melancholisch veriirt.”

In this experience, Seume shares with Sattelzeit travellers such as Moritz’s Anton Reiser and Eichendorff’s Taugenichts both the exhilarating sense of adventure and the social disapproval that comes as the result of making a decision to lead a mobile lifestyle at this time in which dwelling-life is still predominant. On this note, Seume rues the fact that “[m]an hat mich getadelt, daß ich unstät und flüchtig sei; man tat mir Unrecht.”

In another instance Seume finds that he has to cover up the real purpose for his journey while in conversation with an Italian registry officer: “Hätte ich ihm nun die reine Wahrheit gesagt, daß ich bloß spazierengehen wollte, um mir das Zwerchfall auseinander zu wandeln [...] so hätte er höchstwahrscheinlich gar keinen Begriff davon gehabt, und geglaubt, ich sei irgendein Bedlam entlaufen.”

Comparing Contexts of Travel: Seume in the Sattelzeit, Gompitz in the GDR

One can make a connection here from Seume’s to Gompitz’s experience with respect to two interrelated points: that is, first, the sense of adventure related to travel, and second, contravening the predominant social response to changing mobility in the context of the time in which the traveller lives. As mentioned above, Gompitz is set apart from other members of GDR society because he is willing to commit Republikflucht in order to have an adventure. In this respect Seume is the ultimate model of the experienced adventurer: “Er [Gompitz] stärkt seinen Mut an der Furchtlosigkeit Seumes, der vor seiner großen Wanderung in Amerika, in Russland und als russischer Offizier in Polen gewesen ist, dieser gescheite Abenteurer hatte einige Erfahrungen auf dem Buckel, die Paul gut zu brauchen meint” (ZM 16). Like Seume, Gompitz/Müller, in the following citation may be regarded as an exceptional member of society as a result of his daring adventures, as the Spiegel magazine reports: “Müller, 54, ist

481 Seume 159.
482 Seume 160.
483 Seume 196.
Moreover, whereas most GDR citizens did not attempt to cross the border illegally and those who did, did so in order to start a new life in the West, Gompitz wishes only to travel for a short time and then actually return to the GDR. Before leaving he says, “Ich will hier leben! Aber nicht immer eingesperrt sein!” (ZM 70), yet, once in the West, he fears not being able to return home: “In 48 Stunden erledigt er eilig die Vorbereitungen für die Rückkehr, […] für den schlimmsten Fall gerüstet zu sein, wenn die DDR Grenzer sagen: “Gompitz, Sie sind ausgebürgert.” Diese Angst treibt ihn um und treibt ihn die Grenze zu” (ZM 139). It is somewhat paradoxical to contemplate the image of a man hurrying toward the border he describes as “die höchste und ärgerlichste Grenze der Welt”, a border that is specifically designed to keep him in (ZM 7).

Another reason why Gompitz idolises Seume and wishes to emulate him is because of the belief that he too can become educated and socially respected as a result of travel. This is made evident in the wording of Gompitz’s journey as, “[eine] Bildungs- und Pilgerreise”; this is the exact terminology Müller uses in a letter to GDR General Secretary Egon Krenz, and which Delius utilises in Der Spaziergang von Rostock. In Spaziergang nach Syrakus, Seume makes a comment on the connection between travel and learning about the world. He echoes the sentiment of Georg and Johann Reinhold Forster who criticised “[p]hilosophers who have only contemplated mankind in their closets” (cited above). Seume remarks: “Wenn ich recht viel hätte schreiben wollen, hätte ich eben so gut in meinem Polstersessel bleiben können.” Almost two centuries later, Gompitz listens with envy to the stories of the sailors who have come in to the restaurant in which he works: “Geschichten […] aus denen Gompitz

484 “Spaziergang nach.”
485 See “Spaziergang nach” and ZM 17.
486 Seume 179. He says this in the context of apologising for the economy in his writing. It is conceivable that Seume was influenced by the work of both Forsters considering the similarity between this quotation and the quotations cited above in which the Forsters criticise scientists and philosophers who do not go out into the field, so to speak.
immer wieder den größten Stolz heraushört, der in seinem Land zu haben ist: Wir haben was erlebt, wir waren mal draußen! Er hat nichts zu erzählen” (ZM 8-9). Gompitz is frustrated at being prevented from going out into the world and gaining experience like Seume. His frustration at not being able to travel is similar to the feelings expressed by Loest’s protagonist, Haas. This is made evident in Gompitz’s following statement:

Ja, alles kannst du aushalten, die leeren Geschäfte, die kaputten Dächer, die dreckigen Bahnen, den Gestank des Sozialismus, aber was du nicht aushalten kannst, daß sie dich einsperren für immer, daß du nie etwas sehen wirst von der Welt, unter dieser Last kannst du nicht leben. (ZM 79)

**Barriers to Retracing Seume’s Footsteps**

Despite his strong conviction that he might travel outside of the GDR, Gompitz lives in an extreme political situation. There are three significant interconnected factors which cast doubt as to whether he will be able to enact a “Bildungs- und Pilgerreise nach Italien auf den Spuren [s]eines Landsmanns Seume” in the way in which he intends (ZM 17). These factors relate to the context in which Gompitz makes a significant resolution (“Entschluß”) to travel, to his ability to follow in the footsteps of Seume, and to the speed with which he travels and the way in which this conditions what he learns from his travel. Self-determination in relation to one’s own mobility – to be able to travel in spite of social and political obstacles – is important to both Seume’s and Gompitz’s initial decision to embark on a journey. There is one line in particular from Seume’s 1802 account that Gompitz strongly identifies with:

Meine meisten Schicksale lagen in den Verhältnissen meines Lebens; und der letzte Gang nach Sizilien war der erste ganz freie Entschluß von einiger Bedeutung.\(^{487}\)

When Seume is on his way to Paris, he is recruited into the army and ends up in Canada. Back in Germany, he makes two further attempts to leave the army before his release in 1787.\(^{488}\) For Seume, his significant resolution “der erste ganz freie Entschluß” – his setting out on a nine-month walking tour in 1802 – means determining the conditions of his own

\(^{487}\) Seume 160.
\(^{488}\) See Seume 159.
mobility. Spurred on by his reading of Seume, Gompitz himself makes a significant resolution, an “Entschluß”, which, echoes Seume’s determination to travel freely:

An einem wolkenarmen Augustabend im Hafen von Wohlgast auf der “Seebad Ahlbeck”, einem Schiff der Weißen Flotte, fällt der Entschluß, dem Fernweh endlich nachzugeben und das Land, um bleiben zu können, einmal zu verlassen. (ZM 7)

By contrasting Seume’s and Gompitz’s significant resolutions, one can see that, ultimately for Seume travelling is about the journey itself and what one can learn from it. This connects with the previously mentioned supposition that during the *Sattelzeit* the idea of travel becomes accepted as something valuable in itself. However, for Gompitz, travel is about reconciling individual freedom with State-imposed immobility. This relates to the more general idea that in the lead up to the *Wende* travel comes to be seen as a fundamental human right. Müller observes “Das wollte ich nachmachen, das habe ich als mein Menschenrecht angesehen.”

Gompitz is on a pilgrimage in the sense that he is inspired by Seume, however, his underlying motivations are shaped by the contrasting historical circumstances in which the former lives.

At one point in *Der Spaziergang von Rostock*, Gompitz underlines the above passage concerning “der erste ganz freie Entschluß,” while re-reading Seume’s 1802 travel text. In this simple act, Gompitz has to negotiate between his determination to follow the metaphorical traces of Seume’s journey and leaving literal traces of his travel intentions, which could be discovered by or reported to the secret police with grave consequences. Delius details Gompitz’s thought-process at this moment: “Vorsicht denkt er, das ist eine Spur, und radiert den Strich weg, schämt sich sogar seiner Feigheit und setzt nach kurzem Überlegen den Bleistift neu an, makiert die Stelle wieder. […] So ist es, das sollen sie ruhig wissen, falls sie mir auf die Schliche kommen, diese Typen” (ZM 16). At a later point in the narrative, Gompitz attempts to follow in the tracks of Seume while travelling within the GDR

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489 “Spaziergang nach.”
490 Gompitz/Müller could be regarded as an unknown pioneer for East Germans to have the right to travel, however, his story of course not well known until after the Fall of the Wall.
and legally permitted Soviet States: “Im März 1983 sagt er Helga, er werde die nächsten Wochen auf den Spuren Seumes durch die DDR und die ČSSR wandern. […] In Grimma [bleibt er] immer so nah wie möglich an den Spuren Seumes” (ZM 32-3). However, he tries with little success to convince Western tourists to smuggle money across the border for him along the way. It soon becomes apparent that rather than following Seume’s exact path, his trip may be more about finding a way to leave the GDR: “Nach weiteren zwei Tagen Wanderschaft, ohne einen Westdeutschen gesichtet zu haben, muß er sich gestehen, auf den falschen Weg zu setzen. Wenn du dich zu sehr an Seume hältst, wirst du nie nach Westen, nie nach Syrakus kommen” (ZM 37).

Steinecke, in his study of Der Spaziergang nach Rostock, also notes that Gompitz’s pilgrimage becomes more about finding a way to escape East Germany than the actual trip itself, as opposed to Seume. This is evident in the presentation and proportion of each respective text devoted to describing the experience in Italy, which for Seume is about two thirds, compared to about one sixth for Delius.\textsuperscript{491} Furthermore, Steinecke notes, “während bei Seume ein genau beobachtendes, vielzeitiges für die Zeit ungewohntes Italien-Bild entwirft, bleibt es bei Delius eher farblos, konventionell.”\textsuperscript{492} While Gompitz does have a forward-looking goal, his life is generally dominated by the present moment of planning, as reflected in the proportionality of the text and the point that it is written in the present tense. Overall, one might reasonably conclude, Gompitz’s travel becomes less about following the traces of Seume, and more about leaving the GDR without a trace.

The third and perhaps even more important indicator which casts doubt on Gompitz’s attempt to relive Seume’s Sattelzeit sojourn, is the representation of each traveller’s experience in relation to the different mode and speed of his movement, that is, “die

\textsuperscript{491} Steinecke 212.
\textsuperscript{492} Steinecke 213.
On the one hand, he does manage, to some extent, to realise his ambition of turning the dreams of Seume in his imagination into lived experience: “von der Phantasie zur Anschauung, von Dresden nach Rom, von der Vergangenheit zur Gegenwart, gesteigert in vier stolzen Silben: Ich! Bin! Jetzt! Hier!” (ZM 119). On the other hand, the fast pace at which Gompitz generally moves is very dissimilar to Seume. The following extract contrasts one stretch of the journey which Gompitz completes by way of rapid and comfortable train travel, to Seume’s covering of the same distance on foot:


Here Gompitz knows that he is taking advantage of newer mobilities in order to move faster, despite sacrificing the experience of literally walking in Seume’s footsteps. In stark contrast to Seume, he feels under pressure to get the Italian leg of his trip over with as fast as possible in order to ensure that he can return to the GDR and to a worried Helga. At the same time, Gompitz does not appear to feel a deep sense of guilt or regret about spatially and temporally compressing his pilgrimage as indicated in the statement “Er schämt sich fast” (my emphasis). Perhaps Delius suggests here that Gompitz, while still engrossed mentally in the imaginings of Seume’s amazing trip, has subscribed to the accelerated and technologically progressive ways of the west and in doing so has sacrificed the older mobile element of his pilgrimage. Ironically, he is in a hurry to get back to his dwelling-life.

With this in mind, one may ask: what of the Bildungsreise element of his trip? Is Gompitz able to be educated, “gebildet” through his travels? Steinecke finds an answer in the words of Seume written in 1805, “Wer geht, sieht im Durchschnitt anthropologisch und kosmisch mehr, als wer fährt” (cited above):

Spaziergang [bedeutet] für Seume nicht nur eine Fortbewegungsart, sondern auch eine dadurch bedingte Wahrnehmungsform […] von den Menschen […] von der Welt. […] Gompitz kann all diese
As mentioned above, Seume associates a slower pace with a heightened capacity to take in and understand the objects one sees along the way (to paraphrase, “spazieren […] um […] Italien wahrzunehmen”). Thus, for Seume in the *Sattelzeit*, one may conclude, self-determined travel on foot is an educational experience that Gompitz, in the late 1980s cannot emulate. Seume’s story is the impetus for his trip but once he is in the West, he finds himself in a hurry to return to the imposed dwelling-life of the GDR, where he may again find slowed-down time enabling for mental equilibrium (“Zeit und völlige Ausgeglichenheit” cited above).

**Gompitz’s Return and the Comparative Insignificance of the Wende**

Once Gompitz returns to the GDR, thanks to his cunning forward thinking with regard to the laws pertaining to *Republikflucht*, he is imprisoned for just a few weeks before being allowed to return home and be reunited with Helga. To a certain extent, he finds that because of his travel, he now has stories to tell others as he had hoped: “Die engen Freunde feiern ihn als Helden” (ZM 154). However, for the most part, he finds that the people around him are jealous and suspicious of his travelling adventures:

Nach einigen Tagen merkt er, daß der Ausflug nach Syrakus alle seine Rostocker Beziehungen zu verändern beginnt. […] Andere, die ähnliche Reisewünsche hegen, aber es nie gewagt haben, aus der Mühle des Alltags auszubrechen, sind neidisch. Die meisten Bekannten werden mißtrauisch und verdächtigen ihn, dies Ding könne er nur mit der Stasi gedreht haben. (ZM 154)

Furthermore, his relationship with Helga is severely damaged: “Helga empfängt den Heimkehrer mit Tränen und Schweigen. Sie mag sich so schnell nicht trösten lassen. Die Briefe aus Italien sind angekommen, seine vielen Telefonate haben den Schock von Juli nicht heilen können” (ZM 154). By carrying out his ingenious, practical plan to escape the immobility enforced upon him, Gompitz renders himself something of an outcast and severely damages his personal relationships in East Germany. At the same time, with the

494 Steinecke 213.
advantage of hindsight, one may view Gompitz as a kind of pioneer. This is because, as would become commonly accepted after 1989, he understood travel as a human right, as something ostensible and went to great lengths to exercise this right. Thus, while experienced by many as a major turning point with regard to gaining the right to travel, the *Wende* does not have a great impact on Gompitz (in this citation, Müller):

> Die Wende, die ihm und seinen Landsleuten die allgemeine Reisefreiheit beschert, nimmt Müller gelassen. Er hat schließlich keinen Nachholbedarf und macht mit dem Boot nur ein paar Touren nach Nordeuropa. Nichts Besonderes. Das Besondere hat er schon hinter sich. „Italien“, sagt Klaus Müller lakonisch, „Italien ist jetzt abgehakt.“

While Seume’s 1802 journey was the main impetus for Gompitz’s journey, the political time and space in which he found himself meant that he was not able to carry out a “Bildungs- und Pilgerresie” in the exact way which he had anticipated. Upon his return, he did not gain the social acclaim which he might have expected. However, in his own way he anticipated social change by challenging, in an extremely practical and humble way, an extreme political system and finding a way around one of the most complex state apparatuses ever designed by mankind to keep GDR citizens in. By re-telling Müller’s story, Delius has translated an exceptional East German travel account into something comprehensible to those who have never experienced such an extreme case of living in political situation. In so doing, he certainly negated Gompitz’s claim that “er hat nichts zu erzählen” (cited above).

### 4.5.3 Andrei Ujica, *Out of the Present* (1995)

**No Way Back**

In my analysis of Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, I concluded that at the end of the *Sattelzeit*, it was no longer possible for the Taugenichts to return to his original home, because the origin itself has changed. Indeed, when looking at these selected travel texts from a mobilities perspective, it appears that a point-of-no-return *Leitmotiv* emerges and this intensifies during the contemporary period following the *Wende*. The new mobilities were

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495 “Spaziergang nach.”
here to stay – forms of resistance do exist but one cannot return to the original state of dwelling or mobility-singular. As Klaus Müller’s story shows, attempts to immobilise large groups of people, such as East German citizens, are never failsafe; human mobility cannot be indefinitely contained.  

The day after the Fall of the Berlin Wall, Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of West Germany (1969-1974), delivered a speech outside the Schöneberg City Hall, which marked this historical event as a point-of-no-return:

The fact that Germans are moving closer together is happening differently than most people expected. [...] And what is certain is that nothing in the other part of Germany [East] will ever be the same as it was. [...] The people themselves have spoken, have demanded changes, not least of all the right to accurate information, to free travel, and to assemble in organizations freely. [...] Once again, nothing will ever be the same as it was. 

If one is to accept Brandt’s summation of the Wende as a significant turning point, a shift in paradigm following a build-up that is largely characterised by the desire to travel freely, then a set of complex questions are raised. These include: first, how far has mobility taken the traveller in the contemporary period?, second, what impacts/effects do these new travel experiences have on the traveller?, and, third, how does he/she attempt to adapt/respond/reorient themselves to these new ways of being?

**Bringing the View of Cosmonauts to Earth**

*Out of the Present*, a documentary film directed by the Romanian-born experimental documentarist Andrei Ujica, covers the period from 18th May 1991 to 25th March 1992, during which time Soviet (and soon Russian) cosmonaut, Sergei Krikalev, shares with others the experience of living and working aboard the Russian space station MIR, 400 kilometres...
It is a cinematic work which helps the researcher to find possible answers to the three questions raised above concerning: first, distance (e.g. experiencing the new frontiers of space and an extended world view) second, impact (e.g. the self-identity of a space traveller), and third, adaptation (e.g. reconciling the separation between earth-dwelling and mobile-dwelling in space). While Ujica does not go into space himself, he arranges for the cosmonauts to film their experience. One could argue that his approach is similar to Delius’s re-telling technique of mobilising stories and making them more accessible to a wider audience. By utilising film or motion picture as his textual medium, Ujica includes an even greater degree of mobilisation. In his utilisation of cinematic technologies, which draws his travel narrative into the domain of visuality, Ujica brings his audience closer to the lived experience of his travelling subjects than is possible through textual representation.

Ujica spent the first part of his life in Romania before moving to Germany in 1981 to study literary and media theory in Heidelberg. He went back to Romania in 1989, when Communist Party Leader Nicolae Ceaucescu was overthrown. This journey eventually led to the notable 1990 film collaboration with the German director, Harun Farocki, an avantgarde documentary entitled Videograms of a Revolution. This film, as well as Out of the Present, and The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceaucescu (2010), make up a trilogy of films engaged with the historical events concerning the dissolution of the USSR in 1989. Out of the Present, in particular, documents a story which is ground-breaking in many ways. Krikalev ended up living in space for a record-breaking 310 days. For 8 of those days the cosmonaut was accompanied by the British researcher, Helen Sharman, who was the first British person in

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499 A comment Krikalev makes to Volykov in the latter part of the film indicates that he values the filming project: “Take care of the camera” (OoP 1:06:48).
Still, one of the most significant aspects of Krikalev’s experience was effectively being the last citizen of the Soviet Union: when he returned to earth what had been at the launching the USSR was now Russia. The Harvard Film Archive makes a similar observation: “[Krikalev’s] accomplishment [of a lengthy period in space] is notable in and of itself, as Ujica amply illustrates in this documentary, yet by juxtaposing this feat with the monumental events unfolding on earth, *Out of the Present* renders Krikalev’s journey into a breathtaking elegy for the end of the Space Age and the end of an ideology.”

Thus, as the title would suggest, *Out of the Present* may be used a metaphor to describe the large-scale global transition to the new mobilities, that is, from the present experience of everyday life on earth, to the extra-terrestrial travel in which the space traveller can see the planet from a window as he circles the world in just 92 minutes. This film therefore depicts a point-of-no-return with regard to an expansion of motion, of potential worldview, and of the potential of cinema to aesthetically and critically communicate these changes.

**Reconsidering Man’s Possibilities**

Ujica has received high praise for *Out of the Present* from Peter Sloterdijk and Paul Virilio who both regard the film as revolutionary, albeit for different reasons. Sloterdijk lauds the philosophical insights the film provides, particularly in terms of new ways of constructing and experiencing a space (*Raum*), while travelling through space (*All*):

> Ujica gehört zu den wenigen Zeitgenossen, die den ontologischen Ernst der Raumfahrt begriffen haben. Er ist neben Kubrick, glaube ich, der einzige unter den wichtigen Cineasten der Gegenwart, der dieses

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502 Interestingly, Sharman came to be an astronaut quite by accident, as she explains in the following: “I did not consider becoming an astronaut until I heard of the opportunity on my car radio as I drove home from work. Britain did not then, and still does not have, an astronaut program so I had never even entertained the idea of going into space. However, a company had been set up to manage a space mission with the Soviet Union which would put the first Briton into space. As I listened to the advert I realised that a job which combined learning a foreign language and doing physical training with science work was a dream come true. The chance to fly into space and feel weightless made it even better and I applied”, Spacelink Learning Foundation, *Interview with Helen Sharman*, 2012, Spacelink Learning Foundation, <http://www.spacelink.org/helen-sharman-programme/people-zone/interview-with-helen-sharman>.

Motiv abseits des Science-Fiction-Trashs behandelt hat. Sein Film ist eines der großen Dokumente der Filmkultur der Neunzigerjahre.\textsuperscript{504}

Ujica’s film may be linked to Sloterdijk’s theory of spheres\textsuperscript{505} from the point of view that the space station can be seen as a kind of bubble: on the one hand, it provides immunity to the outside world, e.g. through oxygen regulation, but at the same time, it is at risk of penetration or exposing the human to danger, as indicated when narrator and cosmonaut Anatoli Artsebarsky comments with reference to a spacewalk: “After 6 hours of work my space suit’s cooling system failed. That’s how I came to reconsider man’s possibilities” (OoP 33.25).

More generally, for Sloterdijk the power of this film lies in its capacity to exemplify the idea of a space station as a microcosm, that is a kind of self-sufficient, extra-terrestrial floating dwelling, or, in Sloterdijk’s words, “die bewohnte Insel als Weltmodell.”\textsuperscript{506} He explains:

\begin{quote}
Vom Vorliegen einer hinreichend vollständigen Welt, darf die Rede sein, sobald Minimalbedingungen der Lebensversorgung erfüllt sind. Life support bedeutet genau dies: die Liste der Bedingungen abarbeiten, unter denen eine Humanlebenswelt als absolute Insel temporär betriebsfähig gehalten werden kann.\textsuperscript{507}
\end{quote}

This line of thinking has two important outcomes for a mobilities analysis. First, given that humans can survive for extended periods beyond the earth’s atmosphere in these temporarily inhabitable islands, Heidegger’s understanding of earth-bound ideal dwelling is rendered archaic and the need to develop new ways of conceiving dwelling and mobility is underscored (as indicated above when Sloterdijk comments “Ujica [begreift] […] den ontologischen Ernst der Raumfahrt”). Second, life in the mobile bubble of the space station MIR, as made visible in \textit{Out of the Present}, signals a distinct disconnection with life on earth.


\textsuperscript{505} Sloterdijk’s theory of spheres is set out in three volumes published between 1999 and 2004. This theory draws heavily on Heidegger and attempts to update his concept of dwelling.

\textsuperscript{506} Peter Sloterdijk, \textit{Sphären III: Schäume} (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2004), 331.

\textsuperscript{507} Sloterdijk 2004, 331, author’s emphasis.
Thus the opportunity is opened up for the cosmonaut to create an extra-global subjectivity founded on the experience of living in space.\textsuperscript{508}

In an interview conducted by Ujica, Krikalev sheds light on these two points concerning new forms of mobility and a distinct space traveller identity. He speaks of the realities of space travel and the life support system which means he is “dependent on a very compact and, after a while, restrictive living area.”\textsuperscript{509} This rather claustrophobic image is at odds with other ideas commonly associated with space travel, for example, travelling vast distances to new frontiers, unrestricted by gravity. Krikalev speaks to this rather contradictory aspect of space travel:

\begin{quote}
[The space station puts] thousands of kilometers behind it – just during the time I’m eating lunch – I spend the whole day moving back and forth just a few meters. That is the biggest difference compared to my life on Earth. Even though our whole dwelling is crossing great distances, in real terms we’re always in the same place.\textsuperscript{510}
\end{quote}

One might associate this contemporary advancement of a state of being accelerated yet sedentary to the sensation of Gompitz sitting comfortably in a high speed train speeding through the Eastern Alps, as opposed to Seume who walked for 24 days to cover the same passage, or to the increasing tendency of people to travel virtually to other parts of the world while sitting still internet surfing at their desk. Yet, Krikalev is one of the few people in the world who has had the unique experience of accelerated mobility in a confined space \textit{in space}. He is also one of the few people who have experienced the sensation of weightlessness, an enviable sensation and something on which space travellers commonly place great significance. For example, Krikalev notes, “[i]n the end, life there [in outer space] is marked by […] the weightlessness.”\textsuperscript{511} Sharman makes a similar comment: “Floating about feeling weightless is something I hope never to forget […] it was the most natural, relaxing

\textsuperscript{508} Another way to think of this is: if movement were on a continuum with idealised dwelling at one end and extreme mobility on the other, then this film would have the capacity to extend the mobility end of the continuum.
\textsuperscript{509} Krikalev and Ujica 47.
\textsuperscript{510} Krikalev and Ujica 54-5.
\textsuperscript{511} Krikalev and Ujica 47-8.
feeling I can think of.” For these reasons, Ujica regards having experienced this privileged form of mobility as a dividing line between people, as demonstrated when he says to Krikalev, “[t]he decisive difference between us, though, remains the same: you’ve been in space and I haven’t.” An experienced space traveller, Kiraklev knows what it is to have been both tellurian and extra-terrestrial.

A New View of History and Time

For Paul Virilio, two most striking aspects of Out of the Present are, first, the way in which the film opens up a new perspective on world history, and, second, how this relates to the space traveller’s experience of time:

Out is also a first film: the first film from beyond the world, the first film of a new cinematicism which is no longer merely, I will say, dromoscopic. It no longer has anything to do with a sequence of images, as in a passing landscape, as if one were sitting on a train - nothing to do with the view associated with speeds of moving across the ground. Out of the Present offers a revolutionary view of historical time, of global time, which we break into with Krikalev.

Although humans had been in space prior to the making of this film and recorded their experiences, Out of the Present offers an unprecedented view into life beyond earth, and it is this view itself which changes history by offering a new historical perspective. One no longer merely views a sequence of events in a linear fashion, but is exposed to a new and enlarged way of experiencing time and space, and this new gaze is enabled by the technology of moving images. The Harvard Film Archive comments on this capacity of Ujica’s film trilogy: “Underpinning Ujica’s films[,] is his close attention to the conversion of 20th-century history into cinematic and televisual imagery, and the ways in which these images determine our narratives of the present and of history itself.” In fact, Out of the Present even changes the view of the cosmonaut’s own experience of his time in space. This is shown when Ujica asks

512 Spacelink Learning Foundation. At the same time, Krikalev, in contrast to Sharman, describes weightlessness as a burden: “Weightlessness is, no matter what, a kind of burden. It changes us physically: our faces swell because the blood rushes to the head, while the blood vessels themselves also expand. And this state continues during the entire flight. You need a certain amount of time to get used to it, which doesn’t mean that it gets any easier”, Krikalev and Ujica 48.

513 Krikalev and Ujica 47.

Krikalev: “You’ve personally experienced space; for you, it’s a real world. What does it mean, ultimately, to live up there?,” to which Krikalev responds:

When you return to the earth, the flight is of the moment and immediate, but at the same time it starts to feel unreal. Precisely because you remember all the details exactly, it makes it all the harder to believe that you really spent time there. For me, your film is a kind of forced remembrance of the flight, sort of like a vacation film you watch later, which evokes all these extra images not even on the screen. That’s what it’s like for me when I see the film. Other than that, it’s always the same: after a while every trip seems to become immaterial and starts to resemble a fiction. That’s why I often find it difficult to grasp that I’ve personally experienced one adventure or another.

Because spending time up in the MIR is so strongly demarcated from everyday life on earth, as soon as the cosmonaut lands, the easiest coping mechanism, it appears, is to conceive of the experience as fictional, or something separate from reality. For Krikalev, however, *Out of the Present* forces him to extend his view of what is remembered as real experience outward to include space travel, a “forced remembrance.” At the same time, Krikalev views the film in a highly unique way given that he is one of the only people in the world for whom the film “evokes all these extra images not even on the screen.”

Further, as Virilio emphasises above, an integral part of the narrative-determining imagery of this film is Krikalev’s complex experience of time, that is, “global time.” One may refer to this phenomenon of global time in terms of two different zones of experience which I refer to here as the earth context, i.e. what happens on earth, (in this case, the main point of reference is the USSR), and the MIR context, (what happens on the space station).

The earth context and the MIR context, two disparate experiential situations, are mediated through the common measurement of Moscow standard time. Moscow time regulates the daily routine of the station’s crew who officially work eight hours a day and have weekends free. One could argue that along with global time, the earth and MIR contexts are also mediated via telecommunications (with family, media, politicians, and mission control),

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515 Krikalev and Ujica 47.
516 Krikalev and Ujica 47.
517 Ujica also exposes the viewer to the liminal space in between these two contexts, i.e. the rocket which launches the cosmonauts up to the space station and the process of docking on to it.
518 Krikalev and Ujica 54.
which theoretically allows for a sense of social connectivity by way of exchanging information concerning what is happening in each context. Finally, a third way in which the world and the space station are linked is by the construction of MIR’s identity as an internationally cooperative Soviet and later Russian space. However, the following analysis shows that there are limitations to the capabilities of first, the artificial regulation of time, second, of telecommunications, and third, the recreation of a cultural environment to make the cosmonauts feel as though the MIR context is an extension of the earth context.

**Cosmonauts as Privileged Travellers and Victims of Technology**

In this travel text Ujica is able to explain why the artificial experience of time on a space shuttle leaves the cosmonaut not always with the feeling of being connected to home, or the presentness of earth, but rather with a sense of disconnection. He uses editorial techniques to (perhaps unconsciously) convey this temporal element to the viewer of the film:

The MIR station makes a complete circle around our planet within ninety-two minutes. Which is exactly the length of *Out of the Present*. During these ninety-two minutes, all the basic cycles of terrestrial time pass by: day and night and the four seasons. During a single orbit the space traveler looks at a whole day. Which also corresponds to one year. And all that is no longer than a normal film.

If a non-space traveller were to take a long-distance journey on an airplane, she may get some sense of what the artificial creation of time imposed against the time zones and seasons of the outside world is like. In this experience of global time, a year and a day are essentially compressed into 92 minutes. This is a giant leap so-to-speak from Georg Forster’s experience in the *Sattelzeit*, in which he and his crew sailed the equivalent distance of circumnavigating the world three times over 3 years and 16 days. “With space travel”, Virilio explains, “we have passed from voyages in geographical space – Marco Polo or Christopher Columbus, for

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519 Ujica offers another way in which to understand the experience of time in the space station MIR: “In a space station one can perceive the two fundamental categories of time simultaneously. One of the windows allows a view to the stars, to eternity—that is, to astronomical time. Through the other window, the window to earth, one experiences a compression of terrestrial time.

520 Ujica and Virilio 68.
example – to voyages in time.” Virilio then outlines the significance of this shift: “That is, literally, a historical revolution. It’s not a political one, but an incomparable historical revolution. Not Fukuyama’s “end of history,” but the revolution of history, in the original sense of the word revolution: that a day corresponds to a year!” For Virilio, then, the space travel aspect of the new mobilities renders Fukuyama’s end of history thesis irrelevant in the same way that Heidegger’s earth-bound notion of idealised dwelling can no longer be sustained as an effective or relevant conceptual tool.

At the same time, Ujica is quick to deflate any sense of grandeur regarding the achievements of a cosmonaut as opposed to early sea explorers:

What differentiates Magellan or Columbus from today’s space travelers has to do with distances that cannot be overcome. In contrast to those travelers on the globe, space travellers – victims of our all too modest technology – have no chance whatsoever of reaching truly new shores. They are well aware that they are underway not as discoverers but as mere observers.

It is interesting to note that Ujica sees space travellers as both privileged, differentiated members of the mobile high class, and, simultaneously, as victims of technology which allows them, in one sense, to go nowhere. Krikalev says above “in real terms we’re always in the same place”, so the space shuttle MIR may be conceived of as a mobile place that is paradoxically both everywhere and nowhere at once. Perhaps there is nothing new to be discovered; in Ujica’s view, there are no “truly new shores” to be reached, until technology is sufficiently advanced to allow humans to land on other planets. In another sense, cosmonauts can be thought of as victims of technology because telecommunications cannot fully substitute for relationships with those who remain on earth. There are two key moments in the documentary-film which perhaps define this separation between earth-dwelling and mobile space-dwelling: first, the first instance is a conversation between commander Anatoli

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521 Ujica and Virilio 67.
522 On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Krikalev likens cosmonauts to sea explorers: “We cosmonauts are like sailors. Sailors long for the high sea, and no sooner do they have solid ground beneath their feet than they’re already dreaming of heading out again” Krikalev and Ujica 50. So there is a sense of unity between the two groups, one could argue, in that the sense of adventure and ‘dromomania remains the same.
523 Krikalev and Ujica 68.
Artsebaski and his son, Taras, and the second is a conversation between Krikalev and a reporter, which I outline below.

**Disconnection between Earth-dwelling and Space-dwelling**

In the first situation, Artsebaski talks to Taras (who looks about 10) via a televisual link.\(^{524}\) The viewer sees Artsebaski floating around in the space station with a microphone to his mouth while his son sits in a communications room and talks to him about the weather and what he has been doing during the summer holidays. Artsebaski points to an oval-shaped vertical chamber on the space station, and says to his son “Taras, can you see where I sleep?” (OoP 35:19). Taras appears not to have registered what he has said and Artsebaski looks disappointed that his attempt to impress his son has not had the intended effect. Instead, Taras says, “Papa, we got new furniture”, to which Artsebaski replies, “Good. Do you like it?” Convinced that Taras should be amazed at the technology he is using, Artsebarski then makes another attempt to connect with him in this way (OoP 36:21):

Artsebaski [with his arm around the screen image of Taras]: Taras, can you see me?
Taras: What?
Artsebaski [pointing at the screen]: Can you see yourself on the screen?
Taras: Yes, I can see you.
Artsebaski: “Can you see yourself?
Taras: [smiles and waves]

These examples show the difficulty of trying to maintain a close father-son relationship across the MIR and earth contexts. Taras is preoccupied with typical dwelling-life things such as the new home furniture and does not appear to be able to connect with his father’s surroundings in space. For Artsebaski, the screen image he holds becomes a kind of substitute for his son. Interestingly, Taras seems not be able to comprehend his own image in space or the idea that he could be in two places simultaneously via the projected image. When he smiles and waves the viewer is still not certain whether this is another display of affection for

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\(^{524}\) The viewer also sees a shot of Taras at the start of the film. He says: “Papa, I wish you success with everything you do. You’ll have a lot to do. Pity you won’t be here this summer,” OoP 8:05.
his father or a sign that he has finally recognised his own image, as his father has been encouraging him to do.

Later in the film, after Artsebarski has returned to earth, the viewer sees that his sense of disconnection between life in space and life on earth has endured. In the following extract he seems to be negotiating between two competing identities of cosmonaut and earth dweller (OoP 1:27:23):

Artsebarski [voiceover]: Sergei landed in the spring on March 25th 1992. Only now my flight is at an end.
[…]
Reporter: [off-screen]: Anatoli, why did you insist on being here for the landing?
Arstebarski [onscreen, interviewed by a reporter]: I never asked myself that question. I always had the feeling we had been separated by force. I’ve been missing Sergei down here all the time.
Reporter: When is a cosmonaut really home again? Immediately after the landing, or later?
Artsebarski: As soon as he breathes the earth’s air through the open hatch. The smell of the earth. That’s the feeling of being home again.

On the one hand, once Artsebarski lands on earth, he appears to feel immediately at home, an experience which is defined via his senses (“the smell of the earth”) and bodily functions (“breath[ing] the earth’s air”) and which is possible only on earth. This appears to be an experience common to astronauts as indicated by similar statements made shortly after the landings of Helen Sharman and Alexander Volkov. Sharman comments on the smell of a bouquet of flowers she has been handed by a medic (“This smell!” OoP 28:05) and Volkov is impressed by the wonderful taste of the tea he is given (“Lovely tea. That’s so good!” OoP 1:26:51).

Virilio provides one explanation for why sensory experience has such an impact on returning space travellers. This has to do with the fact that in space sight, or what he calls “the view”, is the most utilised and important sense and consequently other senses lose significance. Virilio says: “the view reveals what is most essential. Other than the view, there is no physical or physiological contact. No hearing, no feeling in the sense of touching materials, with the exception of an actual Moon landing.”

525 Ujica and Virilio 64.
makes puts emphasis on the emotional human aspect of the view rather than physical capabilities. Former cosmonaut Vitaly Sevastyanov asks Volkov via the telecommunications link, “What do you like most about Earth from up there?”, to which he replies “Most of all what we can’t see from up here: People” (OoP 1:13:09). In a similar vein, while Artsebarski appears to be physically re-connected with earth dwelling-life (“down here”), emotionally speaking, until Krikalev’s return, he has not yet landed (“only now my flight is at an end”). When he leaves MIR he says “parting from Sergei is hardest” (OoP 58:24) and it is very important for him to be at Sergei’s landing (“I never asked myself that question”). Artsebarski’s use of the term *force* in his statement, “I always had the feeling we had been separated by force” could be interpreted in different ways. It may be that he is referring to force as in gravity. One could understand this viewpoint in the context of a comment that Krikalev in relation to the experience of weightlessness: for me personally it is easier to get used to weightlessness than to get used to gravity again later.” Alternatively, Artsebarski may be referring to the political circumstances which forced Krikalev to stay in space longer than originally planned. Then again, he could mean both of these things, in the sense that he is forced apart from one of the only people in the world who understand his identity as a person who has experienced life in space.

The third and perhaps most significant way in which one can view a breakdown in the connection between life on earth and life on space is by way of the political dissolution of the USSR and how this renders the discourse and signifiers of the Soviet-led MIR mission obsolete. There are two examples in *Out of the Present* in which Ujica demonstrates this

526 I checked this translation with Dr Jacob Edmond of the University of Otago and he pointed out an alternative translation of Artsebarski’s comments to the translation which appears in the English subtitles of the film: ‘Я чувствовал что нас с Сержком разделили’ which translates as: ‘I felt as though Sergei (Serezhka, actually, which is a diminutive form of Sergei) and I had been separated, simply separated’, Jacob Edmond, “Translation from ‘Out of the Present’”, Message to Anita Perkins, Email. If indeed the term “force” was an addition by the documentary film’s subtitle translator, and not in fact Artsebarski’s term, one may nonetheless argue that his sense of separation was likely heightened by gravity and by the political circumstances which kept him away from his friend Krikalev who had to stay in space for longer than planned.

527 Krikalev and Ujica 48.
change by way of the juxtaposition of imagery. The first example may be seen in the before and after shots of Krikalev’s take-off and landing. Near the beginning of the film, there is a scene in which the crew who are about to blast off to MIR are showcased to the media. Sharman sits flanked by Krikalev and Artsebarski with two large flags, British and USSR hanging behind them, symbolic of exemplary international relations facilitated by the Soviets. Krikalev is introduced as follows: “First engineer: Hero of the USSR, Sergei Konstantinovich Krikalev” (OoP 9:47). This scene is in stark contrast to the final scenes of the film in which Krikalev lands. He looks extremely pale and disoriented and the USSR flag on the side of his astronaut suit only enhances his redundant appearance. The second example may be seen in the contrasting images between what is happening in the MIR context and what is happening in the earth context in the time period of August 1991. On 16th August, Arstebarski narrates, the crew tries to fill a large balloon with air. Although the experiment fails, the imagery of the large silver balloon being filled with air and floating in space like some kind of sublime techno jellyfish, although alien-like is rather serene (OoP 37:19). Just two minutes later however, this moment is interrupted by images of rolling army trucks, tanks, explosions and frightened hysterical people, as chaos ensues in Moscow (OoP 39:43). Ujica leaves the date on the video footage so that one sees that this takes place on 21st August 1991. Artsebarsky informs the viewer that the crew of MIR are aware of the unsettled situation in Moscow, but that for them it is work as usual (OoP 41:54). This filmic juxtaposition leaves one with the feeling that life in space appears far preferable to life at home.528 Thus, through these juxtapositions, the viewer of Out of the Present gains a kind of omnipotent perspective, by being able to see what is going on in the discordant earth and MIR contexts.

Still, this is not to say that the crew of MIR remain unaffected by the political circumstances of earth. In fact, it is in this context that Krikalev must stay in space almost

528 This is despite the fact that the burst balloon is a failed experiment.
twice as long as planned. Artsebarski explains: “The launching site in Baykonur is in Kazakhstan. The political decision to send a Kazakh as a second researcher [to MIR] complicated the mission’s planning. That’s why Sergei Krikalev had to stay 6 more months in space. Volkov had to come up and I had to fly back, both without a flight engineer” (OoP 55:10). After this new crew arrives, one notices that USSR flag usually hanging in the background of space station shots has been replaced by a Russian one. One may see this act as an extreme example of that which Enderson refers to in the context of hybridisation and the production of cars, that is, “we might instead consider it as the means by which national identity is redistributed [in space!]”.529 It is at this point that the most pivotal moment in *Out of the Present* occurs when Krikalev is interviewed by the media (OoP 1:20:13).

Reporter: At your take-off the USSR still existed and Gorbachev was in power. Your place of birth was called Leningrad, today it’s St Petersburg. Which of these changes impresses you most of all?
Krikalev: I didn’t get the question.

Reporter: When you took off, the USSR still existed, it was Leningrad, not St Petersburg, Gorbachev was in power, today it’s Yeltsin. Which of these changes is most important to you? Which one surprises you most of all?
Krikalev: Hard to say. So much has happened. But what surprises me most of all, perhaps, is this: Just now it’s night, before it was light and the seasons rush past. That’s most impressive of all you can see up here.

Here, one sees disconnection between the reporter and Krikalev in a similar way to the conversation between Artsebarski and Taras (though in the reverse direction), as indicated when Krikalev says “I didn’t get the question.” Even when the question is rephrased he cannot come up with an answer that relates to the events in the former USSR.530 Instead he refers to the experience of global time and the phenomenal extended world view.

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529 Enderson 118.
530 On 3 December 1989, at the Malta Summit, Gorbachev and U.S.A. President, George Bush, made a pivotal set of announcements concerning lasting peace and a transformation of the East-West relationship. This is regarded by some scholars as marking the end of the Cold War. Alternatively, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 is considered by others as marking as the end of the Cold War. See Joseph Nye, "Who Caused the End of the Cold War," *The Huffington Post*, 9 Nov. 2009, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-nye/who-caused-the-end-of-the_b_350595.html>. My approach to the analysis of these historical occurrences follows Batchen’s method of looking for a discursive desire that leads to a change of events and takes into account the various experiences of individual travellers. This approach is instead of trying to pinpoint exact dates as being of singular and only significance to a particular historical shift. Here, for example, a mobilities perspective provides a nuanced viewpoint when we take into account that for Krikalev, while aboard the space station MIR, the collapse of the Soviet Union was experienced as a kind of insignificant, far-removed idea.
**Shifting values**

Generally speaking, what one sees in *Out of the Present* is a potential shift in values related to a new form of mobility, something is lost: there is a period of time in which one cannot relate to one’s family in the same way as if one were within the earth context, while something else is gained: the cosmonaut is privileged to gain a unique kind of space traveller identity from his experience. One can see that for the Austrian cosmonaut Franz Viehböck (the first Austrian in space who left earth to join the crew on MIR on 2nd October 1991) the chance to enter space is valued above family milestones. This is indicated when he says just before take-off: “I wish my daughter a good start in life” (OoP 49:50). Similarly, in a postscript to his interview with Virilio, Ujica makes note of further changes that have occurred in the realm of space travel since the 1999 interview:

P.S. Since this conversation took place, nearly four years have passed and the MIR station has been scrapped. A new international space station is under construction. With it, mankind is about to establish a permanent outpost in space. We are slowly preparing to abandon the Earth. Put another way, we will probably forever be commuting between gravity and weightlessness. In this way history will cease to occur solely in gravity. That is the end of gravity-centrism. That is THE END OF GRAVITY.

—Andrei Ujica, Berlin, 2002

Fast forwarding to 2012, Ujica’s statement made ten years previously appears to be realising itself. It has been announced that Hollywood celebrity Ashton Kutcher has become the 500th customer to pay US 200,000 to travel to space in 2013 on Richard Branson’s Virgin galactic spaceline. The end of gravity thus marks a new era of social stratification based on a culture of who can afford extreme mobility. One may only imagine what consequences will emerge as wealthy customers embark on “a 2½-hour flight with about five minutes of weightlessness and views of Earth that until now only astronauts have been able to experience.” The following prediction written by journalist J.R.L Anderson in 1970, it appears, is closer than ever: “Perhaps in the next century weightlessness will be an

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531 Ujica and Virilio 74.
533 “Galactic Customer.”
experience so general that it will be accepted as an incident of air travel, like the boiled sweets that are handed out to passengers on take-off.”

There is one particular scene near the end of Out of the Present which encapsulates this transition to which Anderson refers (OoP 1:22:35). The scene plays out as follows. First, the viewer sees a series of shots of the earth from above – landscapes, sea and clouds – a recurring motif throughout the documentary film. Next, one sees Krikalev and another crew member looking out the space shuttle window toward the earth while filming the view, most likely with the video camera Ujica supplied (OoP 1:24:16). Subsequently, there is a shot which is from the final scene of 1972 science fiction film Solaris, directed by Andrei Tarkovsky (OoP 1:24:29). The camera pans upward from a bird’s eye view of the protagonist’s house, through the earth’s atmosphere. Finally, the house is revealed to be situated on a mysterious planet, called “Solaris”, in space. Finally, we hear the voiceover of one of the space station MIR cosmonauts who states: “We watch the Earth” (OoP 1:25:23). Ujica’s insertion of the 1972 film segment into the 1995 film and his emphasis on the new extra-terrestrial gaze may be seen as an example of that which Angelopoulos refers to as a “moment [that] consists of the past and the present, the real and the imaginary, all of them blending together into one” (cited above). An imagined filmic vision of the future (from Solaris) blends almost seamlessly into a documentation of the present (Out of the Present). This combination of scenes and emphasis on the gaze could be described as simultaneously privileged, awe-inspiring, overwhelming and even terrifying. Various responses with respect to how one comes to terms with such ambiguity in the contemporary period of mobilities are examined in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Coming to Terms with the Point-of-no-return 1995-2010

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of Loest’s, Delius’s and Ujica’s travel texts have demonstrated some of the ways in which in the years around 1989/90 a paradigm shift takes place which offers a new or alternative view and experience of the world, history and culture. In the contemporary period, I have argued, travel is seen as a human right, but what are the consequences of this assertion? Should there be political, economic and environmental limitations on how much travel takes place? Is all this travel good for us culturally? Are travellers thinking critically at all about what they are doing? In terms of travel one can identify a difference between the Sattelzeit and the contemporary period and in those practices which are commonly conceived of as normal in each respective context. In broad terms, during the earlier period, travellers broke away from the norm of dwelling-life in order to see what mobility might make possible in their lives. Alternatively, in the contemporary period, it appears that people who could take advantage of the new mobilities but who choose instead to travel less, or not at all, are seeking to discover how remaining in one place can add value to their lives and to contribute to broader humanitarian and environmental concerns. Thus, whereas earlier, travel was seen as a form of social resistance, now not travelling is seen as a form of social resistance.  

It is clear that some advocates are calling for a critical examination of some of the assumptions underlying current globalisation processes. For example, German writer Ingo Schulze’s simple, yet provocative questions “Wem nutzt das?” and “Wer verdient daran?” are appropriate not only in the context of the Eurozone crisis but also in relation to mobility in the contemporary period. More generally, travel texts, I contend, now play the role of

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536 Additionally, not travelling could be viewed as a sign of social inequality or disadvantage, although here, the main focus is on those who have the choice to be mobile.

offering spaces in which to question current assumptions and to think in an alternative way about the new mobilities.

5.2 Analytical Overview
In this chapter, I provide an examination of a selection of travel texts published between 1995 and 2010. The analytical structure of this section is itself predicated on a conceptual journey which takes contemporary iterations of Homer’s *Odyssey* as its starting point and Angelopoulos’s *Ulysses Gaze* (1995) as its connecting thread. The additional texts which I examine here include Christoph Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher* (2010), and, once more, Andrei Ujica’s *Out of the Present* (1995).

The first part of this analytical journey begins with a comparison of Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Ulysses’ Gaze*. To what extent may the film be considered a reiteration of the epic? What do the disparities between both texts reveal about the contemporary period of mobilities? I consider such questions under the thematic heading of: ‘A Break with the Odyssey: from Ithaca to Sarajevo.’ This highlights significant points of transition. In the contemporary text, Ithaca as an ideal has become a mobile gaze and Ulysses’s final destination is the dystopian site of Sarajevo. The increase in mobility, Angelopoulos says, means that textually speaking, it is impossible to imitate Odysseus in the current context. Instead, re-inscription requires a process of adaptation. Then, under the heading, ‘Film, the Gaze and Arrivals,’ I apply the concept of the gaze to take a closer look at the ways in which Angelopoulos communicates his journey narrative. The gaze can be thought of in terms of the way in which the director exploits advantages of the medium of film, the sensory experience he transmits to his viewer. The gaze also signifies the varying and complex perspectives of the protagonist in the film, the viewer’s and the director’s vision. This is a similar approach to that developed by the film theorist Francesco Casetti who, in his monograph *Inside the Gaze: The Fiction Film and Its Spectator*, considers, “how the film constructs a spectator, assigns the spectator a place [or
here, perhaps a sense of placelessness], sets him upon a certain course." Finally, I address the theme ‘The End of Bildung?’ Angelopoulos refers to Sarajevo as a symbol of thwarted hopes, referring to the war-related historic events that took place there at the beginning and ending of the twentieth century. This indicates a lack of human social development and the idea that travel has not been taken advantage of in terms of its educational and formative potential, as it was in the Sattelzeit.

I then move on to consider Christoph Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher* under the heading of ‘Confronting the Contemporary Audience.’ Ransmayr has grave concerns over the current state of the world, including damage to the environment and the proliferation of war. He feels that a play which takes a highly recognisable figure such as Odysseus and exposes the hero as a criminal has the potential to make people face up to the realities of human caused destruction. In the next section, I look at the similarities and difference between two films that were released in the same year, 1995, namely *Ulysses’ Gaze* and *Out of the Present*, first under the heading of ‘Spatially Distinct, Temporally United’. In, *Ulysses’ Gaze* the protagonist ‘A’, has an earth-bound, obstructed gaze as he travels through the war-torn dystopia of the Balkan crisis. In contrast, the cosmonaut Krikalev, in *Out of the Present*, enjoys an unrestricted utopian gaze from space. Yet, at the same time, both figures share a weakness which points toward the weakness of humans in dealing with the present moment: ‘A’ does not appear to take in the war around him and instead focuses on recovering the gaze in a lost set of film reels. In a similar vein, Krikalev cannot emotionally connect with events happening at home in Russia, namely the dissolution of the USSR. Here I propose a term, *Gegenwartsbewältigung*, for conscious reflection which relates to the contemporary function of Bildung. It is a call by writers and filmmakers for humans to learn to come to terms with the consequences of the mobilities of the contemporary period. For example, while

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technological innovations increase or augment mobility they also enable the destruction of war and environmental damage. Increased travel in some cases also leads to the effacing of cultural memory and a loss of home or of the possibility of identifying oneself strongly with a particular place.

Under the heading ‘Goodbye, Socialism – a Complete End?’, I then closely examine a specific scene from *Ulysses’ Gaze* in which ‘A’ rides on a barge with a giant dismembered statue of Lenin roped to it. I consider this scene in relation to historic events experienced by Angelopoulos and the idea of his generation’s crisis and the end of an ideology of hope for the future inspired by socialism. The following section, entitled, ‘Beyond the End of History’ considers the issues of whether, given these rather dystopian images of contemporary journeys, there is any hope for the future. In this way, *Bildung*, when considered as taking on the function of critically reconsidering the state of contemporary mobilities, takes on a sense of urgency. Travel texts thus increase in significance as potential platforms for the renegotiation of travel, its advantages and disadvantages. Here, I propose that one approach to looking at different ways of dealing with the present moment and the future is to analyse the final scenes of the selected films and other travel texts – the final messages communicated from the writer or filmmaker to the reader/audience member. Interestingly, a number of these end sections re-inscribe in some form the final section of Odysseus’s journey in Homer’s *Odyssey*, that is, Odysseus’s homecoming to Ithaca. They commonly reflect on a point which is often overlooked: although the experience of Homer’s Odysseus may be regarded as the image of an ideal homecoming, his journey is in fact, destined to continue beyond the narrative endpoint of the *Odyssey*, as I set out in Chapter Two. Thus there is an attempt to counter the commonplace reading of Homer’s *Odyssey* as ideal and complete, and reread it instead as contested and temporary.
Under the heading ‘The Journey Continues,’ I address the ending of Odysseus, Verbrecher. In these final scenes, Ransmayr implicitly raises some important points that are often overlooked, for example, that a homecoming, if this is at all possible, requires that the returning traveller is accepted by those who stayed behind. And those who stayed behind, who are frequently women, often do not suffer from the kind of cultural memory loss of the traveller, who expects that the place and the people he left behind will remain the same for his return. Penelope, Odysseus’s wife, tries to communicate with her husband to make him realise how Ithaca has changed and of the damage which he has wrought upon his own family, in particular his son. In order to do so, she draws on the discourse of Homer’s Odyssey. Yet unable to face up to the reality of the present, Odysseus’s last hope lies in leaving Ithaca and travelling onward.

Finally, I return to reconsider the final scene of Ulysses’ Gaze under the heading ‘When I Return.’ In this scene, the viewer sees the effect of finally viewing the Manaki Brothers’ films on ‘A’. While not completely fulfilled by the seeing his longed-for gaze ‘A’ does experience a kind of catharsis, and, as the credits roll, the viewer feels a sense of hope for the future. Angelopoulos states that eventually there will be an upturn in the state of global society and one can improve upon the current situation of economic and cultural crisis in many ways. This involves the search for a balanced cultural space (neither overly pessimistic nor overly optimistic), the acknowledgement of home as an emotional state rather than a fixed geographical location, and the acceptance that the uncertain journey will continue. Finally, in this scene, particularly in its dialogue, I believe that Angelopoulos identifies some of the key elements that make the narrative of Homer’s Odyssey such an enduring object of cultural hybridisation.

I finish this travel text analysis with a discussion entitled ‘Fears of Finality.’ I discuss the fear of the lead actor of Ulysses’ Gaze of finishing the movie in the context of a wider
inability to come to terms with the uncertainty of present and future mobilities. I refer to Angelopoulos’s response in which he advocates letting go of fear, accepting some degree of uncertainty and considering new possibilities for dwelling, mobility, and homecoming. I then relate this point to a brief survey of media articles, for example, concerning various reactions to the supposed end of the world predicted by a particular interpretation of the Mayan calendar. I ask if it is possible to reach an emotional point of catharsis and hope at the end of journeys.

Broadly speaking, in this chapter I set out to identify some of the prominent thematic concerns of writers and filmmakers of travel texts critically engaged in the logic of the contemporary period of mobilities, that is, the way in which they identify, question and reformulate ideas about the cultural experience of travel. In doing so, I address questions such as: what is the contemporary role of Bildung, culture and technology in these texts?, why and how is Homer’s Odyssey reiterated in the contemporary period? and, finally, is there hope for the future, or has mobility gone too far? Prior to this textual analysis, I provide an overview of relevant historical global events in the contemporary period and how these relate to the selected travel texts.

5.3 Post-Wende: Global Crisis and the Changing Role of Writers and Filmmakers

In the Introduction, I presented Goethe’s Stein des guten Glücks as an aesthetic manifestation of his desire to find the ideal balance in life between the seemingly opposing notions of dwelling and travel. In the contemporary period, in which the world has passed a point-of-no-return in the sense that a return to dwelling-life is most likely now impossible, the search for existential balance has become ever more complicated as people travel greater distances at greater speed and with increased frequency. How can one begin to make sense of and respond to some of the extreme occurrences in this complex world of mobilities, such as mass immigration, terrorist attacks and global financial crises? I consider this question from three
perspectives. First, I look again at the work of political scientists Huntington and Fukuyama who propose sendarist-informed answers to contemporary cultural dilemmas with the United States of America as their point of departure. Second, I present the contrasting approaches of the political scientist Stefan Auer and the economist Chandrian Nair. Both scholars take the context of the financial crises of recent years in their respective regions of Europe and Asia and examine ways to move forward, but seek to place limitations on the current state of mobilities in matters of scale and speed. Third, I reflect on the ways in which writers and filmmakers of travel texts in the contemporary period play a vital role in critical reflection on the new mobilities, with examples from Ingo Schulze. I argue that the capacity of travel texts to open up a space in which to provide an alternative view or critical perspective on contemporary globalisation processes, while perhaps not the primary aim of the writer of filmmaker, takes on a political and potentially educative function.

Generally speaking, both Huntington and Fukuyama identify the period of 1989/1990 as a significant turning point in the history of the world. Yet, one may regard their explanations for these dramatic changes as outmoded because their approaches polarize and apply universalist and essentialist perspectives to entire groups of people. It is as though mobility, cultural diversity and plurality were threatening, non-desirable, and, ideally, non-existent. This line of thinking appears to have persisted, particularly in Huntington’s later work. For example, in his 2004 book, *Who Are We: The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, Huntington calls for “Americans to recommit themselves to the Anglo-Protestant culture, traditions, and values”, which have been threatened by immigration and transnationalism. He explains:

> [T]he salience and substance of this culture […] [have been] challenged by a new wave of immigrants from Latin America and Asia, the popularity in intellectual and political circles of the doctrines of multiculturalism and diversity, the spread of Spanish as the second American language and the

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539 Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?: the Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), XVII.
Hispanization trends in American society [...] and the growing commitment of elites to cosmopolitan and transnational identities.\textsuperscript{540} One might summarise Huntington’s general recommendation as follows: the United States of America should stop immigration, speak only English and conform, assimilate, or revert to the ideals of Anglo-Protestant culture. Huntington attempts to deflect any accusations of racial or ethnic discrimination with the rather meek claim that his is “an argument for the importance of Anglo-Protestant culture, not for the importance of Anglo-Protestant people.”\textsuperscript{541} The sense of threat to this imagined ideal and fixed-culture he perceives, one may infer, is to be countered by attempting to culturally homogenize North American society and to restrict the mobility of its citizens and of immigrants. The history of East Germany, as set out in the previous chapter, demonstrates that such an approach is unlikely to achieve a positive outcome.

Further, in relation to the attacks of September 11, 2001, Huntington writes, “[s]o long as Americans see their nation endangered, they are likely to have a high sense of identity with it.”\textsuperscript{542} There is an obvious danger in capitalising on such fear-engendering discourse: extreme circumstances in which people are emotionally vulnerable are utilised to garner support for intense, mono-culturally defined patriotic ends, and, in some cases, to generate antipathy toward cultural mobility in the form of immigration and cultural diversity and change.\textsuperscript{543} Again, this viewpoint rests on a fixed cultural ideal or a perspective which “locates bounded and authentic […] nations as the fundamental basis of human identity.”\textsuperscript{544} One could counter by arguing that, at one level, due to the intensity of contemporary mobilities, the world is already in a constant state of extremity, when compared to the Sattelzeit. Either way, travel texts, I suggest, can be usefully utilised to identify the co-existence of contrasting

\textsuperscript{540} Huntington 2004, XVII.  
\textsuperscript{541} Huntington 2004, XVII.  
\textsuperscript{542} Huntington 2004, XV.  
\textsuperscript{544} Sheller and Urry 208-9.
standpoints on culture, from those people who believe that extreme circumstances can be taken advantage of for the gain of personal and national interests, to those who instead seek out balance and normality in an uncertain, changing world.

Then again, do exceptional situations in some cases indeed call for extreme responses? Is there any merit in Huntington’s viewpoint as a justification for the reestablishment of stable national boundaries and identities, and the discouragement of certain forms of cultural mobility? Certainly, since the global financial crisis of 2008 and the ensuing Eurozone crisis of late 2009 to 2012, questions relating to issues of dwelling vis-à-vis mobility and national vis-à-vis supranational or cosmopolitan identities have become increasingly common in academic, political and media discourses. Reverting back to an ideal of culture based exclusively on sedentary, mono-cultural nation-states is a questionable option, given that the world now appears to have passed the point-of-no-return with regard to mobilities. Yet, at the same time, the perceived solutions that were encouraged around 1989 based on mobilisation, viz. the expansion of Western liberal democracy and the growth of global capitalism, seem in many ways to have led to the worldwide crises of recent years. Auer illustrates this point in his 2011 article, “Europe’s self-destructive article of faith.“ He sets out arguments that cast doubt over Fukuyama’s claim that the world has reached “the endpoint of man’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal

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545 For example, in Schlink’s *Heimkehr*, which I discuss in the next chapter, the reader is provided with an exemplification of the proposition that fear which results from extreme circumstances brings out the true qualities of people. The father of the protagonist, John de Baur, expresses aspects of Huntington’s view above. For example he gives the following advice to a student he is teaching “Seien Sie mißtrauisch! […] Trauen Sie weder dem Guten noch dem Normalen! Die Wahrheit offenbart sich erst im Angesicht des Bösen und im Augenblick der Krise” (HK 306). At a later point in the novel, De Baur sets up a dramatic scenario to test his students’ reactions. His students travel to a remote lodge and group of terrorist-like kidnappers take over threaten the students (HK 327-357). De Baur watches on hidden cameras and his motivations are later revealed: “Es hatte mit der Wahrheit der Ausnahmesituation zu tun. Wenn alles normal läuft erfahren wir nicht, wer wir sind. Wir lassen uns täuschen, täuschen uns selbst, und nur in der Ausnahmesituation passiert mit uns […] [die] Wahrheit” (HK 360).

democracy as the final form of human government” (cited above). Concerning Germany and
the Eurozone, Auer states:

[T]he economic crisis of 2010-2011 has also manifested itself as a crisis of European democracy. The
creation of a monetary union with a shared currency, the euro, is a project that, in many ways, arose out
of the events of 1989-1990, in particular, the perceived need to anchor a reunified Germany more
firmly within Europe. The common currency was always much more than a transnational medium of
exchange. From its inception, it was intended to be the symbol of united Europe par excellence. Rather
than achieving this, the Eurozone crisis has reinforced latent suspicions, if not hostilities, between EU
nations.547

The existence of a common currency in Europe has failed to sustain a sense of supranational
cultural identity in the face of economic downturn. The Wende was largely perceived as a
chance to open up Europe and its national, economic and cultural borders. Yet, the financial
constraints placed on some nations (such as Greece) by other countries who provide financial
bail-outs (such as Germany) have more recently led to the resurfacing of hostilities between
nations. Accordingly, Guérot poses two significant questions relating to mobilities and the
financial crisis, the first relating to German vis-à-vis European cultural identity, and the
second to Germany’s leadership role in the Eurozone:

[A] new ‘German question’ for the 21st century has emerged on the horizon: how European is
Germany today? And how much European integration is still politically manageable in Germany? […]
Germany must decide whether it wants to outgrow the EU and to go global alone or to be the main
actor – and the main winner – in leading the whole of Europe into a new global role in the 21st
century.548

Europe, of course, is not the only the only global region in which attempts are being
made to rethink economic and social processes. The Hong Kong based environmental
consultant Chandran Nair calls for an Asian-led reconsideration of Western consumption-
driven capitalism in his 2011 book Consumptionomics: Asia’s Role in Reshaping Capitalism
and Saving the Planet.549 Nair has criticised Fukuyama for the latter’s “odd view of the world

547 Auer 1.
548 Ulrike Guérot, “How European is the new Germany?: Reflections on Germany’s Role in Today’s Europe,”
549 Chandran Nair, Consumptionomics : Asia’s role in reshaping capitalism and saving the planet (Singapore:
based on an inherent belief in American exceptionalism.”\textsuperscript{550} However, one might also argue that, at first glance, Nair’s suggested approach is implicitly predicated on dwelling-life ideals. First, he argues for localised political thinking: “We in Asia and in Africa must start to redefine [the question], what do we mean firstly by rights? What does democracy actually mean?”\textsuperscript{551} Second, in the context of automobility, he problematizes the idea that travel is a human right: “I have argued for instance that car ownership is not a human right”, and simultaneously argues for prioritising “basic [dwelling] rights” of “safe housing with electricity.”\textsuperscript{552} Third, Nair condones the development of a culture-specific (non-Western, nationally-defined) approach: “rights become a very different question in the experience of the developing world. But all of the narrative has been defined through Western lenses.”\textsuperscript{553}

The interviewer sums up his view that what is required is “less inter-country cooperation and more nation-level action.”\textsuperscript{554} However, Nair is not calling for the complete cessation of global exchange of people and products between East and West, but rather a sense of fiscal balance or what he terms “constrained capitalism.”\textsuperscript{555} The current Western model of development he maintains: “does not believe there are limits and this is simply a lie or, kindly put, “being in denial.”\textsuperscript{556} Although Nair’s focus is on the nations of the Asian region developing independently from what he calls the Western paradigm, significantly, Auer advocates a comparable approach for the European context based on reduced regional foci:

\begin{quote}
[P]eople in individual member states might force their politicians to reclaim national sovereignty[...][.] This would include, in at least some countries of the Eurozone, the re-introduction of the national currency. Pursued in an orderly and managed way this is almost certainly the best option. [...]
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{552} Hill.

\textsuperscript{553} Hill.

\textsuperscript{554} Hill.

\textsuperscript{555} “Growing Consumption.”

\textsuperscript{556} “Growing Consumption.”
Germany would do a better service to Europe by pursuing its national interest and managing an orderly exit from the Eurozone.\footnote{557} At the same time, Auer admits, such a proposal “is not even seriously considered.”\footnote{558} In general terms, one may say, Nair and Auer do not push for a reversal of history, but a reconsideration of the question of the political economy in terms of slowing down and downsizing, rather than mobilising and globalising.

Again, writers of fiction and filmmakers may be usefully consulted for alternative views on the current world situation concerning cultural mobility and financial crises. For example, in a 2012 radio interview which took place as part of the Leipzig book fair, Germans writers Ingo Schulze and Peter Schneider were asked their opinions of the Eurozone crisis, and the broader question of: “Was ist eigentlich gut für ein demokratisches Gemeinwesen: Mensch oder Markt?”\footnote{559} Schulze appeals to the members of the public and to political leaders to take a critical look at the current political and economic situation and alternative solutions to present crises. He argues that the emergence of widespread complacency, from the start of the Wende, was a contributing factor to the crisis: “[D]as hängt schon mit 89/90 zusammen, dass man sagt ‘wir leben jetzt in einer alternativlosen Welt […] wir sitzen alle in einem Boot’. Das ist, glaube ich ja, ein falscher Ansatz, denn es gibt ja doch sehr sehr grosse Unterschiede in diesem Land.”\footnote{560} As has already been noted, before the Fall of the Berlin Wall, there was widespread protest in East Germany as GDR citizens called for the same rights as West Germans, including the right to travel. However, post-Wende times, Schulze implies, heralded comparatively less contestation with regard to the political and economic extensions of German unification in 1990, (i.e. the incorporation of East Germany into the West German political and economic system), and later the establishment of the Eurozone and introduction of the euro in 1999. In other words, complacency has

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\footnote{557}{Auer 8.}
\footnote{558}{Auer 8.}
\footnote{559}{Bille.}
\footnote{560}{Bille.}
certainly also contributed to the Eurozone crisis of late 2009 to 2012. This point is supported by Guérot’s assessment: “Today, Germany […] feels overburdened and tired of leading the Union. The German public has lost its enthusiasm for European integration.”

Schulze calls for people to trust themselves to question what is going on and for leaders and high-level decision-makers to consult more with everyday citizens. In a similar vein to Nair and Auer, he emphasises the importance of working within a nation and consulting citizens. Central to this process, he says, should be basic questions that have been largely ignored in the contemporary period, such as “Wem, nutzt das?” and “Wer verdient daran?” Schulze explains:

Ich fühle mich als ein Bürger dieses Landes. […] Zum anderen haben wir [Schneider und ich] einfach eine Möglichkeit zu sprechen und durch unsere Arbeit, durch Lesen u.s.w kommen wir mit einer ganzen Menge Menschen in Kontakt und glauben doch noch irgendwie eine alltägliche Beziehung zu dem zu haben, worüber wir sprechen. Im Gegensatz, glaube ich, zu Experten, die das oft so verengern, dass die entscheidenden Dinge dabei weg bleiben.

Thus, contemporary writers (and, I would add, filmmakers) through a keen cultural awareness, intense contact with the everyday citizens and a propensity toward a high volume of reading are well positioned to help reinvigorate critical thought and voice the concerns of the normal citizens against the dominating elite. Herein lies a change in the function of the concept of Bildung over time. For travel text writers of the Sattelzeit, the concept of Bildung was employed with reference to the possibility of becoming educated by way of travel, and thereby gaining a higher social status. In the contemporary period, the concept of Bildung changes, if the writer or filmmaker instead takes on a measure of social responsibility by providing critical reflection on the impact of the new mobilities on culture and exploring the positive and negative consequences of travel on people’s lives. In the following analysis, I begin an examination of this proposition in relation to contemporary iterations of Homer’s Odyssey.

561 Guérot 2. At the same time, she does not believe Germany is the only EU State to blame for the financial crisis: “To be sure: Germany is not solely responsible for the current state of the EU”, Guérot 2.
562 Bille.
5.4 Travel Text Analysis: Contemporary Odysseys

5.4.1 A Break with the Odyssey: from Ithaca to Sarajevo

Homer’s Odyssey and Theodoros Angelopoulos’s Ulysses’ Gaze (1995)

The Greek filmmaker Theodoros Angelopoulos’s film Ulysses’ Gaze follows the journey of the protagonist simply known as ‘A’ across seven countries of the war-torn Balkans, from Athens, Greece, to Sarajevo, Bosnia. ‘A’, played by Harvey Keitel, is a Greek filmmaker who has returned from the U.S.A after thirty years in search of three lost reels of film captured by the Manaki Brothers, Yanakis and Miltos. The Manaki Brothers are historically significant because, as ‘A’ informs the viewer via a narrating voice, they captured the first film ever made in Greece and the Balkans. At the very beginning of Ulysses’ Gaze one sees a (real-life) short clip of women in the process of weaving in the Manaki Brothers’ home village of Advella in 1905 (UG 00:01:16). ‘A’’s journey is motivated by the idea that this is not the first Manaki Brothers’ film; he is convinced there is an earlier gaze yet. In an interview, Angelopoulos recalls how these various themes and influences came together came together to form the idea for this film:

I wanted to make film somehow related to The Odyssey, and when I visited my co-writer, Tonino Guerra […] we talked over what sort of journey it might be. Then we began to discuss the ethnic conflict in the Balkans, and as we spoke, a young woman arrived, sent by the daughter of the Italian sculptor Giacomo Manzù, with a present for Tonino. And there was a letter from Manzù’s daughter saying how he used to have an idée fixe about the gaze of Ulysses, who in his travels had seen the entire human adventure. And that’s how we came to the title of our film.563

As the comment above and the title suggests, Ulysses’ Gaze was inspired by Homer’s Odyssey and this connection invites comparison between the protagonists of these narratives.564 In order to identify some of the differences and similarities between the journeys of Homer’s Odysseus and Angelopoulos’s ‘A’, one can begin by looking at what motivates each of them to travel. Whereas Odysseus yearns for Ithaca, a fixed home he eventually reaches, ‘A’ longs for a set of film reels which remain undeveloped. In an

564 Fainaru 2001(b), 94.
interview with Andrew Horton conducted in 1995, Angelopoulos was asked about the relationship between Odysseus and ‘A’, and the protagonists’ respective object of intense longing:

I see Odysseus […] as a “reference point” [for ‘A’] […] Let’s say that what I do is more like adaptation than imitation. So it is a figurative “match” in the sense that my Odysseus is in a similar situation as that of the Homeric character, but with the difference that my character’s Ithaca happens to be the missing film that has not been developed. That’s Ithaca in this film. And indeed, like the ancient Odysseus, this modern fellow must use a variety of skills to complete his travels successfully. For the journey creates obstacles he must overcome.\(^{565}\)

Generally, Angelopoulos’s comments imply that the basic human practice of journeying remains in place across time. This is the primary factor linking Odysseus to ‘A’; both protagonists must develop particular skills to overcome obstacles and journeying as a motif retains its strong significance in the present period. Angelopoulos reinforces this point in another interview: “Für mich ist der Mythos des ewig Suchenden und Reisenden eine wunderbare Voraussetzung, um [auch] von heute zu erzählen.”\(^{566}\) However, at the same time, the contemporary period of new mobilities means that we are past a point-of-no-return. For this reason ‘A’ is an adaptation rather than an imitation; the conditions of the modern period render copying Odysseus exactly impossible. This is because increased mobility changes the very notion of home or homecoming and thus the meaning of “completing one’s travels successfully” (arriving) and the “variety of skills” needed to do so changes.

5.4.2 Film, the Gaze and Arrivals

_Ulysses’ Gaze_

Angelopoulos excels in mobilising the potential of film to engage critically the viewer’s mind as well as the senses. On this point, in reference to _Ulysses’ Gaze_, Rutherford comments:

“The particular quality of the cinematic intelligence […] could be encapsulated as an understanding of the sensory intensification of experience […] […] [This is] the vehicle by

\(^{565}\) Horton, “‘What Do our Souls Seek?’: an Interview with Theo Angelopoulos,” 99.

which an affective charge is translated from filmmaker to audience.” A different mode of representation would arguably have had less impact in conveying the important ideas under negotiation in the narrative, such as ‘A’’s odyssey as an *adaptation* of Odysseus’s ur-journey. The affective charge to which Rutherford refers is transferred from filmmaker to audience predominantly via the sense of sight. This process, along with other ideas conveyed by the film, may be symbolised in terms notion of the *gaze*. The gaze may be said to unite the ideas of the medium of film, of sensory experience, and of multiple and complex perspectives – of Angelopoulos, of ‘A’, of the Manaki Brothers, of the viewer – through sight. For example, in the film generally, the dark hues, constant shrouds of mist, fog, ubiquitous snow, grey clouds, decaying buildings, bomb blasts, through which ‘A’ travels, seem to render the viewer herself partially sighted or disoriented. Again, the gaze may be understood as an ideal, a vision encapsulated in the lost films of the Manaki Brothers. In this case, the gaze becomes ‘A’’s motivating factor for travel. This aspect of the gaze is rather complex because the Manaki gaze, an ideal Ithacan image, is a mobile destination to which one can travel in one’s mind but not necessarily reach corporeally. Depending on the emphasis of the filmic moment, it becomes a link to or break with the past.

Further, one might say even say that Angelopoulos’s gaze produces a kind of cinematic time-space compression. The filmmaker’s gaze appears projected in the screen image to inhabit space and, in the process, blur time. On this point he notes “For me, my style is a way of trying to assimilate space and time so that space becomes the passing of time.” Angelopoulos gives the example of one scene from *Ulysses’ Gaze* in which five years in the history of one family, of Romania, and of Europe pass by during a short waltz in one room.

In part, this represents Angelopoulos’s general belief that “[e]very moment consists of the

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568 Andrew 2001, 92.
569 Andrew 2001, 92.
past and the present, the real and the imaginary, all of them blending together into one.”

Considering the film in its entirety, this diachronic, temporally-compressing aspect of the gaze, shows the viewer that although time has passed – a whole century of events, as I explain below – when considered developmentally, it may as well be that no time at all had passed, for humans have not progressed much in terms of their relations to one another. It is as though by way of the gaze and these filmic images, Angelopoulos urges the viewer to come to terms with the sobering present-day reality: Ithaca, dwelling-life, homecoming in the traditional sense of mobility-singular – these former ideals are now a myth. The enforced visual impairment of the viewer underscores the point that the gaze of mobility singular is forever lost. Such notions now belong to the hazy realms of the imagined past, and this is partly the fault of humankind.

Again, one can illustrate this point more precisely by drawing a comparison between the journeys of Homer’s Odysseus and ‘A’, and their respective visions of arrival – both imagined and real. For Odysseus, an arrival in Ithaca is a realisable, tactile reality. Though at times threatened, Ithaca remains predominantly a vibrant, clear image based on memory with overwhelmingly positive associations. This is demonstrated in the following previously cited line from the *Odyssey*: “The joy of seeing his own place so wrought upon Odysseus that he fell kissing its bounteous soil, before invoking the nymphs with up-stretched hands”. Like Odysseus, ‘A’’s journey is motivated by an ideal image but it is based on a strong imaginary and a desire to recover the historical vision encapsulated in the lost films, rather than memories of his own lived experience. ‘A’ longs to see what Odysseus sees, i.e. Ulysses’ gaze, albeit in a different form – represented on screen in a motion picture. By way of production techniques, Angelopoulos conveys to the viewer that ‘A’ is unable to see Ulysses’s gaze in the same way as Homer’s Odysseus: “vision, the gaze itself, is constantly

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570 Fainaru 2001(b), 98.
undercut, prefigured or superseded by sound [...] and finally collapses in Sarajevo”, Rutherford writes. The collapse Rutherford refers to is likely the following: ‘A’ finally does come across the Manaki reels in Sarajevo and watches them, yet this act of arrival, unlike Odysseus’s arrival, leaves ‘A’ emotionally unfulfilled. The spectator too, who perhaps expects to capture a glimpse of the Manaki films, also remains unfulfilled, as all we see on the cinema screen is blank white flickering. However, on this point Angelopoulos notes, “what counts is not arriving, but the journey itself,” which I expand on in a subsequent discussion of the film’s ending.

5.4.3 The End of Bildung?

_Ulysses’ Gaze_

Still, a comparison of the two endpoints of Odysseus’s journey, Ithaca, and ‘A’’s journey, Sarajevo, indicates a strong divergence between these travel narratives. Ithaca and Sarajevo could not be more antithetical in their representations by Homer and Angelopoulos. In stark contrast to the “joy of seeing his own place” which overcomes Odysseus when he returns to his home of Ithaca, for Angelopoulos, Sarajevo is “ein Symbol enttäuschter Hoffnungen.” When asked why his film ends there, Angelopoulos refers to its significance as a historical site: “Wir stehen am Ausgang eines Jahrhunderts, das mit dem Attentat von Sarajevo und dem Ersten Weltkrieg begann und dort wieder endet.” Thus, Sarajevo is a symbol of dystopia marked by two events of bloodshed, namely, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria on 28 June 1914, which is widely regarded as the causal moment of World War I, and from 1992-1996, the city was the main site of the Bosnian War. “This proves to what extent we all failed”, Angelopoulos adds in another interview. How is it,

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571 Rutherford 73.
572 Andrew 2001, 90.
573 Dockhorn.
574 Dockhorn.
575 Fainaru 2001(b), 100.
one may ask, that, as Angelopoulos implies, humans have ended up at an historically advanced, yet in many respects socially static, point in time in which homecomings have become mythical and journeys have no clearly visible or tactile Ithaca-like end points? While Angelopoulos was in the process of preparing the screenplay for Ulysses’ Gaze, he found that assessing present-day society in relation to the past led him to a rather dystopian outlook. In a 1995 interview in the Berliner Zeitung, he was asked whether he felt that humans have learned anything from history:


One may make the following inferences from Angelopoulos’s comments: from approximately the beginning of the Sattelzeit to the present (“in den vergangenen Jahrhunderten”) global developments in the areas of Bildung (“als wenn die Welt nichts dazugelernt hätte”) and culture (“der Mensch hat sich in seinem Wesen kaum entwickelt”) have not kept pace with developments in technology (“[i]n der Technik wurde […] vieles erreicht”). This is a similar conclusion to that reached by Virlio who emphasises the often overlooked point that the development of technology inevitably goes hand in hand with the increased incidence of the accident: injury, death and disaster.577 Similarly, Angelopoulos’s implication here is that technology which has enabled us to travel physically has not been taken advantage of in terms of its educational potential; in the context of the Balkans, for example, military technology is mobilised to perpetrate mass genocide. To a great extent, Angelopoulos has lost hope and has a feeling of powerlessness analogous to the sense of lost vision which the viewer experiences while watching the blurred sequences of Ulysses’ Gaze. Perhaps then, the ultimate outcome of this film may be understood as the director’s last

576 Dockhorn.
577 See Virlio 2000.
chance to confront the viewer with the sense of hopelessness that blind acceptance of contemporary destructive forces brings in relation to the persistence of human suffering.

What then, does ‘A’’s journey to Sarajevo mean? And what should the spectator conclude from the seemingly final, obstructed filmic gaze of the developed Manaki reels? In order to find possible answers to such questions, it is necessary to conduct a detailed cross-sectional analysis of *Ulysses’ Gaze* in relation to other contemporary travel texts which also draw on Homer’s *Odyssey*. This approach invariably returns to the predominant thematic concern of Angelopoulos’s film, *Ulysses’ Gaze*, which concerns the return journey and the possibility of homecoming in the contemporary period.

### 5.4.4 Confronting the Contemporary Audience

**Odysseus, Verbrecher (2010) and Ulysses’ Gaze**

In 1991, the contemporary Austrian novelist and dramatist Christoph Ransmayr emphasised the potential of drama as a literary form with which to confront audiences with difficult truths. It is the moral imperative of today’s writer to expose the undesirable realities of the present caused by humans – such as, pollution, war, cultural memory loss and unaccountability – through theatrical performance:

> Was aber könne in einer Geschichte, auf einer Bühne, denn Größeres getan werden, als daran zu erinnern, was die Menschen sich selbst und einer dem anderen angetan hätten, daran zu erinnern, wozu die Menschen in ihrem Glück und in ihrem Elend fähig seien und was ihnen also auch in Zukunft noch winken oder drohen werde?

In 2010, he identified a reworking of the *Odyssey* as an effective vehicle by which to achieve these ends. Ransmayr took up his own challenge in his 2010 play, *Odysseus, Verbrecher: Schauspiel einer Heimkehr*. This drama shifts the figure of Odysseus and those homecoming scenes which ought to be the highlight of his journey and turns them upside down – from a utopian to a dystopian mode. In doing so, Ransmayr obliterates the idea of mobility-singular in the contemporary period, or of homecoming in the traditional sense of Homer’s

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In Ransmayr’s version of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is viewed not as a hero but as a bloodthirsty warmonger who has abandoned his family and home. In Homer’s version, the goddess Athene makes a passionate appeal to Zeus on Odysseus’s behalf: “[M]y heart is heavy for Odysseus, so shrewd, so ill-fated, pining in long misery of exile on an island which is just a speck in the belly of the sea” (cited above). This is in stark contrast to a comparable scene in Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher*. Soon after Odysseus returns to Ithaca, Athene urges him to face up to the reality that he was not well-regarded in his absence: “Städteverwüster! Den Städteverwüster hat man dich in den Abend- und Morgennachrichten genannt” (OV 16). In addition, she refers to his journey as “deine blutige Wallfahrt nach Troja” (OV 19).

One of the more obvious ways in which Ransmayr features human destruction to the planet on stage is by way of shattering utopian images of Ithaca. Instead of experiencing “[t]he joy of seeing his own place” and “kissing its bounteous soil”, Ransmayr’s Odysseus is faced with Ithaca as a kind of polluted dystopia which he cannot (or will not) recognise (cited above). Athene tries to persuade him to face up to the dire reality of what his home has become: “Siehst du die Müllberge? Das ist bloß Abfall – unter allem angeschwemmten Überfluß findet sich so viel Abfall, daß turmhohe Leuchtfeuer davon ewig brennen könnten” (OV 15). However, despite Athene’s appeals, Odysseus refuses to accept this place as his Ithaca, as he indicates in the following:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Odysseus</th>
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For example, Anderson finds examples of adventuring men who imbue the qualities of Odysseus, namely: “courage, selfishness, physical strength and competence, imagination, self-discipline, endurance, and competitiveness”, inside front cover. The continuation of such qualities, he believes, holds “a major hope for the future of mankind”, inside front cover. A quick survey indicates that in the contemporary period the concept of the odyssey is (still) used in media and advertising discourses to evoke positive associations related to adventure and mobility: in 1994 automobile manufacturers Honda, released a van model called “Odyssey”; a news article from the *Timaru Herald* reads ‘Daring odyssey to a notorious landmark’. Derek By referring to Odysseus as a criminal Ransmayr violently disrupts such discourses.
It is in this quotation that one may observe an interesting paradox with regard to the concept of mobile places. The image of Ithaca held in Odysseus’s imagination is what motivates him to continue his journey. However, it is exactly this mobile place of Ithaca travelling with him in his mind that eventually immobilises him, psychologically at least. The image of Ithaca which he has in his mind while travelling, cannot be reconciled with the place of arrival; he cannot connect with reality, when the mobile place in his mind does not match the changed physical landscape around him. This point is reinforced by the stage directions for Odysseus’s physical movements which immediately precede the quotation above: “Kniet nieder, hebt einen Kiesel auf, hielt ihn wie prüfend hoch […] Odysseus gräbt, pflügt, nun mit beiden Händen im Sand” (OV 20, author’s italics). Here, Odysseus tries unsuccessfully to grip physically onto the land, the stones and sand of his home place, so that he may find some way to reattach himself emotionally with it through sensory experience. One might conclude here that both Angelopoulos and Ransmayr convey the idea of their respective protagonist’s disconnection from a stable home via the senses. Whereas Angelopoulos focuses primarily on the gaze, Ransmayr’s sensory emphasis is tactile.

It is this kind of commonplace refusal to acknowledge the non-sublime elements of our world, such as on-going war and conflict and grave human-caused environmental damage, which Ransmayr finds particularly dangerous in the contemporary period. His Odysseus symbolises the collective denial of dystopian aspects of the contemporary period of new mobilities. This is indicated in an interview: “Odysseus trägt durch seine Bereitschaft, die Bilder seines Heimwehs für die Wirklichkeit zu halten, in einer tragischen Ausprägung Züge von uns allen.”\(^{580}\) There must be limits to the extent to which one looks beyond the reality of the present moment, or the extent to which one allows oneself to be homesick for a dwelling-life which is no longer possible. Ransmayr implies that the tragic ground of this

play, and, more generally, of the present state of human society lies in the fact that most people will not face up to the present realities of home as unstable notion, of mobility as a destructive force in terms of environmental damage, on-going genocide, and strained interpersonal relations.

5.4.5 Spatially Distinct, Temporally United

Out of the Present and Ulysses’ Gaze

Ulysses’ Gaze and Out of the Present were both released in 1995 and both critically engaged with the contemporary period of new mobilities. Given these similarities, the question arises, how can the gaze and sentiment of Ulysses’ Gaze be so very leaden and dystopian when compared with the clarity and brightness of the gaze in Out of the Present? At a surface level, one possible answer is simply that each filmmaker, influenced by his own experiences of mobility, represents the experience of the traveller in idiosyncratic ways. This observation notwithstanding, a deeper, more nuanced answer emerges when one compares the context of each film along spatial lines. By this I mean the perspectives made visible to the spectator from her standpoint, the directions in which she can see, the limits on how far she can see and the potential affective impact of the gaze on her. This approach contrasts and links the two internal and external conceptual worlds of textual narrative and production/reception, and draws again on the prominent theme of the gaze and the variations in traveller and viewer perspectives.

In Ulysses’ Gaze, ‘A’’s view is from below, an earthbound, obstructed gaze. ‘A’ is bound by gravity and time to a site of war-torn dystopia, which he tries to escape by seeking out another view. By contrast, in Out of the Present, Krikalev’s view is from above. He travels, weightless across time and space and his view is unrestricted, outward as he looks downward to a sublime earth, still full of wonder and possibility. As discussed above, Krikalev’s gaze, while liberating in one sense, suffers the drawback of rendering him
emotionally disconnected from what is taking place on earth. At the same time, Ujica provides the spectator with to see two perspectives, the view of the cosmonaut in outer space as well as the on-the-ground view of the pedestrian in Moscow. This is achieved through the inclusion of disarming shot sequences of roving tanks and highly distressed people in Moscow. One may regard *Ulysses’ Gaze* as a kind of extension to the short series of disturbing dystopian on-the-ground shots, for example, of shootings in Sarajevo, that are a part of *Out of the Present*. Thus, by taking both films into consideration, one gains access to a contrast between an *earthed* as opposed to an extra-terrestrial perspective on the experience of contemporary mobilities.

Additionally, in spite of the vast spatial distances between the viewpoints of ‘A’ and Krikalev, there are also some striking similarities between the temporally similar experiences of both travellers. Both *Ulysses’ Gaze* and *Out of the Present* highlight the inability of humans to deal with important aspects of the present moment. In both cases, this involves (not) coming to terms with the crumbling of ideals of Marxism-Leninism. Instead of confronting what is going on, ‘A’ looks back in time to his version of Ithaca or to the pre-1905 Manaki films; Krikalev looks beyond the USSR to the extra-global passing of time (“Just now it’s night, before it was light and the seasons rush past”) (cited above). Paradoxically, the gaze which ‘A’ eventually is privy to, does not appear to fulfil him and for the viewer is obstructed; the events taking place in Moscow when Krikalev is in space, seem disconnected both from his field of vision and his understanding. In this way, both Angelopoulos and Ujica appear to be imploring the viewer to confront and critically consider what is happening in the present moment on earth. With these observations in mind, one might go so far as to suggest that the German post-war concept and practice of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* or the struggle to come to terms with the past, may be turned around and adapted to a post-1989 contemporary worldwide struggle to come to terms with
the present as *Gegenwartsbewältigung*. Two further examples appear to affirm the position that the protagonists of both *Out of the Present* and *Ulysses’ Gaze* are caught up to some degree in a process of *Gegenwartsbewältigung*. As mentioned earlier, in *Out of the Present* a striking disconnection arises between the focus of a reporter’s questions which attempt to elicit Krikalev’s opinion regarding the events of USSR dissolution and Krikalev’s response. This is comparable to the example of Krikalev’s co-cosmonaut Artsebarski struggling to communicate with his son, Taras, about his experience in space. Is this sound evidence for concluding that the present geopolitical transformations and the agency behind dystopian forms of mobility may be the most pressing issues of today?

5.4.6 Goodbye, Socialism – a Complete End?

**Ulysses’ Gaze**

In *Ulysses’ Gaze*, there is another context which may similarly be considered in the light of the proposed concept of *Gegenwartsbewältigung*. There is a particularly poignant scene in which ‘A’ hitches a ride on a barge with a gigantic, dismembered statue of Lenin roped to it (UG 1:15:00). ‘A’ appears so engrossed in his quest to locate and develop the Manaki film reels that for him the barge is simply a means of transport, he is oblivious to and disconnected from the enormous emotional significance of what is taking place for the people of the Balkans around him.\(^{581}\) This scene plays out as follows.\(^{582}\) The barge moves slowly up the river and one sees ‘A’ standing at the front of the barge looking forward (UG 1:16:31). The camera then moves to the river banks where dozens of people rush and then stand frozen at

\(^{581}\) Initially, the viewer sees a transaction between ‘A’ and the ship’s captain, the latter of whom informs ‘A’ that the barge is heading from Odessa to Constanza, then up the Danube to Germany (UG 1:11:22). The captain then questions ‘A’, “Where the hell are you going? Don’t you know there’s a war?”, but does not wait for an answer from the seemingly unperturbed ‘A’.

\(^{582}\) In an interview, Angelopoulos describes the real-life experience which inspired this scene in the film: “This episode originated in a real scene I witnessed while they were dismantling this huge statue to put it on a ship. A small boat with a couple on it was crossing the harbour of Constanza, the Romanian port on the Black Sea. When the man noticed the enormous effigy of Lenin, he stood up and looked at it dumbfounded. The woman put her hand over his eyes and crossed herself. However, let’s not forget, in a manner of speaking this is also a funeral, and in such circumstances it is customary for people to make the sign of the cross”, Fainaru 2001(b), 97-8.
the sight of the disappearing Lenin drifting by; some fall to their knees and make the sign of the cross (UG 1:17:33). The sun sets and there is a dash of pink visible in the sky, some of the little colour present in the film. There is no dialogue for several minutes. It is as though the enormity of the image of the hacked-up past, drifting away downriver, and the emotive orchestral music allow no space for conversation. Then, one sees ‘A’ at night – perhaps one or two hours later – sitting on the shoulder segment of Lenin’s statue reading the diary of one of the Manaki brothers aloud (UG 1:19:52). He appears wholly engrossed in the story of the past and oblivious to the strangeness of the present moment of this scene, in which a redundant concrete Lenin seems to cradle him. Rutherford analyses what takes place in this scene as a process of grieving. She refers to it as an “extended eulogy to Lenin” in which, “the momentous history of the aspirations and allegiances, the demise and contradictions of the whole of communist Europe, glid[e] by in a solemn obituary.”

In a similar vein, Angelopoulos states, “in a manner of speaking this is also a funeral.”

Is it possible to read this film in terms of Angelopoulos’s general belief that “[e]very moment consists of the past and the present, the real and the imaginary, all of them blending together into one”? A brief survey of Angelopoulos’s life and experience of making films in response to socio-historical circumstances in Greece certainly aids in interpreting the significance of this filmic moment. Born in Athens in 1936, Angelopoulos lived through World War II (1939-1945) and the Greek Civil War (1946-1949). By the age of thirty, he was part of a youth movement which, sparked by the ideals of Marxism-Leninism, believed that the future of society lay in the political left. He began work for a left-wing newspaper, *Dimokrati Allaghi* in 1966, and his films of the late 1970s, such as *The Travelling Players* (1975), revealed “a history viewed from the Left that Greeks had not seen onscreen

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583 Rutherford 71-2.
584 Fainaru 2001(b), 97-8.
before.”

By the early 1980s, however, hope in the eventual triumph of left-wing ideology was lost. This occurred amid on-going political turmoil in Greece, the emergence of the Balkan crisis and, more generally, that which Angelopoulos sees as the retrogressive repetition of historical mistakes in the 20th century, as embodied in the infamous historic events that took place in Sarajevo. Angelopoulos sums up this point in a short statement in his interview in the Berliner Zeitung: “Meine Generation glaubte, daß man die Welt ändern kann. Und jetzt bin ich frustriert und enttäuscht.” While one must be careful not to treat ‘A’ as a filmic self-portrait of Angelopoulos himself, Andrew points out that Angelopoulos does admit that the film is “spiritually autobiographical”: “it’s about my ideas, the questions I ask about the Balkans, the cinema, the human condition.” In another interview he adds, “‘A’ [is] seeking a way out of the crisis that is not only his own, but that of an entire generation. […] to a great extent his crisis is my own too.”

Given these statements, in his interview with Angelopoulos, Horton asks the filmmaker about the nonetheless surprisingly emotive, soft quality of this scene in Ulysses’ Gaze:

Horton: In that scene, you have the camera track slowly around Lenin’s head. The shot is almost a loving or caressing action.
Angelopoulos: It’s goodbye to an era. I am saying goodbye to all of that, which is or was also part of me or my childhood and youth. That broken statue represents the end. A complete end.


587 Fainaru describes this transition period in Angelopoulos’s life, (reinforced with an interview statement), in the following: “As time passed and the political conditions in his own country and all over Europe changed, clear-cut notions of good vs. bad, of right vs. wrong and particularly right vs. left, were invaded by vast areas of grey. Angelopoulos came to accept the fact that power corrupts not only on the right but on the left, too. […] “For a very long time we used to dream that politics was not a profession; it was a creed, a faith, an ideal. But in recent years I have become convinced that politics is nothing more than a profession, that’s all”, he tells Edna Fainaru, in 1991”, Dan Fainaru, "Introduction,” Theo Angelopoulos: Interviews, ed. Dan Fainaru (U.S.A.: University Press of Mississippi, 2001(a)), VII-XVII, IX.

588 Dockhorn.

589 Andrew 91, author’s emphasis.

590 Fainaru 2001(b), 94.

Here one sees a reiteration of the point-of-no-return *Leitmotiv*, that is, the idea of “a complete end.” Angelopoulos looks to the hope embodied in the broken figure of Lenin with great affection and, in a context of current hopelessness, bids that past farewell. The scene is thus representative of a striking turning point in the filmmaker’s personal life or belief system, his cinematic career, and in a wider sense, a historic break from an irretrievable past in which a certain kind of socio-political hope still existed. Still, could one say that Angelopoulos’s rather negative outlook was the result of being over-enmeshed in some of the most dramatic and bloody events of world history? On the contrary, in an interview published in 2009, it does not appear that Angelopoulos has changed his stance on this issue of a world devoid of hope, despite the end of the Balkan crisis. Global crises have simply taken on a new economic form. He says:

> We have reached a dead end point in the social and political life of Greece; and if we add to this the economic crisis, we find superimposed on each other three parallel crises, social, political and economic. It is a very severe situation. Who suffers from this? Obviously the more vulnerable social and economic classes, but some other groups as well. Who? The young people. Ahead of them there is a closed horizon, there is no reference point, no future prospect.

Does the beginning of the twenty-first century mark the end of hope and political consciousness? Have the ideals and goals attached to mobility taken us too far from ourselves?

**5.4.7 Beyond the End (of History)?**

*Odysseus, Verbrecher*

The analysis of travel texts in the contemporary period thus far has largely painted a dystopian picture of a world in which mobility has gone too far, and the traveller directs his gaze away from human-caused problems. Instead of confronting uncomfortable or distressing

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592 This is similar to a scene from the film ‘Good bye, Lenin’, in which a statue of Lenin is lifted away by helicopter as an East German mother is faced with the end of socialism in the GDR and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, *Good bye, Lenin!*, dir. Wolfgang Becker, Twentieth Century Fox, 2003.

593 Jane Gabriel, "Theo Angelopoulos: “I am standing by you” ” *Open Democracy*, 7 Jan. 2009, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/a-closed-horizon>. The quotation continues: “they live in a world where whatever we hear about public life is scandal, corruption, crises, weaknesses and compromises. Young people become tangled up in this story; they feel the full burden and the weight of this story. The result is that without having full consciousness of what is going on, they have a profound need to break out of this shell, and they take to the streets”, Gabriel.
issues, the protagonist is wont instead to mobilise and seek utopia elsewhere. On his return to Ithaca, Ransmayr’s Odysseus is in denial, preferring the mobile place/home of his imagination to the reality of the landscape and people around him; Angelopoulos’s ‘A’ is so engrossed in the quest to recover an historic gaze, that the overwhelming horror of the Balkan crisis through which he travels seems to have comparatively little emotional impact on him; on the orbiting station MIR, the cosmonaut Krikalev in Ujica’s documentary-film seems to find utopia in space, in the weightlessness, the privileged gaze, and disconnection from on-the-ground political upheaval. But is this the endpoint at which the writers or filmmakers wish to leave their audience? Is there hope and are there experiences to look forward to? Or, are the pre-1989 hopes for a world of free mobility, so longed for by East Germans such as Erich Loest, Klaus Müller and those who protested for the unhindered right to travel abroad empty and ultimately futile?

There is another possibility. The imperative of these travel texts, which call on audience members to critically engage with the impact of mobilities, still offers a chance to find the positive opportunities and alternative answers and understandings, before it is too late, that is, before mobility becomes excessive and the world becomes a completely dystopian social, political and cultural space. The question remains: can there be a new beginning or a positive affirmation of life beyond that which Angelopoulos refers to as a “complete end”? This perhaps rests on a swift in the function of Bildung from the Sattelzeit to the contemporary period of mobilities. That is, a change involving a challenge to the conditions of the present, to question the development and use of mobilising technologies so that we may discursively reconstruct or forge new spaces for new forms of cultural memory and identification. Defined in these terms, this way the notion of Bildung takes on a sense of urgency and authority and becomes a critical lens for re-evaluating culture and technology.
Travel texts, I suggest, open up a space in which to realise the potential of these functions in this new form of Bildung. For example, Fredric Jameson finds that the unique cinematic gaze of Angelopoulos provides an opportunity to:

[M]ake a contribution to inventing a new politics beyond the current “end of history”, that paralysis of action in submission to the world market. […] [Angelopoulos’ work] afford[s] unexpected glimpses of the narrative forms of the future, an inconceivable high art yet to come of the epoch of globalization and transnational communication, and worldwide mass culture. (94)594

Contrary to Fukuyama’s claim that we as humans have arrived at “the endpoint of man’s ideological evolution”, there is still much working out to do when it comes to cultural movement and negotiating dwelling-life and mobility in the contemporary period of new mobilities, as the writers and filmmakers point out. Life goes on beyond the large-scale transition and dramatic historical events of the Wende. Despite Angelopoulos’s rather alarming rhetoric concerning the “parallel crises, social, political and economic”, and a time yet to come marked by “a closed horizon”, “no reference point”, and “no future prospect”, in the final sequences of Ulysses’ Gaze, as I will set out below, he also suggests an alternative outlook for the future. This involves the difficult task of first accepting that a complete endpoint has been reached, a genuine break with the past, acknowledging the point-of-no-return, and then, more importantly, consciously becoming aware of the new opportunities that may arise.

It is appropriate at this point in the analysis to examine the final scenes of the selected films and travel writing in order to look at different approaches to dealing with the present moment and the future. How is the concept of travel negotiated at the end of the selected travel texts? What does it mean now and what might it mean in the future? By doing so one may hope to comprehend the message that the writer or filmmaker intended to leave their audience with and the points of contrast and convergence between these various final messages. Interestingly, a number of writers and filmmakers from the contemporary period

end their narratives by re-inscribing in some form the final stage of Odysseus’s journey in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus’s homecoming to Ithaca.\(^{595}\) In particular, these texts commonly reflect on a point which is often overlooked: although Homer’s Odysseus’s homecoming in the original version of the myth may be seen as an ideal and completed return, in the era of modernity his journey seems destined to continue beyond the narrative end point of the *Odyssey*.

As mentioned earlier, in Homer’s *Odyssey*, while in Hades, Odysseus is warned by the ghost of Teiresias that his travails are not yet over.\(^{596}\) Thus, when he is reunited with Penelope in Ithaca he relays the message to her that there remains “immeasurable toil prescribed” (OD, 23: V.246-50):

> [The ghost of Tiresias] gave me word that I must take my shapely oar and wander through many places of men, until I find a people that know not the sea and have no salt to season their food. […] When another wayfarer passes me and says I have a winnowing fan on my stout shoulder, even there am I to strike my oar into the ground and offer for rich sacrifice to Kind Poseidon a ram, a bull and a ramping boar. Then I may return homeward, to celebrate the Gods of high heaven with hecatombs of victims, and all things else in order due. (OD, 23: V. 267-81)

Odysseus’s homecoming is then, in one sense, not only the end of one journey but also the occasion for the commencement of another. In order for the persistence of Homer’s *Odyssey* as the prototype for a homecoming myth – the ideal mobility-singular journey – one needs to downplay or ignore the fact that Odysseus is fated to travel beyond Ithaca and beyond the end point of the narrative. While readers of Homer’s *Odyssey* are given a basic plot line in the text, they do not know exactly how this part of Odysseus’s journey will play out. Instead of dealing with this uncertainty, one is wont to re-imagine the journey as ending in Ithaca – the return of the hero to live out his days in his home place. The writers, whose work I analyse in this subsequent section reiterate (in both the sense of *emphasise* and *recreate*) the continuation of the journey, beyond the unknown point of the ending.

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595 As mentioned above, Odysseus’s homecoming is the concern of the entirety of Ransmayr’s play, however, in the following section, the focus will be on the final scenes of this homecoming.

596 See Chapter Two, 44-5.
5.5 Travel Text Analysis: Beyond Homecomings

5.5.1 The Journey Continues

*Odysseus, Verbrecher*

The ending of Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher* reflects on the idea that Odysseus’s journey is destined to continue beyond the narrative of the text. One could say that the protagonist arrives in Ithaca, but never comes home. In Penelope’s words, Odysseus does not come to terms with what is required of him, “um […] tatsächlich heimzukehren und nicht bloß in der Heimat zu stranden” (OV 114). His dislocation from Ithaca, his lack of connection with loved ones and the reality of the present moment render a homecoming impossible. Ransmayr expands on this point in the following interview extract:

"Odysseus hat sich für den Weg nach Troja und in die Schlacht entschieden, einen Weg, der sich rückblickend als Irrfahrt erweist. Selbst Ithaka wird ihm schließlich zur bloßen Station einer Irrfahrt, weil er dort erkennen muss, dass die Heimat, von der er träumte, nicht mehr existiert, vielleicht nie existiert hat. Und so bleibt ihm als einzige Hoffnung, noch einmal aufzubrechen, um eines Tages vielleicht tatsächlich aus einem utopischen Traumland in die Wirklichkeit zurückzukehren."

Here, one sees that in Ransmayr’s travel text, Ithaca, rather than a kind of final resting place, becomes a mere stopover or transit point. The main reason for this is that Odysseus cannot reconcile the dystopian place around him with the ideal image in his mind. For this reason, all he can do is remain wandering until he can come to terms with the present or come back to reality from his utopian dreamland. Yet this is not to deny the potential of Odysseus’s own agency in making decisions concerning his own mobility. In the beginning, Ransmayr points out, Odysseus makes his own decision to travel to Troy and into battle, just as, at the end, he still has the choice “in die Wirklichkeit zurückzukehren.” In both the internal world of the narrative and the external world of the readership, Ransmayr emphasises Odysseus’s ability to make decisions in spite of the difficult circumstances in which he finds himself. In the final scene of the play, Penelope says to Odysseus: “Es ist nicht die Zeit, die dich verändert hat, du warst es selber. Du hast dich zu dem Schiffbrüchigen gemacht, als der du in deiner Heimat

597 Gmünder.
gestrandet bist” (OV 113). According to Penelope, it seems that Odysseus has made his own homecoming impossible by turning himself into a kind of castaway who cannot take responsibility for the consequences of his decision to leave Ithaca and go to war in Troy. In an interview, Ransmayr reiterates this point: “Er [Odysseus] hat immer wieder die Wahl. Selbst Sachzwänge lassen noch einen Rest von Spielraum zu.”

By questioning Odysseus’s (self-)assumed right to mobility and to murder, Ransmayr simultaneously sheds lights on the effects of his decisions on two groups of people who are often overlooked in the critical analysis of travel. These two overlapping groups are: the characters he refers to alternately as “die Verlassenen” or “die Zurückbleibenden”, denoting those who stay or are left behind, including Telemach and Penelope, and the women characters, including Athene and Penelope. For example, it is interesting to note that Ransmayr’s Odysseus makes the same error of judgment as Sattelzeit travellers, such as Kleist and Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister, who expect their respective loved ones to dwell at home and wait for them while they travel. Ransmayr explains this as follows:

Odysseus verlässt die Seinen ohne Rücksicht auf den Schmerz der Verlassenen, setzt aber voraus, dass die Zurückbleibenden, für wie viele Jahre auch immer, sich stets für ihn bereithalten und vor allem: sich bis zum Tag seiner Rückkehr nicht verändern. So nimmt er für sich alle Freiheit in Anspruch, während seine Lieben, ja die ganze von ihm verlassene Welt, zu Idealbildern erstarren.

Die Zurückbleibenden, Odysseus assumes, will remain physically in the same place, and remain emotionally the same, (“stets für ihn bereithalten”), that is, they will stay the same, recognisable, affectionate people, ready for their loved one’s return, regardless of how long he is away (“für wie viele Jahre auch immer”).

Further, in the crumbling of Odysseus’s and Penelope’s relationship, one can clearly identify the abyss between the traveller and the stayers, between expectations (Odysseus’s) and reality (that of present-day Ithaca), at the play’s end. This is epitomised in Penelope’s

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598 Gmünder.
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phrase: “[i]ch erkenne dich nicht wieder”, which she utters after berating Odysseus for
drawing their son Telemach to engage in a bloody battle with the reformers (OV 111). At this
point, the following exchange takes place between husband and wife:

Odysseus: Liebste..., ich hatte keine Wahl, ich habe ihnen angeboten, mit mir an der
Vergoldung Ithakas zu arbeiten, ihnen angeboten, unter ihrem heimgekehrten Herrn
dem Land zu dienen, Penelope, unserer Heimat! zu dienen, aber sie haben nicht auf
mich gehört. Sie wollten ihren heimgekehrten Herrn nicht wiedererkennen.

Penelope: Willst du jeden töten, der nicht auf dich hören will? Und jeden, der dich nicht
wiedererkennt? Dann mußt du auch mich töten. Ich erkenne dich nicht wieder.

Odysseus: Penelope was sagst du da, Liebste, ich habe nie aufgehört, dich zu lieben. (OV 111)

Here, one sees that Odysseus has no ability to see beyond his decision to engage in killing
(“ich hatte keine Wahl”), and the consequences of his leaving his loved ones behind, (“was
sagst du da [?]”). At the same time, one could argue that Penelope’s complaint that she
cannot recognise Odysseus may be, in part, due to her own false expectations as to how he
might behave on his return to Ithaca. Nevertheless in this final section, Penelope tries to make
Odysseus reconsider his actions in a critical light, in a similar way to Athene in the initial
sections of the play. Penelope’s alarming imperative to her husband, “[d]ann mußt du auch
mich töten”, may be understood as an amplified version of fellow female character, Athene’s
earlier statement: “[d]ann mußt du deinen Namen vergessen.”

Despite both women characters’ best attempts to persuade Odysseus that he is not
seeing, hearing or comprehending the reality of present-day Ithaca, Odysseus can only revert
to his own view of the world (“ich habe nie aufgehört, dich zu lieben”), which, as Ransmayr
sets out above, has petrified into a set of idealised images (“zu Idealbildern erstarren”; “d[ie]
Vergoldung Ithakas”). Generally speaking, in this play Ransmayr indicates that hope for the
future of the world lies in the actions and words of women: “Für uns Männer […] sind die
Frauen doch auf allen Ebenen unseres Lebens – in unserer Angst vor Verlassenheit und Tod
[…] in unserer Sehnsucht […] die große und oft einzige Hoffnung.”

In the same vein, Ransmayr suggests that it is largely men who are responsible for the dystopian outcomes of

601 Gmünder. In a similar vein, Angelopoulos states, “I believe that women are stronger than men! Not only in
films, but also in life. Beginning with my mother, I have known strong women”, Horton 1997, 107.
extreme mobility. Is there, in this sense, a certain advantage in being immobile, or in belonging to die Zurückbleibenden, who are often women, in that one gains a different perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of mobility vis-à-vis dwelling-life?

If one considers Ransmayr’s own life around the time that he wrote this play, one may deduce that he wished to experience his own kind of homecoming, to return to his home country and educate himself through the potential insights of die Zurückbleibenden or those who stay. Weber notes the impact this life change had on the direction of Ransmayr’s literary oeuvre:


In the final four pages of Odysseus, Verbrecher, Ransmayr’s grappling with the aporiae in the concept of homecoming reaches a peak. This is ultimately the height of Ransmayr’s intense enquiry into how the homecoming myth of Homer’s Odyssey comes into conflict with the contemporary period of mobilities, as informed by his own experience. Yet the play’s ending is open: rather than coming to any kind of resolution, it encourages further engagement with the question as to whether a successful homecoming is possible. This is Ransmayr’s conscious intention, I suggest, especially in light of his didactic ambition, “in einer Geschichte, auf einer Bühne, […] daran zu erinnern, was die Menschen sich selbst und einer dem anderen angetan hätten […] und was ihnen also auch in Zukunft noch winken oder drohen werde” (cited above).

This Auseinandersetzung or working out of the conflict between Homer’s Odyssey, and Ransmayr’s Odysseus, Verbrecher, plays out as follows. In Homer’s Odyssey, it is Homer who informs Penelope that he is fated to wander still. By contrast, in Odysseus,

Verbrecher, it is Penelope who convinces Odysseus to leave Ithaca and continue journeying. In their final exchange, the couple discuss a puppet play they once put on for Telemach when he was a child, before Odysseus left for Troy. The play appears to be an intertextual reference the events of Homer’s *Odyssey*. Ransmayr’s Penelope draws on Homer’s narrative to communicate with her husband, who is still enamoured in the image of “timeless narratives of heroism and homeland” or emotionally preoccupied with a space of mobility-singular.\(^{603}\)

She encourages him to continue his journey:

| Odysseus: | Der Seefahrer hat sich wieder auf den Weg gemacht… |
| Penelope: | um irgendwann tatsächlich heimzukommen und nicht bloß in der Heimat zu stranden. |
| Odysseus: | Und? Ist er den je wieder zurückgekehrt? […] |
| Penelope: | Der Seefahrer ist einer Prophezieung gefolgt, die ihn eine Heimkehr für immer versprach, wenn er ein Ruder über die Schulter nehmen und dieses Ruder tragen, tragen und tragen würde, bis in ein Land, dessen Bewohner das Ding für eine Schaufel hielten, Menschen, die das Meer nicht kannten, jenen Ozean, der den Seefahrer ein Leben lang hatte segeln – und irren lassen. […] |
| Odysseus: | Und erst aus einem Land solcher Toren dürfte er endlich heimkehren – und bleiben? |

*Gebeugt unter seiner Last, Odysseus macht sich auf den Weg.* (OV 114-5)

There are different possible interpretations of Penelope’s actions here. Some may suggest that Penelope is merely giving up on Odysseus and sending him away. On the other hand, one may argue that it is Penelope who holds out to him his only possibility of a future homecoming. By communicating with him through the discourses of Homer’s Odysseus, e.g. by reinterpreting Tiresias’s prophecy, she is able to encourage him on his way in the hope that he may one day return with a new perspective and the truth of what Ithaca has become. The reader’s understanding of Penelope’s action will largely be determined by her own experiences of mobility. For example, Ransmayr’s final term, “Paradies”, leaves the reader questioning whether Odysseus will come to terms with the present or whether his vision will remain forever clouded by his unattainable ideal images of Ithaca: “die Heimat, von der er träumte, [die] nicht mehr existiert, [und] vielleicht nie existiert hat” (cited above).

\(^{603}\) Leahy 213.
What might one consider overall as Ransmayr’s message for the reader in relation to the concept of homecoming to be? I suggest the following reading: homecoming in the contemporary period of mobilities, if at all possible, requires acceptance of the traveller by those who stayed behind. This approach problematizes the associations of greater mobility with higher social advantage. The traveller’s chances of being accepted by those who stayed behind may be enhanced by accepting the notion of mobile places (rather than fixed). This means accepting both that home may not be experienced in the same way as it was prior to travel and that the people who remained, may have changed. Additionally, Ransmayr appears to suggest a homecoming is likely to be only temporary in nature; a permanent homecoming, in the sense of remaining in the same place, is now more likely to be a negative act of resistance to the new mobilities. These ideas concerning the complexity of the notion of homecoming are perhaps best expressed in the words of Ransmayr’s Athene: “Heimkehr? Aus einem Krieg, Held Trojas, Städteverwüster, ist noch keiner heimgekehrt – jedenfalls nicht als der, der er war. Willkommen in Ithaka” (OV 28).

5.5.2 When I Return…

_Ulysses’ Gaze_

Like Ransmayr’s _Odysseus, Verbrecher_, the ending of Angelopoulos’s _Ulysses’ Gaze_ engages with the complexity of ideas of home and homecoming. Other connections between the two texts include the continuation of Ulysses/Odysseus journey beyond the narrative, as well as the potential which is opened up for a variety of interpretations. In the analysis of Angelopoulos’s film thus far, I have largely focused on the dystopian aspects of the director’s concern that humankind did not progress very far during the twentieth century, and that an inability to deal with the present moment remains. Angelopoulos (re-)emphasises the challenges of the contemporary period in a 1996 interview:
In recent years [...] I’ve been preoccupied with ideas about exile and the journey, both exterior and interior – with the possibility of dreaming in this end-of-the-century world where there’s an absence of dreams. Now, it seems we just live from day to day, and it’s hard really to believe in something.\textsuperscript{604}

Still, in spite of this rather melancholy outlook, in a 2009 interview, Angelopoulos does, in fact, convey the idea that there is hope for the future. It is simply a matter of time:

My generation believed that it was possible not only to dream of a new world, but also to turn dreams into realities. It didn't happen. I think we are all carrying the shadow of disappointment and failure. Yet, in spite of this, and contrary to what pessimists and nay-sayers believe, I believe that history moves about in a meandering way, sometimes going up and sometimes going down. Right now we are in a downturn, but there will be an upturn eventually.\textsuperscript{605}

One of the ways in which one can stimulate such an upturn, Angelopoulos implicitly suggests, is if one is willing to consider that alternative, open-minded ideas and cinematic travel texts provide a platform for the development of new viewpoints. The message he hopes to have conveyed to the viewer of Ulysses’ Gaze is that one should think in terms of multiple perspectives and open-ended processes, rather than in oversimplified binaries of utopia/dystopia or optimism/pessimism. Angelopoulos expands on this:

I hope this [film] is neither optimistic nor pessimistic but a faithful image of our times. Optimists usually turn their backs on reality; they invent false reasons for believing things have to improve. On the other hand, the only acceptable conclusion for pessimists is to stop and commit suicide. At the very end of my film, my characters imply that “the journey goes on.” It means the search for a home will continue[,] […] home being that privileged place where we can finally be at peace with ourselves and the rest of the world. The search is not over, the film is not over. In the words of Lars Gustafsson, probably the best contemporary Swedish novelist, “we never capitulate, we have to go on.”\textsuperscript{606}

In this statement, Angelopoulos conveys significant points with regard to audience response and the idea of home in the contemporary period of new mobilities. Extreme responses to global crises and a world of mobile extremities, he suggests, whether optimistic or pessimistic, are polarizing and therefore not a productive way of coming to terms with the present. Whereas Ransmayr’s approach to stimulating the audience into critical thought is rather confrontational in character, Angelopoulos, one might say, is more focused on the search for a balanced cultural space in which to continue the journey. Angelopoulos places emphasis on finding acceptance in on-going processes. A preoccupation with denial and

\textsuperscript{604} Andrew 90.
\textsuperscript{605} Gabriel.
\textsuperscript{606} Fainaru 2001(b), 100.
finality is less likely to result in one finding home, or “that privileged place where we can finally be at peace with ourselves and the rest of the world” (cited above).

Underlying Angelopoulos’s proposals are two fundamental assumptions. First, the notion of home is an affective quality or a concept, rather than something concrete and tied to a particular place. In Angelopoulos’s words: “[Home] is not necessarily a real spot that is here or there.”607 He gives the example of Greece as a concept:

I do not believe that Greece is only a geographical location. […] It extends much further than the actual borders, for it is the Greece for which we search, like home.[…] [T]his Greece that is in my mind is the Greece I call home, not this office or this place here in Athens where I am sitting.608

If home moves with the traveller in her mind, rather than having sedentary associations “(this place […] where I am sitting”) then it follows that homecoming is more about being at peace with oneself and others, than arriving at and being in a specific location. This leads to the second assumption, namely, that home may be found while one is on the move. For example, Angelopoulos states, “[f]or me, ‘home’ is not your house, but a place where you feel in harmony – which in my case is in a car passing through a landscape.”609 If the feeling of home can indeed be found in a moving car, then perhaps there is hope for the future of mobility.

But more specifically, how does Angelopoulos convey these ideas in the very final scene of Ulysses’ Gaze? And to what extent can this be seen as a reiteration of Homer’s Odyssey? The scene plays out as follows: the viewer sees a flickering screen and ‘A’ sitting alone in a bombed-out film theatre in Sarajevo (UG 2:44:27). He sobs heavily, just after watching the newly developed film reels of the Manaki brothers, the gaze for which he has so longed. ‘A’ then begins to recite the verse below; after saying the first line, he looks up with teary eyes, puts his hand on his heart and continues. As he does so, the camera shot travels backward, widening from a close up of ‘A’, to placing him in the wider context of the

607 Horton 1997, 106.
608 Horton 1997, 106.
609 Andrew 2001, 90.
bombed-out space. By the time ‘A’ has finished his dialogue, his face, although worn-looking, conveys emotions of contentment and acceptance, but not quite happiness. He looks at the camera for a few moments before the credits appear (UG 2:46:25). During the entire scene and the credit roll, one hears the gentle clattering of the film projector. This gentle sound is suggestive of rhythmic on-going steps or heartbeats, the continuation of the journey, of life, and shows how the film can be embedded in the viewer’s own life, that is, it becomes part of her own experience or mobile trajectory (“The search is not over, the film is not over”). It is possible to interpret this scene in a number of different ways, but here I focus on three main aspects, namely, viewing the Manaki brothers’ films, the verse ‘A’ recites, and the emotional response of ‘A’ to this ending.

In the original screenplay, Angelopoulos planned that the spectator should see one of the Manaki films that ‘A’ is seeing, in which “an actor playing Odysseus climbs out of the sea and stares at the camera.”610 Perhaps Angelopoulos’s intention for this scene was to create a strong filmic image connoting Ulysses’s gaze, thereby conceptually uniting the journeys of Homer’s Odysseus and ‘A’ with the idea of the original gaze sought in the Manaki films. The figure of Odysseus in this scene would have then represented “the whole human adventure” or the journey. ‘A’ (and the viewer of ‘A’) would discover that his Odyssey has actually been a search for himself (cited above). However, Angelopoulos later decided to omit this scene because, he felt, “it was too concrete.”611 Creating a specific end-of-journey image for the film essentially undermines the idea that “the journey goes on” and “the search for a home will continue” (cited above). Angelopoulos continues: “ Basically, by developing the film, ‘A’ has reached his goal” and, in a different interview, he adds, “[i]t’s not important to see the film. It’s more important to see its effect on Harvey Keitel.”612 Hence, by omitting this scene and concentrating more on ‘A’’s emotional response to

611 Fainaru 2001(b), 98.
612 Fainaru 2001(b), 98; Horton 1997, 105.
reaching his goal, the spectator is encouraged to relate ‘A’’s journey to their own: the viewer is invited to project her own image on to the Manaki film, and in doing so, discover that which constitutes her own individual sense of home.

In this final scene of *Ulysses’ Gaze*, ‘A’’s dialogue also opens up a space for multiple and sometimes contradictory interpretations. The words he utters are as follows:

> When I return it will be with another man’s clothes/ Another man’s name/ My coming will be unexpected/ If you look at me, unbelieving and say/ "You are not he"/ I will show you signs/ And you will believe me /I will tell you about the lemon tree in your garden/The corner window that lets in the moonlight/And then signs of the body/ Signs of love/ /And as we climb, trembling, to our old room/Between one embrace and the next/ Between lovers’ calls /I will tell you about the journey/All the night long/And then all the nights to come /Between one embrace and the next /Between lovers’ calls /The whole human adventure /The story that never ends/ (UG 2:46:24)

At first glance, this quotation appears to be a verse from Homer’s *Odyssey*, a premonition of the impending reuniting of Odysseus and Penelope. Indeed, in one interview Angelopoulos affirms this supposition when he says, “[i]t is the poem from the *Odyssey* which Harvey Keitel recites at the end. It’s important the lines from Homer are aimed at the future: “When I return….” So his journey will return. It is not over.”\(^613\) From this statement one would assume that ‘A’’s words are a direct intertextual reference from Homer’s *Odyssey*, intended to remind the viewer that Odysseus’s journey continues beyond the narrative of the text. Yet, this poem is not to be found Homer’s text.\(^614\) When asked about this apparent discrepancy,

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\(^{613}\) Horton 1997, 105.

\(^{614}\) I consulted with Homer expert Mr Robin Hankey from the Classics Department of the University of Otago concerning the interpretation of ‘A’’s poem and how it relates to Homer’s *Odyssey*, Robin Hankey, "Question about Odyssey-like Quotation”. Message to Anita Perkins, Email.. Mr Hankey’s response drew on specific intertextual references, as follows: “The poem is not actually a part of Homer’s ‘Odyssey’ and is not in any sense a quotation, but I believe it alludes to certain passages in the ‘Odyssey’, or derives from them, with modification of some of the details. The ‘clothes’ in line 1 are probably the beggar’s clothes worn by the disguised Odysseus for most of the second half of the ‘Odyssey’, described at the end of Book 13 (lines 434-8). The ‘lemon tree’ in the garden (line 8) probably derives from the passage in Book 24 (lines 336-344) where Odysseus, trying to convince his old father Laertes that he really is his long-lost son Odysseus, lists the types and number of the trees that Laertes gave him when he was a boy. (Laertes has asked him for a ‘sign’ that he really is Odysseus). ‘Signs of the body’ (line 10) may be an allusion to the scar on Odysseus which the nurse Eurycleia recognizes in Book 19 (line 392-3, 468-475), catching Odysseus by surprise and leading him to threaten her with death if she reveals his identity. This scar is not in fact a ‘sign of love’ but a scar inflicted by a dangerous wild boar in a hunting accident when Odysseus was young, as described in 19.394-466. The actual ‘sign of love’ in the ‘Odyssey’ is really the marriage-bed that Odysseus himself built for his wife Penelope and himself, as he describes to Penelope in Book 23 (lines 187-204) when she is still sceptical about his identity and has herself just tested him by giving the nurse incorrect details about the bed and its location, asking her to make it up for her. This rouses Odysseus to anger, as he thinks their bed has been moved or changed. He refers to it as a ‘sign’ (188).”
Horton suggests that the poem is Angelopoulos’s version of the Homeric tradition with the influence of other Greek poets whose thematic concerns include reiterations of the Odyssey and Ithaca, namely George Seferis and Constantine P. Cavafy. This supposition finds support in Angelopoulos’s statement: “As I said, my point of departure was the Odyssey. I am referring to the myth, not to Homer’s text. […] According to the myth, Ulysses comes back to Ithaca but does not stay there. After a while he leaves again on another journey.”

What exactly is one to understand by these seemingly contradictory statements? One possible explanation lies in the idea that the *Odyssey*, as travel text, is the ultimate mobile and adaptable object of cultural hybridisation. This narrative is a cultural meme which endures over time and allows for reformulation in multiple contexts. There remains today vehement debate over its original form (if one can be said to exist): whether Homer is one person or multiple persons and over the possible locations of Odysseus’s journey, if, in fact, the events depicted in the *Odyssey* happened at all. Homer’s *Odyssey* has also been translated into numerous languages, with numerous versions within each language. These points undermine attempts to question whether Angelopoulos’s poem cited above exactly replicates the original *Odyssey*, because they challenge the very notion of an identifiable original. Instead, in the context of this analysis, it is more productive to ask, which key elements do Angelopoulos (and his co-screenwriters) convey through A’s poem, which make Homer’s *Odyssey* such an enduring and thus mobile narrative syncretic form and object of contestation.

These elements, I argue, include reiterations of four contested ideas: 1.) one cannot expect to remain unchanged through the experience of travel or by the same token, expect those who stay behind to be the same on one’s return, mobility challenges notions of fixed identity (“When I return it will be with another man’s clothes/ Another man’s name”); 2.) mobility invariably entails uncertainty, whereas humankind often seeks certainty (“My

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615 Andrew Horton, "Question on Ulysses' Gaze Interview", Message to Anita Perkins, Email.
616 Fainaru 2001(b), 94.
coming will be unexpected/ If you look at me, unbelieving and say/ "You are not he"'); 3.) home, dwelling-life and, more generally, the feeling of being recognised are still commonly desired in the contemporary period of mobilities ("I will show you signs/ And you will believe me /I will tell you about the lemon tree in your garden/The corner window that lets in the moonlight"); 4.) in the contemporary period of mobilities, perhaps only two things remain constant, the search for love ("And then signs of the body/ Signs of love/ /And as we climb, trembling, to our old room/Between one embrace and the next/") and the enduring nature of the journey ("Between lovers’ calls /I will tell you about the journey/All the night long/And then all the nights to come /Between one embrace and the next /Between lovers’ calls /The whole human adventure /The story that never ends").

5.6 Fears of Finality

The inability to deal with the present moment in the contemporary period may be linked to our common fear of finality or endings, and ultimately death. Angelopoulos reveals that when the time approached in which to film the final scenes of Ulysses’ Gaze, Harvey Keitel grew increasingly reticent. Angelopoulos recalls: “He constantly tried to delay the shooting of the final scene in Ulysses’ Gaze, taking place in the ruins of the destroyed Cinematheque. He was terrified by the notion that it is the end.”617 Yet, hope for the future, as expressed in the poem above, lies in the ability to let go of this fear, accept some degree of uncertainty and infiniteness and consider in new ways, various cultural possibilities for dwelling, mobility, and homecoming. These ideas are best conveyed by Angelopoulos in the following interview extract with Andrew Horton:

Horton: The United States is known for producing films which embrace some form of a “happy ending”, no matter how unrealistic that ending may be. Thus many Americans say that films such as yours have “depressing endings.” How would you defend the ending of Ulysses’ Gaze as being something more than simply “depressing”?

[Angelopoulos] I would simply say what Aristotle said about tragedy, that a drama, or in this case, a film should invoke pity and fear in an audience, and then create a catharsis by which these emotions are released. My film does not have a happy ending, but it does have

617 Fainaru 2001(b), 99.
a catharsis, a relief, a letting go of fear and pity. And that’s not depressing! You understand, to cry, which is part of catharsis, is necessary if one it to succeed. What finally, is the catharsis in my film? It is the poem from the Odyssey which Harvey Keitel recites at the end. It’s important that lines from Homer are aimed at the future: “When I return….” So the journey will return. It is not over. The journey to find “home” continues. And this is a kind of hope. For he is, despite all, in those closing moments, beginning to be at peace with himself and the world.618

How can one relate Angelopoulos’s ideas to travel experiences of the present moment? Is it possible to reach an emotional point of catharsis and hope at the end of journeys? This is a complex issue, as a brief survey of media articles reporting on events related to mobilities over the last two years demonstrates. On the one hand, it would appear that humans are constantly seeking new and ever more extreme ways to travel further, faster, with disconcerting consequences. On 15th October 2012, Austrian Felix Baumgartner became the first skydiver to fall faster than the speed of sound after safely completing a 38.6-kilometre jump from the stratosphere, the highest-ever altitude from which anyone has jumped. Around the world those with access to the internet were privy to a privileged, yet protected gaze of this event: “A live internet stream of the event is being promoted […] from all cameras except those on Baumgartner's body. But organisers said there will be a 20-second delay in their broadcast of footage in case of a tragic accident.”619 Baumgartner’s reported comments following the event reflect a disturbing desire to sacrifice sensation and orientation for the joy of speed and the search for humility:

Baumgartner says that travelling faster than sound is “hard to describe because you don't feel it.” With no reference points, “you don't know how fast you travel”, he told reporters. “Sometimes we have to get really high to see how small we are,” he said.620

On the other hand, other evidence appears to indicate that humans have involuntarily curbed their own ambitions with regard to mobility, simply by means of fiscal exhaustion. On the 4th October 2012, for example, it was reported that the European Union had run out of the funds needed to continue backing the ERASMUS (European Community Action Scheme for the

Mobility of University Students) student exchange programme. ERASMUS has been running since 1987 and supports the studies of over 230,000 students per year. In a 2005 media report political scientist Stefan Wolff was interviewed about that which he refers to as “the Erasmus generation.” Wolff linked the programme’s success with the creation of a supranational identity in Europe: “For the first time in history, we’re seeing the seeds of a truly European identity.” Following this line of thinking, would the cessation of the Erasmus programme and the consequent immobility of university students lead to resurgence in feelings of national identity?

Both of these examples assume that there is a future to consider, yet in the contemporary period, how does a fear of finality or of endings manifest itself as media discourse and what changes may be observed in the nature of apocalyptic reports over a short period of time? Recently, widespread media reports highlighted the supposed end of the world on 21 December 2012 on the basis of an ancient Mayan calendar. Over the course of approximately one year, this apocalyptic prediction has gone from a prognosis inciting intense fear in some, to suddenly being dispelled and becoming a marketing opportunity for tourism based on humanitarian ideals. To begin with, a (US) ABC News headline from 21 December 2011 read “2012 End-of-the-World Countdown Based on Mayan Calendar Starts Today.” Then, on 9 March 2012, Scientific American magazine published a report entitled “NASA Crushes 2012 Mayan Apocalypse Claims,” in which the planetary scientist, Don Yeomans, explored the myth of an apocalypse by dispensing “the belief that the calendar used

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by the ancient Mayan civilization comes to a sudden end in December 2012, and that this will coincide with a cataclysmic, world-ending event,“ when he advised “[t]heir [the Mayan’s] calendar does not end on December 21, 2012; it’s just the end of the cycle and the beginning of a new one. It’s just like on December 31, our calendar comes to an end, but a new calendar begins on January 1.” Then on 3 September 2012 the New Zealand Herald published an article entitled “Guatemala: Mayan calendar spurs tourism” which described an event called the “New Dawn for Humanity” world summit being organised by the Guatemalan National Tourism Institute.625

If you haven’t booked for the party of the year, which marks the start of a new era for humanity, you’d better hurry. Hotels near the Mayan city of Tikal are preparing for “a full sell-out” of the events planned for December 21 to mark the start of a new era for humanity in the Maya cosmology.626

This evidence would suggest that a considerable section of humanity has abandoned itself to every incoming media signal. Still, against this trend, the analyses of travel texts here have shown that some writers and filmmakers have made a conscious and concerted effort to highlight critical perspectives on otherwise unquestioned media, political and social ideological discourses. Due to its popularity as an enduring and malleable cultural meme, reiterations of the narrative of Homer’s Odyssey have been a successful communicative and stylistic method in order for writers and filmmakers to voice their concerns and raise questions regarding the present state of mobilities in a globalising world.

625 “Guatemala.”
626 “Guatemala.”
Chapter Six: Conclusion: Have We Gone Too Far?

6.1 Introduction

In this conclusion I reflect on dominant themes and ideas put forward in the thesis. In order to do so, I set out to answer two broad questions arising from the introduction which relate to the analyses and methodological approach. The first question is: how does the experience of travel transform culture over time? In order to answer the first question, I draw on examples from a contemporary travel text, the 2006 novel *Heimkehr* by Bernhard Schlink, which narrates the odyssey of a young German man in search of his father. To this I add relevant illustrations from preceding chapters. This discussion is prefaced by a short introduction to the novel and is divided into three topics: first, ‘The Significance of the *Odyssey* through Time’; second, ‘Responses to Intense Mobilities’; and, finally, ‘The Possibility of Homecoming.’ The second broad question I address in this conclusion is as follows: to what extent does a German-focused comparative cultural analysis of travel texts from a mobilities perspective constitute a useful contribution to the field of mobilities studies? Here I reflect on the ways in which the analyses in this thesis have contributed productively to existing mobilities scholarship and I conclude with suggestions for future research.

6.2 Key themes in Relation to *Heimkehr*

6.2.1 Bernhard Schlink’s *Heimkehr* (2006)

In his novel *Heimkehr*, Bernhard Schlink invites intense reflection on the reader’s part regarding the topics of home and homecoming via the complex relationship between a son, Peter Debauer, and his absentee father, John de Baur. Schlink examines how people of different generations in post-WWII Germany attempt to deal with issues of self-formation and strained familial relationships in the shadow of a National-Socialist past. Here one may identify a break with the idea of *Bildung* in the traditional (viz. *Sattelzeit*) sense; how can one possibly undergo a process of self-formation when a period of history in one’s home country is forever marred by an evil dictatorship and acts of mass genocide? Is history in the
contemporary period of new mobilities still tied to a particular place of major relevance to a sense of cultural identity? Father and son demonstrate different approaches to these quandaries. Peter searches for his own way to find home and to come to terms with a personal past which includes a childhood split between an idyllic life with his grandparents in Switzerland, a mediocre life with his less than affectionate mother in Germany, and the constant absence of a father he knows little about. In contrast, his father, a former Nazi party member, finds ways to absolve himself of any association with or responsibility for the past. He takes practical measures by moving to the United States of America, assuming a new name (changing from Johann Debauer to John de Baur), a new career as an academic and starting a new family (HK 267). Peter later sums up his father’s abandoning of his responsibilities as indicative of a generational trend: “Wie Tausende vor und nach ihm ließ er in Europa Frau und Kind, seine dunkle Vergangenheit und seinen alten Namen zurück” (HK 365).

This short summary of *Heimkehr* allows some initial links to be drawn to some of the findings in this thesis. For example, the generational differences between the responses of father and son recall the divergent reactions of Johann Reinhold Forster and his son Georg Forster to new cultural interactions when both travelled to New Zealand and the South Pacific with Captain Cook in the 1770s. At the same time, different responses must be anticipated when one considers that growing up in different time periods with varying degrees of mobility gives rise to varying contextually-specific responses. This has been shown via the comparative analyses of travel texts in the *Sattelzeit* and the contemporary periods. Thus, in the novel *Heimkehr*, Schlink simultaneously brings to light some of the relatively hidden and controversial moral issues of post-war Germany, as well as raising a number of open-ended questions that relate the concepts of mobility, home and identity.
6.2.2 The Significance of the *Odyssey* through Time

*odyssey* [...] a series of wanderings; a long adventurous journey. □ *Odyssean* [...] title of an epic poem attributed to Homer describing the adventures of Odysseus (Ulysses) on his journey home from Troy.

I began my analysis with an examination of the culturally foundational Greek epic, Homer’s *Odyssey*. Initially, I pointed out the significance of the text in relation to the conception of Goethe’s *Stein des guten Glücks* and the production of his literary works such as *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774). In Homer’s *Odyssey*, I identified some of the key aspects of Odysseus’s mobility-singular journey, e.g. the importance of cultural memory and the role of the Gods in returning him home, as well as considering an interpretation of his return to Ithaca as an ideal homecoming. Cognisant of the enduring cultural resonance of the *Odyssey*, and in a manner similar to Ransmayr and Angelopoulos, Schlink draws on Homer’s epic as an intertext in the novel *Heimkehr*. For example, the two genetically related but socially estranged characters of Peter Debauer and John de Baur reveal contrasting viewpoints concerning the possibility of homecoming in the contemporary period and how this relates to the homecoming myth of Homer’s *Odyssey*.

Peter first learns that his father is a professor in the Political Science Department at Columbia University, New York, when he comes across de Baur’s book “The Odyssey of Law” (HK 259). In the introduction to his book, de Baur sets out what may be described as a conventional (or non-reflective) understanding of the ending of the *Odyssey*:

> Die Einleitung handelte nicht vom Recht, sondern von der Odyssee. Sie beschreibt sie als Urform aller Heimkehrgeschichten. In allen seinen Abenteuern, seinen Irrungen und Fehlungen, seinem Scheitern und Gelingen bleibe Odysseus sich treu, bis er nach Hause findet. Zu Hause erwarten ihn frecher Widerstand, aber auch treue Liebe und überdies die Waffe, mit der er den Widerstand bricht, damit sich die Liebe glücklich erfüllt. (HK 259-60)

However, later, in one of de Baur’s university lectures, which Peter attends in New York, de Baur proposes that, when broken down, the *Odyssey* is in fact essentially meaningless. His later reassessment of the *Odyssey*’s ending is as follows:

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De Baur’s interpretation above is reminiscent of scenes in Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher* in which a once idyllic Ithaca has become an environmental disaster zone and Odysseus is rejected as a bloodthirsty warmonger rather than accepted as a hero. Further, de Baur questions the possibility of homecoming when he makes the following statement in reference to (Homer’s) Odysseus’s fate of travel beyond Ithaca: “Odysseus kehrt nicht einmal wirklich heim; er muß alsbald wieder aufbrechen, und diesem neuen Aufbruch ist eine gute Heimkehr zwar verhießen, aber deshalb noch nicht gewiß” (HK 290). De Baur’s rejection of an ideal and final homecoming in favour of the idea of an on-going journey, is similar to the narratives of Ransmayr’s Odysseus, and Angelopoulos’s ‘A’.

De Baur thus seeks to discursively destabilise any sense of certainty or finality one may read into the end of Odysseus’s journey. Scepticism is part of his recommended worldview or approach to life: “Seien Sie mißtrauisch! Trauen Sie weder dem nächsten Jahrzehnt noch dem nächsten Jahrhundert!” (HK 306). De Baur’s insistence on the ideas of mistrust and meaninglessness are thus reminiscent of Kleist’s concept of contingency from the *Sattelzeit*. While de Baur’s viewpoint, like that of Kleist, has merit in that it encourages one to face up to uncertainty, rather than believing in an imagined ideal, it also poses the danger that life itself, if ultimately meaningless, becomes pointless or not worth living. By contrast, there is some hope behind Ransmayr’s and Angelopoulos’s often dismal reflections on the current state of humanity: their texts open up a space in which the reader is confronted

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628 Before attending his class, it is likely that de Baur’s students would have read this book, and one could assume from the following quotation that he enjoys the shock the students face as he deconstructs his own earlier argument: “de Baur freute sich schon darauf, daß die Erleichterung wider Ratlosigkeit weichen würde”, HK 305.
with, and, as a result, can attempt to come to terms with, the point-of-no-return of the present state of mobilities.

6.2.3 Responses to Intense Mobilities

On the question of coming to terms with contemporary mobilities and the uncertainty that both the present and the future hold, Schlink also offers an alternative point of view through the eyes of Peter. Perhaps there is less uncertainty in the world than his father purports, and maybe learning to deal with the uncertainty that does exist in an age of new mobilities is not necessarily something negative. Peter outlines this point in an imaginary argument with de Baur:


One may, in the first instance, accuse Peter himself here of avoidance by not facing up to the realities of the violence present in the world. One might also view Peter’s approach as a first step towards making sense of the new mobilities; he implies that rather than dismissing the ending of Homer’s *Odyssey* as meaningless, it is more valuable to look at the various ways in which individuals understand and normalise both the concept of homecoming at the end of *Odyssey* and in the contemporary period more generally. At a meta-level, this is exactly the opportunity that Schlink is opening up to the reader through the perspectives of his two central figures.

> Taking a step back, it is useful to ask, when this sense of uncertainty arising from mobilities emerged and how various travellers responded to it. Following Koselleck, I have argued that the *Sattelzeit* was a fundamental time of social change; while many travellers expressed a desire to see what travel could make possible in their lives during this time, individual experiences in dealing with unforeseen circumstances (including’s Kleist’s concept of contingency) varied greatly. For example, one may contrast Moritz’s/Anton
Reiser’s “dromomania” or the incessant need to keep moving in pursuit of new people, places and things, to Nicolai’s controlled method of journeying which rested on his belief: “Ein jeder Reisender sollte, ehe er die Reise antritt, den Zweck derselben wohl überlegen und festsetzen” (BeR 13). If we follow de Baur’s line of thinking, that it is how one establishes normality in a context of change which is most important, then we might conclude that continually immersing oneself in new experiences becomes normal for Moritz/Reiser, whereas executing a well-contemplated and planned journey is normal for Nicolai. Then again, for a writer such as Chamisso, who wrote *Peter Schlemihl’s wundersame Geschichte*, while in exile, establishing a sense of normality at a time when he was rendered immobile involves exploring the possibilities of imaginary journeys. The French-born writer’s private reality was plagued by feelings of being imprisoned in his elected cultural home of Germany: “Ich hatte kein Vaterland mehr oder noch kein Vaterland.” This feeling was countered in the manifestation of his protagonist, Schlemihl, whose enhanced powers of mobility were comparable to those of the Homeric figure, the world-girdler Poseidon. Thus in the *Sattelzeit*, individual responses to emerging mobilities, including temporary exclusion from travel, the establishment of a sense of normality, varied from the continual pursuit of new people and places, to well thought-out planning, and imaginative escape.

In the early contemporary period, I examined the travel desires of East Germans who faced severe travel restrictions. In her documentary *Behind the Wall: ‘Perfectly Normal Lives’ in the GDR?*, Fulbrook explores whether one could establish a sense of normality while living in the GDR. The writer, Wulkau challenged this contention, given the fact that many people could not come to terms with more restricted mobility than their literary heroes of the *Sattelzeit*. Loest’s semi-autobiographical protagonist Haas’s struggle with not being able to travel is predominantly psychological; he tries to find a legal way out on the pretence of travel for research but after constant refusal, suffers a nervous breakdown. Delius’s
protagonist Gompitz, based on Müller, takes a more hands-on and pragmatic approach. He sees travel as his human right, so he learns to sail and escapes to Denmark, knowingly committing the crime of *Republikflucht*. As a result, the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the associated right of East Germans to travel, is not of great significance to him.

In contrast, the fall of socialism in the form of the dissolution of the USSR has a major impact on the cosmonaut Krikalev, who ends up aboard the space station MIR for ten months. When reporters ask him how he feels about the unfolding crisis in Moscow, he cannot connect to these events. Instead of associating himself with what is happening on earth, he identifies with the experience of being in space, that is, the wondrous extra planetary gaze afforded him and the playfulness of interacting with other cosmonauts in a gravity-free environment. Only when he lands on earth, does the sublime nature of this nationless experience appear to be abruptly assigned to oblivion, as the drained-looking last citizen of the USSR re-joins the ranks of the earth-bound and crisis-ridden humans. Still, Krikalev’s sense of humility leads one to think that he does not necessarily set himself apart from others who have not been into space, or align himself with famed historic explorers. Despite his amazing and unprecedented experience, perhaps he establishes a sense of normality by rationalising his role: “space travellers – victims of our all too modest technology – have no chance whatsoever of reaching truly new shores. They are well aware that they are underway not as discoverers but as mere observers” (cited above). It is worth briefly examining Krikalev’s point here; perhaps establishing a sense of normality is not of great significance when the new mobilities have become normality. Can one claim that the discursive desire to travel that became prevalent in the *Sattelzeit* and the common belief that travel is a human right, one of the protest messages of East Germans in the lead-up to the Fall of the Berlin Wall, now mean that a one-eighty degree turn has taken place and *not*-travelling is what is seen as travail? Despite circling the world every 92 minutes, Krikalev says that in the space
station, “in real terms we’re always in the same place.” The omnipresence of mobilities means that there is no clear-cut sense of where journeys begin and end. Whereas in Homer’s *Odyssey*, a journey of mobility-singular, order is restored when Odysseus is reunited with his father at the end of the journey, in Schlink’s *Heimkehr*, a journey in the time of mobilities-plural, the protagonist, Peter, finds his father in the midst of his travels and they are not reunited. Taken together, these points raise the question, if in the contemporary period, the experience of mobility, rather than that of dwelling-life more increasingly establishes a sense of normality, what does this mean for the concept of home and the idea of homecoming?

### 6.2.4 The Possibility of Homecoming

At the very end of *Heimkehr*, it seems that Peter’s journey in search of a lost father ends with a homecoming and a sense of peace. He is able to arrive at this point through a long process of letting go of the ideal image he holds of de Baur as a father. Theirs is a relationship fraught with complexity and giving up on the paternal dream is not as simple as Peter not liking de Baur, as is demonstrated when the latter says, “Widerwillig stellte ich fest, daß er ein glänzender Lehrer war. Ich hätte ihn lieber schlecht gefunden” (HK 293). At the heart of Peter’s pain is the fact that his father abandoned him: “Daß ich bei einem Vater, der sich nicht um mich gekümmert hatte, auch sonst nur an sich gedacht hatte, machte mich besonders aggressiv” (HK 273). Yet, he is still curious to know why his father left and how he justified absolving himself of such responsibility: “Zugleich faszinierte mich, wie er durchs Leben getragen war, sich auf das, was war, immer eingelassen, sich ihm aber auch immer wieder entzogen und am Ende noch eine Theorie entwickelt hatte, die diesen Weg durchs Leben rechtfertige” (HK 273).

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629 At the end of the novel, when Peter finds his father in New York, the reader learns that de Baur also adopts a postmodernist outlook which effectively serves to dissociate him from any evil or wrongdoing, partly by justifying its use. De Baur follows a so-called iron rule, which sets out: “Die Bereitschaft, sich dem Bösen auszusetzen als Rechtfertigung dafür, das Böse einzusetzen” (HK 261).
As his time in New York nears its end, Peter faces the decision of whether or not to confront his father and reveal himself as his son. At first, he fantasises about the ideal father-son reunion:

Sollte ich ihn statt in Gedanken in Wirklichkeit stellen? […] Wenn ich die Sache leicht, sportlich, spielerisch nehmen würde, könnte aus der Konfrontation zwischen Sohn und Vater eine Vater-Sohn-Begegnung werden. […] Dann würden wir zusammensitzen und Rotwein trinken und über Heimkehren reden. (HK 364)

However, on consideration of this dilemma and his experience with de Baur, Peter decides that the most likely chance of securing a happy future is to let go of such ideals:

Vielleicht hätte ich mich auf ihn einlassen mögen, wenn er tatsächlich der Abenteurer, der Spieler gewesen wäre, den ich lange in ihm gesehen hatte. Aber die spielerische, abenteuerliche Leichtigkeit war immer nur eine Fassade gewesen, hinter der de Baurs Dämonen lauerten. (HK 364)

Ultimately, one might say, Peter experiences his own kind of homecoming. He returns to Germany and is immediately accepted by his girlfriend Barbara, who has been patiently waiting for him. Despite their turbulent history together (for a time Barbara appears to abandon Peter for another man) in the end, Barbara’s actions are akin to that of Homer’s Penelope. She remains loyal to Peter and waits for him while he is in New York. However, unlike the Odyssey, the success of Peter’s homecoming, one may argue, lies in his relinquishing of any reconciliation with his father or the equivalent Homeric Laertes figure:


Schlink, then, leaves it up to the reader to imagine whether this ending means that Peter will remain in this kind of contemporary dwelling-life with Barbara in Germany or whether his future is uncertain and he is destined to journey onward.

Apart from its referencing of the Odyssey, how does Schlink’s ending relate to the wider discussion of homecoming in the thesis, and in particular, in the contemporary period? I suggest here that concerns about homecoming are located in the spaces that travel texts open up to reconsider ideas of home. In these passages or film sequences, intimations of
home and homecoming emerge but changing global contexts mean they cannot be identical to traditional forms of (returning to) dwelling-life. Goethe’s *Stein des guten Glücks* embodies this concept. Eichendorff’s protagonist, the Taugenichts, finds a kind of dwelling-life, though it is far from his home village and he is destined to travel in the future. Schlink’s protagonist is also exemplary here in terms of giving up on ideals and finding a sense of home. The question arises whether it is possible to find a way of being which represents a state of balance between both strength and dynamism, of permanence and change. Some of the authors and filmmakers examined in this thesis appear to concur that this is possible, when we rethink ideas about home in relation to affect rather than fixed geographic location, when we take more consideration of others, such as those who stay behind, and when we reconsider the importance of promoting global trade and increasing our travel in terms of speed and frequency.

Angelopoulos, for example, suggests that one can find a feeling of home while on the move: “[f]or me, ‘home’ is not your house, but a place where you feel in harmony – which in my case is in a car passing through a landscape” (cited above). Concerning feelings of national identity he adds: “I do not believe that Greece is only a geographical location. […] [T]his Greece that is in my mind is the Greece I call home” (cited above). Accordingly, perhaps a mobilities scholar of the future will take a similar approach to Koselleck and identify a period of social change reflected by semantic shift, a move from an emphasis on self-identification on a basis of sedentarism, to self-identification on the basis of mobility. It may become much more common and accepted in everyday conversation, for example, to make statements like: “I am currently between Japan and Australia”, or “For now, Germany is my home”. The example from Schlink’s novel above also intimates that finding home is about acceptance of and by others or not having false expectations of those who stay behind. In Ransmayr’s *Odysseus, Verbrecher*, the author implies that the contemporary Odysseus
figure would have a chance of coming home to Ithaca and restoring order, if he were to accept responsibility for the fact that others considered him a “Städteverwüster!” as a result of “[s]eine blutige Wallfahrt nach Troja” (cited above).

Debates arising in the wake of contemporary crises, including the Eurozone crisis of 2008, have led some to the conclusion that urgent reflection is needed on how our rapidly globalising world has reached its current state and how we might proceed with more caution. This is summed up aptly in writer Ingo Schulze’s questions: “Wem, nutzt das?” and “Wer verdient daran?” These questions, one may argue, are particularly pertinent when it comes to the design of new technologies. To borrow an ironic observation from Virilio, how many accident museums must be built? Perhaps hope for the future lies in a reconsideration of present values. Positive changes may occur, if human interactions and emotional wellbeing are prioritised over economic advancement and the development of technology for faster physical and virtual travel. Could this lead to a more balanced state of being and a re-discovery of trust in the feeling of home? This is where travel writers and filmmakers critically engaged in thinking through the effects of the new mobilities can help.

6.3 Suggestions for Future Research
This thesis may be viewed as making a contribution to the emerging field of mobilities studies in a number of respects. To the best of my knowledge, it is one of the first attempts to historicise mobilities and to provide a comparative perspective, primarily on the experience of travel during the Sattelzeit of 1770-1830 and the contemporary period from 1985 to 2010. This has opened up a space for analytical connections which may not otherwise have been identified or theoretically contextualised, such as the link between travel in the Sattelzeit and the travel desires of East Germans, as exemplified in Der Spaziergang von Rostock nach Syrakus. In addition, I have demonstrated the insights that can be gained by incorporating philological approaches from German studies, such as a detailed examination of the
emergence, development and reiterations of Heidegger’s concept of dwelling. Of course, mapping out a German-focused analytical journey is but one way of tracing the cultural impact of travel through time and geographical space. Future studies could explore other cultural or geographical pathways, with a focus on other eras of cultural significance for mobilities. I am also cognisant of the fact that my research follows the travels of those for whom mobility is more accessible than others, with the clear exception of citizens of the former GDR. While it was not my conscious intention at the outset, I acknowledge that most of the travellers I focus on are men. While I do discuss to some extent the role of women in changing mobile contexts, such as Penelope, Wilhelmine, or Sharman, future research could focus more explicitly on the experiences of women travellers.630

Perhaps one of the most important and somewhat unexpected outcomes of this thesis is a recognition of the vital importance of travel writers and filmmakers in opening up textual spaces which bring to readers and spectators different perspectives on what is happening in the world and thus enable reflection and potential change. Schulze suggests that the contemporary writer (and filmmaker) through a keen cultural awareness, intense contact with the everyday citizens and a propensity toward a high volume of reading, is well positioned to help reinvigorate critical thought and voice the concerns of normal citizens, as against “Experten, die das oft so verengern, dass die entscheidenden Dinge dabei weg bleiben” (cited above). One of these so-called experts is Fukuyama, who postulated an end to history in 1989 on the basis of an alleged universalization of the values enshrined in Western liberal democracy. Against this theory, Jameson finds that the unique cinematic gaze of Angelopoulos provides an opportunity to “make a contribution to inventing a new politics beyond the current “end of history”, that paralysis of action in submission to the world market” (cited above). He argues that Angelopoulos’s work “afford[s] unexpected glimpses

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630 For example, refer to Chapter Two, 38-40, on Homer’s characters, Athene and Penelope; Chapter Three, 98-100 on Kleist’s relationship with Wilhelmine; Chapter Four, footnote 502, on space traveller, Helen Sharman; Chapter Five, 238–40 on Ransmayr’s characters, Athene and Penelope.
of the narrative forms of the future, an inconceivable high art yet to come of the epoch of globalization and transnational communication, and worldwide mass culture” (cited above). In a similar vein, Virilio discusses with the cosmonaut Krikalev, the way in which Ujica’s documentary film renders Fukuyama’s thesis irrelevant, as the very understanding of history itself is changed by the gaze of a cinematic outer-space: “With space travel we have passed from voyages in geographical space […] to voyages in time” (cited above). Virilio continues: “That is, literally, a historical revolution. It’s not a political one, but an incomparable historical revolution. Not Fukuyama’s “end of history,” but the revolution of history, in the original sense of the word revolution: that a day corresponds to a year!” (cited above). If one agrees that one significant purpose of travel text authors and filmmakers is to stimulate reflection and change for a better future, then valuable research could be conducted into the ways in which this knowledge might be transferred beyond the traditional realms of literary studies or cinema studies into the broader spectrum of political science, international relations, environmental studies, and contribute to government policy making.

Overall, the conceptually open and heuristic approach of this thesis has allowed ideas to form and for connections to be made in unexpected an illuminating ways. Rather than clearly delineating fiction from non-fiction, I have identified ways in which both forms blend into each other and examined instances in which autobiographical elements are adapted in travel text narratives. One key outcome of this method is that it has allowed me to recognise the importance of travel first and foremost at the conceptual level, as idea, image, ideal or desire. For example, *Fernweh*, the strong desire to be or travel elsewhere, has stimulated much movement and change; without this emotion, for better or worse, the world would not be what it is today. For Odysseus, *Heimweh* or homesickness, was his motivation to return home, shaping the ideal image of Ithaca in his mind which propelled him forward; for travellers of the *Sattelzeit*, it was a desire to see what travel could make possible in their lives,
whether that was escaping an unfulfilling middle class dwelling-life or sailing to the other side of the world to conduct ethnographic research; for East Germans, Fernweh was a desire to travel West, the demand to realise a human right which contributed to the Fall of the Berlin Wall; for Sergei Krikalev, a sense of Fernweh felt in outer space came in the form of “what we can’t see from up here: People”; for Angelopoulos’s ‘A’, the motivation for his travel was to find a reel of film and see an original gaze from almost 100 years prior. Perhaps in this context it is appropriate to reassess the validity of an earlier cited comment made by Heidegger. Thousands of years since it was first told, Homer’s Odyssey and the idea of the journey home remain a powerful enduring cultural trope. It is perfectly reasonable that Heidegger be “allowed to think certain things about Greece without seeing the country” (cited above).

Sheller’s and Urry’s new mobilities paradigm provided the primary methodological platform that has informed this research. Overall, this paradigm has been important in terms of emphasising the significance of the globalised world in which we live today and the centrality of movement in understanding human experience. However, cultural and literary analysis arguably goes beyond this descriptive function and addresses that which is missing from the paradigm in its present form. While the mobilities paradigm is successful in its outline of the ways in which humans are adapting to increased movement, it lacks a thorough engagement in the ethics of ever-increasing mobility. Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to address this absent affective evaluation by raising the question: are the new mobilities good for us? This is a question also raised, albeit in a different form, in fields such as climate change research and environmental studies. Still, the writers and filmmakers analysed here bring the value of subjective experience to the fore and have thus from various perspectives provided invaluable answers this question. In addition, they stimulate critical discussion and raise further important questions concerning our cultural values. These writers
and filmmakers highlight a human response to the impact of increasing mobilities, whether positive or negative.

Sheller’s and Urry’s mobilities scholarship informs us: “[n]ew forms of ‘virtual’ and ‘imaginative’ travel are emerging, and being combined in unexpected ways with physical travel.” A cultural and literary-analytical approach enables an exploration of the human impact of these changes. Contemporary texts of science fiction, for example, the works of the novelist William Gibson, or the 2010 film *Inception*, written and directed by Christopher Nolan, depict worlds in which technology takes over, everything is mobile and the sense of stability is lost. A critical and evaluative reflection on life in the present moment through the analysis of travel texts from a mobilities perspective potentially anticipates and prevents the coming-in-to-being of Gibson’s or Nolan’s dystopian projections, that is, before it is too late and we have gone too far.

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