

Toward an Analysis of the Corporate Ego: The Case of Richard Hakluyt

It may be asked whether and how far I am myself convinced of the truth of the hypotheses that have been set out in these pages. My answer would be that I am not convinced myself and that I do not seek to persuade other people to believe in them. Or, more precisely, that I do not know how far I believe in them. There is no reason, as it seems to me,

why the emotional factor of conviction should enter into this question at all. It is surely possible to throw oneself into a line of thought and to follow it wherever it leads out of simple scientific curiosity, or, if the reader prefers, as an *advocatus diaboli*, who is not on that account himself sold to the devil.
—Freud

*I*f the human has a future, it will be to seek its own death and thus to have no future at all: this was the conclusion Freud found himself contemplating upon his inquiry into the nature of the ego-instincts and the forces of life and death in the field of biology in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Nearly a century later it is a conclusion that critical theories of the human have only begun to digest.¹ The recent shift from the philosophical problem of the “subject” to the ontological and epistemological status of the “human” among critics working in many fields, especially in the heterogeneous area of science studies, has rejuvenated a line of critique that had begun to run out of steam. But this shift has at the same time placed the notion of a specifically *human* “future” suddenly into question. The conceptual limits of the human category have never been more blurry, its empirical grounding never more difficult to establish, its history and ontology never more subject to debate. How can the human have a future if we have never been human in the first place?² If Freud himself rarely submitted the concept of the human to this level of direct questioning, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* he allowed himself

to go further than usual, borrowing freely from other fields; proposing, in a tone all the more surprising for its offhandedness, that the sciences are simply another source of figurative language; openly advocating for the virtues of open-ended, even inconclusive, research.

Like many readers of Freud, I have often found it difficult to decide what to appreciate more about his work in general and about *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in particular: the radicalism of its hypotheses or the frankly speculative method it employs in order to explore them. The essay that follows has been written for this special issue as a response to Freud's undertaking, proceeding from a general conviction—one that I do not suppose to be original or controversial and that I imagine many *differences* readers will share—that psychoanalytic theory continues to offer a powerful set of concepts and interpretive methods that are widely useful in the study of literature and history but also in the social and even the natural sciences. My purpose has been to use psychoanalytic categories in order to explore two broad theoretical problems that seem to me to mark a significant threshold in the determination of the “human” and that are fundamental to assessing whatever future it may have. The first is most properly a problem of political theory, because it involves *group organizations*: the human considered as a member of a collectivity, and of a collectivity that includes nonhuman entities as well as human ones. The second I will describe as a problem of technology, because it involves modes of making, creating, assembling, or representing *artificial entities* of various kinds, including group organizations but also fictional persons and the representational technologies necessary to create an enduring sense of “personhood.” Because I am an early modernist by training and because the two problems I have identified take a distinctive turn in the early modern period, I have used evidence drawn not from the future of the human but from its past: from the work of the geographer and historian Richard Hakluyt (1552–1616). Both the problem of the group organization and the problem of technology emerge with particular clarity in those sections of the Hakluyt material that pertain to the emergence of the “corporation,” a collective organization that was itself (and that remains) an artificial legal person. Readers of *differences* will probably agree that, after Freud, it is difficult if not impossible to discuss problems of personhood and the human without reference to psychoanalysis; in my view, this is no less true of discussions of artificial persons. At the same time, the work of Hakluyt and the history of the corporation have offered me an occasion for proposing some modifications to Freud's model so that psychoanalytic

ideas may be used to examine impersonal institutional structures and so that Freud may be put in dialogue with the work of more recent thinkers who offer powerful theoretical resources for examining the nature of corporate organization and corporate writing, notably the critic Roland Barthes and the sociologist of science Bruno Latour, whose work seems to me to reflect the influence of Freud's ideas, albeit indirectly.

A final word remains to be said about the voice of the essay, for it has been written not only as a response to the arguments that Freud advances in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and in other writings from the same period: it has been written in the spirit of experimental hypothesis that characterizes that book in particular and that I take to be a condition of possibility for all psychoanalytic inquiry. The style and tone are meant to recall Freud's lectures delivered to a public audience at the University of Vienna in 1915–16 and 1916–17 and subsequently published as *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in Die Psychoanalyse (Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis)* (1917), an act of ventriloquism that deserves some explanation. Writing the essay as a hypothetical lecture seemed to me to permit a more technical and at the same time a clearer and more accessible exploration of Freudian models than I might otherwise have been able to accomplish in a conventional essay, even one written in a strongly marked theoretical voice; more surprisingly, I found that it led me to a more experimental—a more *analytic*—attitude by provoking insights into both corporate organization and Freud's ideas that I had not seen at the outset. As questions of voice, of fictionality and artifice, of collective articulation, and of corporate authorship began to emerge more and more saliently from the Hakluyt material, it seemed to me particularly appropriate to adopt the device of an artificial person who was “himself” in some sense a collective entity in order to explore these questions through an act of creative demonstration rather than direct exposition: my hope is that the readers of *differences* will find the experience of an artificial person as illuminating and as enjoyable as an explanation of it. If not, I can only say, as Freud did of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, that “it may be asked why I have embarked upon such a line of thought as the present one, and in particular why I have decided to make it public. Well—I cannot deny that some of the analogies, correlations and connections which it contains seemed to me to deserve consideration” (60).

We shall renew our inquiry into “the future of the human,” and no doubt you are eager to hear what new light psycho-analysis can shed on the problem. By now you are all familiar with the premises of our new science, although as is always the case in a field as young as our own we shall inevitably find occasions to revise our ideas and to find ever more precise ways of stating them, including our most fundamental principles; I myself have often been surprised by the hitherto unforeseen problems that the analysis of new material may introduce.

With the exception of a few topics of special interest, such as the traumatic neuroses, it has been a central tenet of psycho-analysis to regard the individual psyche from the inside out, proceeding from the premise that the organism is bombarded from within by pressures that derive from the primary processes of the unconscious, which does its extraordinary work to satisfy those impulses despite the force of repression that intervenes in the many ways we have come to recognize. I have even suggested how memory and the unconscious itself result from the cathexes that have attached themselves to the apprehension of objects and the feelings they arouse, cathexes that have engraved enduring paths back into the psyche. To expand upon an analogy that I have sometimes used, we may compare the process of perception and memory to those extraordinary Roman aqueducts built to transport water over great distances back to the heart of the city, or to the great Roman roads that traversed huge territories and provided the cities with the resources necessary to sustain themselves as nodes in the larger Roman Empire. This is why I have occasionally compared the unconscious to the great ancient city of Rome, with its many historical layers interpenetrating one another and providing mutual support for edifices, streets, entire neighborhoods whose subsequent evolution would have astonished their original inhabitants. And of course I have often declared that dreams are the royal road to the unconscious. So perhaps you will permit me to transpose these metaphors when I say that aqueducts, roads, and other networks are the dream of every political community: it seems to me that such a figure of speech is as good a way as any to introduce the terrain that is our subject.

Tonight we shall depart from previous practice by no longer considering the individual human person and its internal psychic life, but rather the person in its external relation to collectivities and groups. Our central problem shall be to determine how the structures and processes that psycho-analysis has identified in individual people may also be said to operate in group organizations. But our broadest purpose shall be to

suggest several points of overlap between the science of psycho-analysis and the field of political theory, or the study of the relations between the one and the many, including systems of community organization, problems of legal sovereignty, and governance. In what follows, I shall be turning to the work of authors in whose work we may discern certain influences of psycho-analysis but who themselves have had little to do with the field in a professional capacity. And we shall be considering primary evidence taken from a case that is unusual by the lights of our usual investigations, although one that I think is particularly instructive: the case of Richard Hakluyt.

No doubt the name of Richard Hakluyt is unfamiliar to many of you, but I can assure you that to his own Elizabethan contemporaries the name was, if not exactly commonplace, well known in influential circles, especially among those statesmen and merchants concerned with geography and with the history of overseas discovery, trade, and colonialism, the areas in which Mr. Hakluyt was an authentic pioneer. His writings have had a particular importance among historians of the early United States, especially those concerned with early colonial efforts by the English in the New World, and scholars of the British Empire and its early global history; indeed, today his work sustains an entire society that bears his name and that is devoted to the publication of the geographical writing he inspired. Because the evidence that survives is so unusual—Mr. Hakluyt did not consult with me himself, nor did I ever meet with him in person, nor did I gather any of the material directly from his own thoughts and associations, as is the usual way—some will ask how it is possible to proceed with an analysis in such a case. But I can assure you that, given the problem that it is our object to understand, the absence of Mr. Hakluyt is more than a positive benefit: it is a vital aspect without which certain insights would never emerge. I first became acquainted with his writings during preliminary research into the nature of groups or collectivities, the problem of intergroup encounter or interaction, and the lingering question of whether and how the insights of psycho-analysis might extend to group formations. Some of this research has since appeared in print; for reasons having to do with another case, I had been led to look for historical evidence for the problem and in a circuitous way had come to read Hakluyt.

I say “read Hakluyt,” but already I feel I must correct myself. For I have begun to slip into what I have come to think of as the trap of biography, which in this case proves particularly important to resist. Some scholars have even suggested that a conventional biography of Hakluyt is

impossible to write, although this is not for lack of biographical details, furnished by a modest documentary record.³ Today we possess a clutch of letters written while Hakluyt was chaplain to the English ambassador to France, most of which concern diplomatic “intelligences” on matters of religion, French involvement with North America, and the probable intentions of England’s perennial national enemy, Spain. Prefaces and dedicatory letters to works that Hakluyt encouraged and often sponsored financially, sometimes signed by him, allow us to locate his position in patronage circles around Sir Francis Walsingham and, most famously, Sir Walter Raleigh; these dedications often bespeak clear opinions regarding matters of discovery and foreign “planting.” A long manuscript treatise on the strategic and commercial value of colonial projects in the New World, written for presentation to Raleigh, Walsingham, and the queen, provides a detailed survey of reasons to anticipate success for planting ventures in the New World.⁴ The treatise accompanied an analysis of Aristotle’s *Politics*, also presented to Elizabeth, which has received little discussion among Hakluyt specialists.⁵ The case is made somewhat more complicated by the fact that the person to whom we refer as “Richard Hakluyt” was in fact two people, the historian, geographer, university lecturer, chaplain, and general promoter of English “adventure” to whom I have been referring, and an older cousin of the same name, a lawyer and member of the Middle Temple at the Inns of Court, who also attended Oxford, who also collected documentation about English travel and trade, and who also advised powerful Elizabethan courtiers on navigation and plantation projects. Fewer documents ascribed to Richard Hakluyt the Elder survive, and among them we find considerable overlap in opinion between him and his more famous cousin.

Adding to our difficulty is the fact that Hakluyt’s most famous and enduring work cannot be said to have been written, much less authored or “invented,” as his Elizabethan contemporaries liked to say, by himself. I am referring to the enormous *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, published in London in one volume in 1589 and then again in a revised and expanded three-volume edition in 1598–1600. Those of you who have consulted *The Principal Navigations* will know that it is a coherent “book” only in the most literal, physical sense. Hakluyt’s method, as a famous preface tells us, was to gather out of libraries and private collections, from letters, direct interviews, and from third-party reports, any document that pertained to the history of English global exploration, from the earliest historical accounts to the most recent

projects of his own day. He then organized these documents geographically by vector of direction across the globe: voyages to the northeast, to the southeast, and to the west, including in the last category journeys both to the Americas and in search of the fabled, and utterly fantasmatic, Northwest Passage. Each individual text has a brief title, which sometimes indicates its origin or how Hakluyt came across it.

Within this enormous nation-building project, as one expert has described it (Helgersen 151–54, 166, 171–87), we find a pastiche of many different speakers and many different documents, from charters, letters, and inventories to brief histories and first-person narratives of travel and trade. Aside from the extensive prefaces and dedicatory letters to the *Principal Navigations*, only a few of these accounts can be identified with any plausibility as having been written by Hakluyt himself.⁶ This is perhaps the best indication of why, in this case, we encounter something very different from a conventional biographical subject; as we shall see, the name *Richard Hakluyt* describes what I have come to think of as a composite or “corporate” person, an entity made up of many intervening layers of voices, desires, and impulses that are difficult to separate from one another. No doubt we could make similar claims for *all* proper names: these phenomena are common enough in our clinical research and will be familiar to you from previous lectures and from your own observations; it is for this reason, among others, that the case of Hakluyt seems to me so amenable to the techniques of psycho-analysis, albeit with some modification.

Our general topic is “the future of the human,” but we shall find it useful to draw some distinctions among concepts that we normally condense in psycho-analytic discussion and indeed in many fields of argument, whether philosophical, legal, historical, literary, or scientific. For in this case the person is often not human in any simple sense, and its subjectivity has very little to do with the individual as we usually imagine it. At the risk of using a somewhat awkward turn of phrase, I shall call it a “posthuman” person: there is nothing “natural” about it, and it is as much an assemblage as it is an individual. In this sense, I shall class it among the other artificial and highly organized group formations that I have recently considered, such as the church and the army.⁷ My purpose shall be to track its footsteps through the material that the case of Richard Hakluyt provides; we shall use the occasion to examine in more detail the institutional structures that sustain artificial groups, including their legal foundations and the ways in which they account for themselves, and we

shall venture a few hypotheses about their psychological characteristics, as peculiar as this may sound.

But first a brief digression is in order so that we can grasp more easily the historical dimension to the Hakluyt case and establish some definitions to guide our analysis. A moment ago I characterized him as a composite or a corporate person: what, after all, is a “corporation”? For it is more than a group like the church or the army; in the words of the eminent English legal historian Frederic William Maitland, it is a special type of person: a fictional or artificial person. “Persons are either natural or artificial,” Maitland writes. “The only natural persons are men. The only artificial persons are corporations. Corporations are either aggregate or sole.”⁸ In this way Maitland opened his inquiry into the problem of the “corporation sole,” which he regarded as a nonsensical absurdity of early modern English law with no precedent in ancient Roman law and no parallel on the Continent. In contrast to the long-standing legal fiction of the corporation aggregate or the legal entity formed by the association of several different natural persons, the “corporation sole” consisted of one single natural person who could be of two types. The first type was the humble church parson, who could assume the legal status of a “corporation of one” in the interest of holding property on behalf of his church or of entering into legal actions regarding those holdings. The other was the person of the king, who could stand not as a mortal person but as an immortal *corporation sole* in the interest of undertaking legal actions pertaining to property and feudal obligation.

Roman civil law had recognized several types of associations formed to undertake a collective activity, including the city, the trade guilds, and burial societies, designating them as *municipia*, *civitates*, *coloniae*, *societates*, or *collegia* and classing them generally under the category of *universitas*.⁹ These provisions formed the basis for the gradual development by medieval canonists of a distinctive notion of corporate personality, which Roman law had lacked: the legal fiction of a collective person who was distinct from and greater than the individual members who constituted it. A flock of sheep always remains a flock, despite the death of individual sheep—so argued the thirteenth-century jurist Henry de Bracton.¹⁰ The *universitas*, the most common term in late medieval canon and common law for a notion approximating that of incorporated legal persons, ranged in size from the universal church and the kingdom, or the community of the realm, to the medieval guilds, boroughs, and cities, to the two actual universities of Oxford and Cambridge, down to

individual monasteries, hospitals, parish churches, and even, as Bracton asserted, to theaters—since they, too, were entities in which one was composed out of many.¹¹ By the fifteenth century, the terms *corporation* and *body corporate* had explicitly entered English legal discourse, bearing the imprint of what both Maitland and Ernst Kantorowicz have described as a “mystical” tradition typical of medieval theological uses of corporatist concepts.¹² This mystical tradition found its most famous articulation in the middle of the sixteenth century as the legal theory of the King’s Two Bodies; in the hands of Hakluyt’s contemporary Edmund Spenser, it eventually produced a famous theory of allegory.¹⁵ But I shall draw this digression to a close by saying, with Maitland, that “I would not trouble you with medievalism. Only this by the way: If once you become interested in the sort of history that tries to unravel these and similar problems, you will think some other sorts of history rather superficial. Perhaps you will go the length of saying that much the most interesting person that you ever knew was *persona ficta*. But my hour flies” (“Moral” 308–9).

At this point, I would like to venture a simple claim: Richard Hakluyt’s *Principal Navigations* records nothing less than the historical emergence of what has become, for us, the most familiar type of corporate person: the commercial corporation, in the form of trading companies organized according to the joint-stock method. A major purpose of Hakluyt’s work is to provide a series of case histories of these enormous artificial persons, integrating their biographies into the larger historical narrative that he is seeking to tell about English nationhood and gathering together the different forms in which this corporate person begins to “speak.” These speech acts include royal charters that extended to the trading companies the legal rights long associated with corporate status; diplomatic letters that sought to secure or expand corporate privileges; and intracorporate inventories that provided information about stock, transportation routes, and political circumstances necessary to the conduct of trade. As newly incorporated persons, long-distance trading ventures were recognized as abstract entities distinct from and greater than the sum of their constituent members, with the right to purchase, alienate, and bequeath property, especially over generations, to bring suits in law, and to be sued in turn by other parties. As a consequence, incorporated ventures were more enduring than nonincorporated partnerships; they could accumulate capital more effectively and use it more flexibly; and they offered limited protections for individual members from the debts of the association when ventures turned bad.¹⁴

Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* is a "corporate form," therefore, in two distinct senses. In the first place, many of its documents were produced by the early trading corporations and constitute their mode of address to the world. Despite their formulaic character, these documents raise a set of questions that are at once figurative, economic, and political; I say figurative, first, because they demonstrate what we might call the prosopopoeic or "apostrophic" nature of corporate personhood. For the corporation is by definition absent, dead, or virtual until addressed, and it emerges only through the founding declarative legal act that attributes personhood to it. We are in a mode in which the text of the law speaks lyrically, crying or calling out to the corporation: "Speak, O corporation, and act and profit us!"¹⁵ But the corporation is a peculiar creature, and we soon find that it cannot speak for itself. Once corporate life begins, we encounter not a single voice but a cacophony of voices, a thousand vanishing personas speaking across vast distances to one another. Information swamps identity and renders it irrelevant; first person shifts suddenly to third person, in the midst of narration; subjects turn and objectify themselves. The corporation is an institution ventriloquizing a person, and it is a person speaking with an institutional voice: it is a person without *personality*. Although we find occasional references to hope, fear, admiration, and other forms of heightened emotion in the accounts that Hakluyt collects, these are rare, as though the abstraction necessary to constitute the collective person saps narrators of their affect and replaces them with a neutral style that any natural person may employ in turn. This objective voice is the stylistic signature of the "representative" principle that organizes the corporate form and allows it to function over great distances. Every enunciation is collective; names signed at the bottom of a letter speak as representatives of the corporate person rather than in their own voices; at the same time, there is no corporate person without their commands, which thus always emerge from the mouth of another. "I" and "we" become interchangeable, as singularity gives way to collectivity—the corporation has stolen the collective first person from the monarch. Here is a relatively ordinary example:

A remembrance given us by the Governours, Consuls, and Assistants of the company of Merchants trading into Russia, the eight day of May 1561, to our trustie friend Anthonie Jenkinson, at his departure towards Russia, and so to Persia, in this our eight journey:

First you shall understand that we have laden in our good ship, called the Swallow, one Chest, the keyes whereof we doe heere deliver you, and also a bill, wherein are written particularly the contents in the sayd Chest, and what every thing did cost: and because, as you know, the sayd Chest is of charge, we desire you to have a speciall regard unto it, and when God shall send you unto Mosco, our mindes and will is, that you, with the advise of our Agents there, doe appoint some such presents for the Emperour and his sonne. (3: 9)

Among the many questions we might ask of these documents, perhaps the simplest ones are: Who speaks? Who is spoken to? As the *wes* and *ours* multiply and contract into *you* and *me*, it is impossible to say, exactly. The corporation contains multitudes; it is an aggregate entity dispersed into a network of narrative relays, itineraries of topographic displacements, lists and inventories, sudden accidents, and unmotivated events reported in letters and other accounts passed from outpost to ship, from factor to agent to merchant and finally to Hakluyt back in London. The corporation feeds on reported speech and indirect discourse—to paraphrase a well-known phrase, we may say that the corporation is simply a displaced name for a linguistic predicament.

The second reason that the *Principal Navigations* is a corporate form is because Hakluyt himself imagines it in this way: this is clear from some of the very first words that he addresses to us, words that, as we find so often in clinical work, reveal the core of the problem around which the entire case turns. Some of you will recall the famous preface to the 1598 edition of the *Principal Navigations*, where Hakluyt reminds his readers of the stakes of the project and allows himself to complain, gently, about his efforts:

Having for the benefit and honour of my Countrey zealously bestowed so many yeres, so much traveile and cost, to bring Antiquities smothered and buried in darke silence, to light, and to preserve certaine memorable exploits of late yeeres by our English nation atchieved, from the greedy and devouring jawes of oblivion: to gather likewise, and as it were to incorporate into one body the torne and scattered limmes of our ancient and late Navigations by Sea, our voyages by land, and traffiques of merchandise by both: and having (so much as in me lieth) restored ech particular member, being before displaced, to their true

joynts and ligaments [. . .] I do this second time [. . .] presume to offer unto thy view this first part of my threefold discourse. For the bringing of which into this homely and rough-hewen shape, which here thou seest; what restlesse nights, what painefull dayes, what heat, what cold I have indured; how many long & chargeable journeys I have traveiled; how many famous librar-ies I have searched into; what varietie of ancient and moderne writers I have perused; what a number of old records, patents, privileges, letters, &c. I have redeemed from obscuritie and perishing; into how manifold acquaintance I have entred; what expenses I have not spared; and yet what faire opportunities of private gaine, preferment, and ease I have neglected; albeit thy selfe canst hardly imagine, yet I by daily experience do finde & feele, and some of my entier friends can sufficiently testifie. Howbeit (as I told thee at the first) the honour and benefit of this Common weale wherein I live and breathe, hath made all difficulties seeme easie, all paines and industrie pleasant, and all expenses of light value and moment unto me. (1: xxxix–xl)

The archive is like a mirror, and Hakluyt is suspended in a kind of spatial capture, caught in the projection of a body image that oscillates in an ambivalent fashion around two poles of unity and partition, the first acting centripetally to gather him together, the second working centrifugally to disperse and disfigure him. This body image operates at several scales simultaneously, since the disappearance of the self that Hakluyt narrates with such poignancy at the individual level—he is literally wasting away through his efforts and “traveiles”—is tolerable and even desirable so long as it is reintegrated into an even greater imaginary body, the plenitude of “Countrey” and “Common weale.” And yet the body that confronts him in the surface of the archive is plainly monstrous, a grotesque creature of parts and severed limbs that resist his attempts to integrate them. Even the grammar of the passage repeats this structure of ambivalence, as a prominent display of *selflessness* or of *self-erasure*—the rhetorical stance of denial, effort, expenditure, and sacrifice—competes with an increasingly insistent assertion of *selffullness* endowed with perception and sensation. We note in passing that *I* is by far the most frequently occurring word in the passage, as Hakluyt clings desperately to that most dubious linguistic signature of personhood. And yet the *I* is just as liable to be absorbed into the fantasy of collective agency and the history of “our” navigations, voyages, and traffics.

Hakluyt's preface introduces us to a peculiar formation that I propose to call the "corporate ego," a notion that implies several contradictions. Normally we reserve the term *ego* for that part of the psyche associated with personal identity, both consciously and, through repression and the specific structure of the defenses, unconsciously. We have discussed the important role played by the body as a substrate for this psychic structure, which I have described as deriving from the percept-consciousness system and which is why the ego really is a "body-ego" (Freud, *Ego* 25–27). But what happens when the "body" is at the same time not a body, the "ego" not a single person but many, the "person" not even a natural thing but an artificial being? Let us sit down next to the ghostly voice of Richard Hakluyt and begin the work of undertaking a full-scale analysis of this corporate ego, which extends across the pages of a virtual couch before us.

I can give only a brief sketch of how such an analysis might proceed, beginning with the first paragraph of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*:

In the theory of psycho-analysis we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the pleasure principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course of those events is invariably set in motion by an unpleasurable tension, and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension—that is, with the avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure. In taking that course into account in our consideration of the mental processes which are the subject of our study, we are introducing an "economic" point of view into our work; and if, in describing those processes, we try to estimate this "economic" factor in addition to the "topographical" and "dynamic" ones, we shall, I think, be giving the most complete description of them of which we can at present conceive, and one which deserves to be distinguished by the term "metapsychological." (7)

In the dynamic model of cathexes that I have elaborated in this work and elsewhere, the concept of "economy" has been borrowed from thermodynamics; the problem seemed to me to explain the origin, accumulation, and transformation of psychic or neural energy, the pathways that it follows toward discharge, and the resistances that it encounters. In this scheme, "economic" means quantitative: it would in theory be possible to measure and quantify an amount of neural energy cathected in an object or in the

ego, to measure its intensity, and to gauge its vector of direction toward discharge.

In attempting to translate this individual psychic model onto the structure of collective groups, I have hitherto stressed the *libidinal* aspect of group formation, as an alternative to the unsatisfactory appeal to a mysterious principle of “suggestion.” I have maintained that artificial groups such as the church or the army are maintained by the libidinal ties that bind members together, ties that are experienced as a form of identification (Freud, *Group* 91–99). I have even suggested that a similar process takes place among multicellular organisms, proposing that the combination of many cells into a “vital association” answers the need to prolong cellular life and results from the fact that each cell takes the other as its libidinal object (*Beyond* 50). The same may be said of the corporation, for one of its most important qualities is the collective desire, that “common tendency, a wish in which a number of people can have a share,” as I have described it (*Group* 100), that motivates its members to undertake voyages of considerable discomfort and even to risk their own lives. In the case of the corporate person, this wish is simply and specifically a wish for *profit*. We may suspect, in other words, that in the corporate person a principle of *value* has taken the place of libido—that it plays a similar role.

There is thus no reason not to take my earlier use of the term *economic* quite literally and to do so in order to develop an analysis of the *corporate* ego, specifically, integrating this economic analysis with what we would be perfectly justified in describing as the “topographic” structure of the early modern corporate apparatus. For this structure *is* topographic in a literal, cartographic sense. In order to pursue this hypothesis, I propose to take a cue from a phrase that Hakluyt himself uses in his address to his readers, a phrase found under the pen of every humanist of the Renaissance period who seeks to justify his writing: the phrase “profit and pleasure”: “This being the summe of those things which I thought good to admonish thee of (good Reader) it remaineth that thou take the profite and pleasure of the worke: which I wish to bee as great to thee, as my paines and labour have bene in bringing these rawe fruits unto this ripenesse, and in reducing these loose papers into this order” (*Principal* 1: 12). In true humanist fashion—or in true *posthumanist* fashion, I should say—let us now exchange the term *profit* for the term *pleasure* every time it appears in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, beginning with this initial paragraph:

In the theory of psycho-analysis we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the profit principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course of those events is invariably set in motion by an unprofitable tension, and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension—that is, with the avoidance of unprofit or a production of profit. In taking that course into account in our consideration of the mental processes which are the subject of our study, we are introducing an “economic” point of view into our work; and if, in describing those processes, we try to estimate this “economic” factor in addition to the “topographical” and “dynamic” ones, we shall, I think, be giving the most complete description of them of which we can at present conceive, and one which deserves to be distinguished by the term “metapsychological.” (7, trans. modified)

Viewed in this light, the entire notion of cathexis and of libido, and especially of cathexis as the *investment* of libido in objects and persons, would become extremely fruitful, since by transposing them in this way we may grasp how the role of libido in the economic model is played in the corporate ego by capital and by the notion of value—a term we should understand in its economic sense but for which we may also retain an ethical meaning.¹⁶ This fund of capital libido is relatively “free” or “bound” depending on its state; resides in objects, images, and avatars; and is maintained or managed by the corporate ego in response to its demands and drives. The corporate ego is, like all egos, predicated on the narcissistic cathexis of libido onto itself, which it seeks to expand by constructing physical networks of materials, as the corporate body comes to live *in* its assemblages; by assembling durable networks in this way, corporate agents “load” the corporate ego by incorporating objects and introjecting the value associated with them, which forms its capital reserve.

Having adopted this substitution of terms—somewhat fanciful, perhaps, but nonetheless clarifying—we may now grasp several additional insights and even propose important revisions to our model. In the first place, we may discern the two major categories of psychic life that we have identified in all natural persons: the primary processes that characterize dreams and the unconscious, and the secondary processes that we associate with the preconscious and with rational, waking, conscious life. Rather than assigning these processes to two different regions of the corporate

psyche, however, we must instead identify them by their different *forms of writing and narrative modes*. The secondary processes, for instance, are easily perceived in official, legal documents of the corporate person: in its rules for governance and action; in the rationality and deliberateness of corporate decision making; in its ledgers and account books, in its attempts to zero out charge and discharge and in this way to lower an unpleasurable tension by maintaining a constant state of capital flow. Here, the “voice” of the corporate ego emerges most clearly: it speaks on behalf of the organization and its self-preservation; it commands and orders; it proclaims portentously and threatens to punish when necessary. These last features reveal most clearly to us the defenses that the corporate ego establishes in order to protect itself from enormous discharges of cathexes that would disturb its everyday functioning, its strict supervision of trading practices, and its self-armament against aggression by others.

The primary processes, in turn, may be attributed to the “unconscious” of the corporate ego, which suddenly appears to be nothing less than what we normally call the “market,” along with the processes of condensation, displacement, and investment that are necessary to the accumulation of value. The all-important force of repression, which exercises its implacable power on the psyche of natural persons and determines both their relative degrees of happiness and their overall fate in life, corresponds to those forces that attempt to systematize and structure the flow of value and to give the corporate ego a distinctive, enduring shape, through an organizational structure and through the manifold forms that value may assume for it, whether in instruments, in tools, in people, in commodities, or in long assembled chains of different materials. The force of repression marks the limits of those areas where trade is not possible or has been forbidden and where profit is consequently not to be found, in conformity with a reality principle; it governs the distribution of value among its members; it allows for appropriate forms of expenditure. In situations where direct trade or profit making is either impossible or not yet possible—situations of which there are many in the corporate accounts—we find that repression redirects the profit principle by forcing it, symptomatically, into a compromise form: the gifts and other symbolic functions of an “ambassadorial” nature that represent an underlying drive for profit as a gesture of respect and affection.

Like all natural persons, the corporate person becomes satisfied when it succeeds in loosening the binding power of repression, lowers the unprofitable tension, and invents new combinations of materials

and new pathways toward profit. It displays neuroses when this profit principle becomes too inhibited or encounters obstacles that it cannot overcome, forcing it to retreat to earlier fixations and familiar chains of commodification, even if these yield marginal returns. Inevitably—and here we touch upon the reasons why I have turned to *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*—we may glimpse in the corporate accounts the contours of a corporate “death drive” that plunges it toward its own annihilation: a compulsion to return to the same regions, even when trade seems blocked, exhausted, or impossible; to force its agents into ever more extreme circumstances, at the limits of civilization and its control; a fear of ice and glacial seas that immobilize ships and freeze entire companies of men, a haunting and recurring image that surfaces again and again in the letters of both the Russia Company and in many other accounts.¹⁷ *Roanoke*, *Virginia*, the *Northwest Passage*: these are the names of a corporate death drive, symptoms of an inevitable tendency in every organism to seek its own death and to expire in its own way. For it is a fact that none of these corporate persons were able to endure forever, and some, notably the Virginia Company, turned out to be perpetually unprofitable and remarkably short lived.

Several important points are now worth emphasizing. As in the case of natural persons, the primary processes of the corporate person remain accessible to us *only* through its symptoms and elaborate self-narrations, only through the forms that the corporate ego itself generates—in a moment, we shall consider some of these more closely. The corporate “unconscious” remains remote from us and yet at the same time just at hand. It is a perpetually shifting, mutating thing; if a moment ago I described the market as the “unconscious” of the corporation, we must remember that the so-called market does not have an independent existence but exists only in relation to specific corporate persons, which create their own economy in their wake as they pursue their goals.¹⁸ The market does not preexist the corporation but results from its activity; we may say of failed corporate ventures that they are the exact corollary to those animalculae studied by Woodruff who were “injured by the products of metabolism which they extruded into the surrounding fluid” and for which “only the products of its own metabolism [. . .] had fatal results” (Freud, *Beyond* 48). The only difference is that the forces that drive the corporation are not organic but artificial and fully historical, fused and contradictory but decisive and implacable; very powerful persons, after all, have decided to act, leveraging their positions and authority to involve

themselves in a venture.¹⁹ The queen herself often participates. *These* are a source of the corporate unconscious, along with the many foreign substances, figures, and forces that are caught up in the corporation's thrust. And this is why we may say that "the ego is the true and original reservoir of libido" (*Beyond* 51), with the understanding, of course, that by libido we mean a principle of capital and of value.

But this is also why, in the case of the corporation, we must abandon our traditional model of the ego as "surface" and unconscious as "depth," or the ego as the core, nucleus, or center ringed by a periphery, or the notion of the person as an entity with a clear inside and outside. For there is *no depth and no inside* to the corporate person; there is only surface, there is only outside.²⁰ We find only thresholds, joints, hinges: points of juncture, modification, and lateral assemblage; chains of association that are longer or shorter, denser and looser, more and less durable. These extend from the fingertips of the agent or the factor—from the farthest reaches that his ear strains to hear, over the horizon and beyond, through the rumors and reports that reach him across the snowfields of the north—all the way "back" or "up" the line to the corporate ego, whose representatives have their own external relations in overlapping networks of other commercial and civic entities, many of them also independent corporate persons. The corporation may have a global reach, but it does not have a "planetary" shape, if you will; we must resist as strenuously as possible the notion of a "nucleus" located in London surrounded by "rings" of orbiting satellites. The corporation is a geographical or topographic organization, but it is not a *bounded* entity: it is a system, a network, a cluster of sovereignties, freedoms, powers, and wills, a vectored movement and a gigantic rhizomatic extension that takes its shape from a series of territorial drives that perpetually press against the limits of their own horizons.

Let us turn to the *Principal Navigations* to illustrate these somewhat speculative observations. Bound inside some copies of the 1598 edition, we find a striking visual image of the corporation's networked and territorializing form: Edward Wright's famous world map, otherwise known as the Molyneux map and mentioned by Shakespeare in his *Twelfth Night* (see figs. 1 and 2).²¹ It would be a mistake to look into the map and see only nations, only empires, only land and sea. For the map illustrates not bounded entities but itineraries and vectors of movement—as cartographic artifact, the coastline is, after all, the trace of an itinerary. It shows crisscrossing navigational rhumb lines that spread from multiple foci or vanishing points; it is a diagram of corporate desire stretching itself

across the body of the earth. The map allows Hakluyt and his readers to *imagine* these networks as a global one; it gives a totalizing geographical shape to networks and processes that occur across many different scales, through thousands of points of conjuncture that could never be glimpsed in one glance. Where is the global in the English Renaissance? In a literal sense, it is not in the West Indies, not in Cathay, not in the dream of a Northwest Passage. It is to be found inside the covers of the second edition of the *Principal Navigations*, and it runs throughout every single narrative venture that its pages subsequently collect together and then unfold.

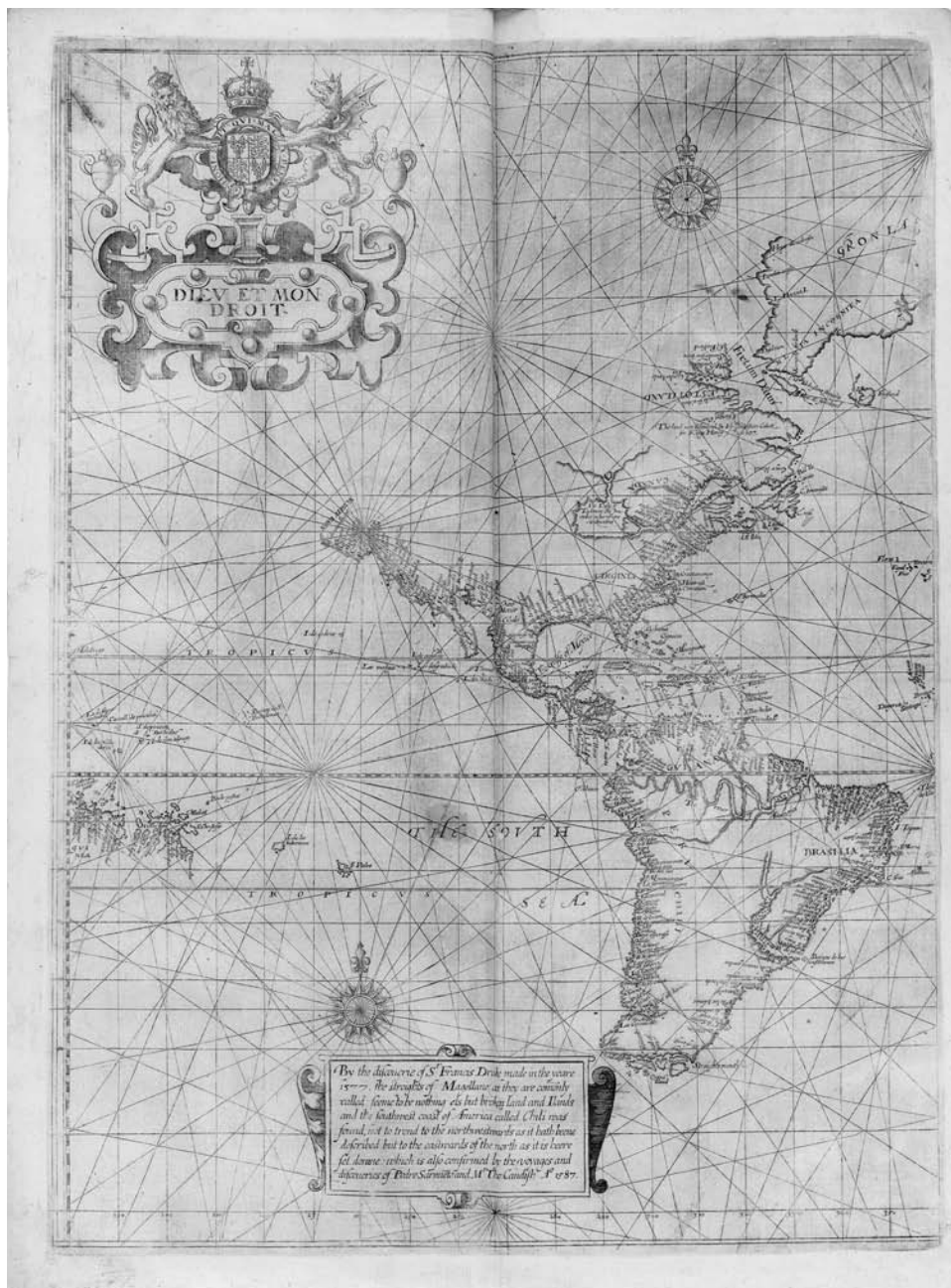
The *Principal Navigations* also collects the birth certificates, as it were, for its artificial persons. We may take as an example the charter for the Russia or Muscovy Company, formally founded by a grant of incorporation from its parents, King Philip and Queen Mary, in 1555. The charter declares that the merchants “shalbe from henceforth *one bodie and perpetuall fellowship and communaltie of themselves* [. . .]. We doe *incorporate*, name, and declare by these presents [. . .]. And that they and their successours, shall and may bee for ever able *persons and, capax in the lawe*” (2: 305 and 308, my emphasis).²² Eleven years later Elizabeth confirmed the grant of corporate status and at the same time shortened the name of the body:

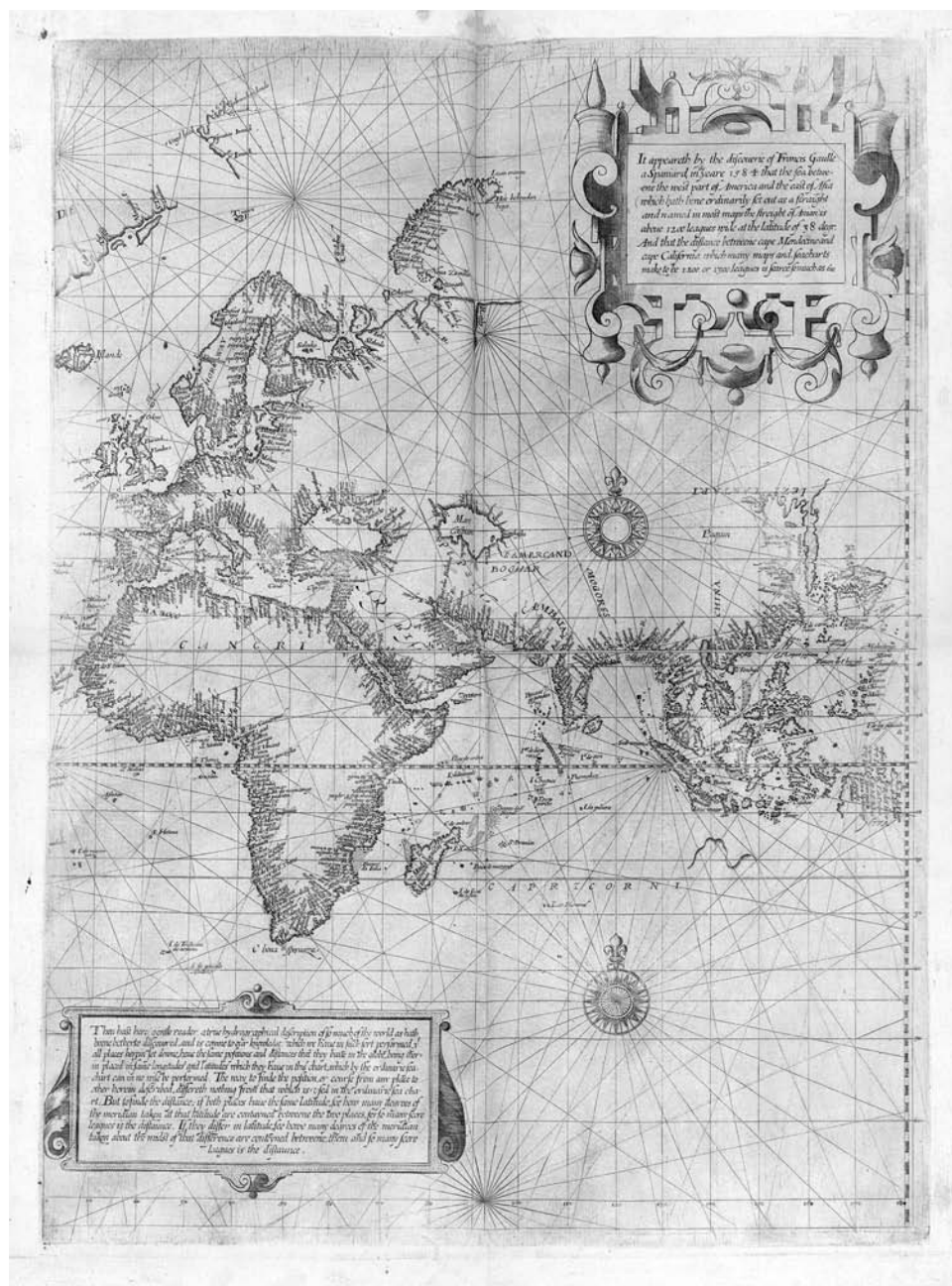
*[T]hat they by the name of Merchants adventurers of England, for the discoverie of lands, territories, Isles, dominions, and Seigniories unknownen [. . .] should be from thenceforth one body, and perpetuall felowship and communaltie of themselves, both in deed and in name [. . .]. And for that the name by which the saide felowship is incorporated by the letters patents aforesaid, is long, & consisteth of very many words: Therfore be it enacted [. . .] that the said felowship, company, society & corporation [. . .] henceforth be incorporated, named and called onely by the name of the fellowship of English merchants, for discovery of new trades, and by the same name for ever shall and may continue a perpetuall body incorporate in deed, and name, and onely by the same name from henceforth. (3: 84, 86–87, my emphasis)*²³

The case of the Virginia Company is similarly instructive. Like Elizabeth, James lacked the resources to undertake plantation projects directly and instead exploited the private corporate form in order to foster them, granting to the Virginia Company and to the Plymouth Company

Figures 1 and 2
Edward Wright's
world map, printed in
Hakluyt's *Principal*
Navigations.

*Courtesy of the
John Carter Brown
Library at Brown
University.*





in 1606 all commercial rights to land in the New World between 34 and 45 degrees latitude. Among the members of the first Virginia Company we find “Richard Hakluyt,” granted the rights to “all the Lands, Woods, Soil, Grounds, Havens, Ports, Rivers, Mines, Minerals, Marshes, Waters, Fishings, Commodities, and Hereditaments [. . .] along the said Coast of Virginia and America.” Three years later, the Company’s second charter of 1609 expanded its political powers considerably by declaring it “one Body or Commonalty perpetual [. . .] [with] perpetual Succession and one common Seal to serve for the said Body or Commonalty [. . .] [to be] known, called, and incorporated by the Name of The Treasurer and Company of Adventurers and Planters of the City of London, for the first Colony in Virginia.” Among the roughly seven hundred individual subscribers who together make up this enormous artificial person, we again find Richard Hakluyt, alongside Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton and Shakespeare’s patron; Sir Humphrey Weld, then lord mayor of the Corporation of London; Sir Francis Bacon; and a subscriber who is named only as “Dr. Turner.”²⁴ We find earls, lords, knights, gentlemen, captains, merchants, goldsmiths, grocers, haberdashers, coopers, stationers, shoemakers, and many other trades, as well as sixty separate commercial companies, each itself an independent corporate entity.

Upon the legal creation of the corporation, the category of personhood functions as a conceptual envelope, a formal principle of both extension and intension that can “cover” many different singular bodies so that they may be substituted for one another and be arranged in an order of subordination within a single group formation. The corporation is then metabolized, as it were, by an economic calculation in which the notion of value allows for abstraction and equivalence. Membership in the corporate person is purchased by share; conversely, singular persons dismissed from the venture must be “allowed proportionably the value of that he shall have deserved to the time of his dismissal or discharge” or agree “to repay the overplus of that he shall have received, which he shall not have deserved” (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 198). It is managed at a distance by counselors who remain in England, “certaine grave and wise persons,” in the words of Hakluyt, here translating from the Latin account of the first Russia Company voyage by Clement Adams, who act “in maner of a Senate or companie, which should lay their heads together, and give their judgements, and provide things requisite and profitable for all occasions” (2: 240). This “Senate or companie” forms the ego for the artificial person that travels and acts in their name: “4 Item, every person by vertue of his

othe, to doe effectually & with good wil [. . .] all, and every such act and acts, deede and deeds, as shalbe to him or them from time to time commanded, committed and enjoined (during the voyage) by the Captain generall, with the assent of the Counsell and assistants” (2: 196). Or as the adventurers in Virginia put it in a letter of June 22, 1607, back to the Council of Virginia in England:

We acknowledge our selves accomptable for our time here spent were it but to give you satisfaccion of our industries and affections to this most honourable accion and the better to quicken those good spirritts which haue already bestowed themselves here and to putt life into such dead vnderstandings or beliefs that muste firste see and feele the wombe of our labour and this land before they will entertaine any good hope of vs or of the land. (Barbour 1: 78)

The corporation is an entity whose head can suddenly emerge at any point, since as an artificial person it must borrow the hands, eyes, legs, and mouths of its natural representatives, who begin to move on its behalf and speak in its name. It bears not one but a thousand heads—only those heads are suddenly in the hands of its monstrous body, which fondle and paw the earth, in the roving eyes of its factors and agents, in its mouth or mouths. These agents and factors are deputized “for the whole body of this companie, to buy, sel, trucke, change and permute al, and every kind and kindes of wares, marchandizes and goods [. . .] the same to utter and sell to the best commoditie, profit and advantage of the said corporation” (*Principal* 2: 281). “To utter and sell”: the act of trade is literally an act of corporate speech.²⁵ The infinite variety of the world must be quantified through the categories of number, weight, and measure;²⁶ physical substances must be combined and compacted into a single coherent “masse” and then transported through a network of distribution in which differing zones of value must be reconciled with one another.²⁷

Finally, the entire process must be recorded in writing, “to the end that the marchants of that new adventure, may the better understand how the wealth of that new frequented trade will arise” (2: 273).²⁸ The steward and cook must keep a record of all “victuals, as wel flesh, fish, bisket, meate, or bread, as also of beere, wine oyle, or vineger, and all other kinde of victualling under their charge” that is purchased and consumed by the corporate body (2: 197–98). The corporate agent is responsible for generating the written forms that the corporate ego uses to evaluate

conditions, remember itineraries and profitable combinations, and use to project future action:

9 Item, that the said Agents shall in the ende of everie weeke, or oftener as occasion shall require, peruse, see and trie, not onely the Casshers, bookes, reckonings and accounts, firming the same with their handes, but also shall receive and take weekly the account of every other officer, as well of the Vendes, as of the empteous, and also of the state of the houshold expenses, making thereof a perfect declaration as shal appertaine, the same accounts also to bee firmed by the saide Agents hands.

13 Item, that all Agents doe diligently learne and observe all kinde of wares, as wel naturals as forrein, that be beneficiall for this Realme, to be sold for the benefit of the company, and what kinde of our commodities and other things of these West partes bee most vendible in those Realmes with profite, giving a prefect advise of all such things requisite.²⁹

In preparing its foreign outposts, the corporate ego imagines a home or *oikos*—the etymological origin of all “economy”—that ruled by its agent and managed by its merchant, who is cast as a “housewife” (2: 287). The agent is also imagined as a kind of craftsman who literally shapes the informational material of the venture with his own hands, “permut[ing] al” on behalf of the larger collective of which he is a part (2: 281).

The role of this agent deserves special comment, since he is poised at a kind of threshold between primary and secondary processes, working to “translate” primary processes into secondary processes so that the corporate ego can represent its own workings to itself in its transactions with a world that it does not understand.³⁰ He really is a “little fragment of living substance [. . .] suspended in the middle of an external world charged with the most powerful energies” (Freud, *Beyond* 27), for he protects the corporate ego as much as he serves it as an instrument of perception. He takes in “*samples* of the external world” (28), which he returns to the ego to evaluate. And his work is a “translation” in several senses. In the first place, he records many examples of foreign words and their English counterparts. But he is a “translator” above all in the sixteenth-century meaning of the term, Shakespeare’s meaning in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee. Thou are translated” (3.1.113). This notion of translation is at root artisanal; it includes

all actions of modification and physical transformation. We may construe it more broadly to include all actions that assemble an enduring network, whether by physical transformation and coupling or by conceptual and figural appropriation. To “translate” is to alter and combine substances in order to make them valuable, but it is also to make a problem comprehensible to others, to reframe it so as to enlist their interest.⁵¹ “Translation” is material, therefore, but it is also intellectual and rhetorical; when we speak of the knowledge that was necessary to conducting overseas trade, we should remember that this knowledge employed specific concepts and categories, numerical as well as verbal, and that these concepts translated the physical world so that it could be more easily manipulated and discussed (often these concepts were borrowed from the physical world by analogy and thus can be said to depend on it). And these acts of translation were rhetorical because knowledge was not useful if it was not convincing to others. The corporation may best be described as a relatively durable assemblage of human persons and nonhuman things; of technologies, economic practices, and information-gathering procedures; of places, ports, and trading sites; of archival structures and legal systems; of diverging interests, representatives, and spokespersons—all held together by many different points of translation.⁵²

In this sense, the operation of translation may be compared with the dreamwork, whose remarkable function we have considered in previous lectures; it forms the vital power of the corporation, since the successful venture depends on finding ways of investing, accumulating, and discharging the profit principle, through as many different forms as possible. But the corporate person *never* sleeps—such artificial beings have no need for rest. And so its “dreams” are to be found in its “accounts” or its “reckonings,” as they are often called by corporate agents. On the analogy to natural persons, I have been referring to these documents as examples of corporate “speech.” But these “speech acts” are of course not speech, but writing; they are acts of self-*narration*. The corporate ego produces nothing if not narrative; the *Principal Navigations* has been called “the Prose Epic of the English Nation” and is a virtual encyclopedia of the narrative forms that flourished before the advent of the novel.⁵³ These provide the form in which we may discern its primary processes. And this is why Hakluyt will always be a model patient for us, since he himself acts as a kind of “agent” on *our* behalf, giving an overall shape to the process by which the corporate ego accounted for the world, at every scale imaginable: from the minuteness of a plant and its roots and flowers to the parts of the walrus to the

organization of military divisions and camps to the ships that transported the adventurers to the coastlines that received them to the enormous seas that yawned beneath each and every single “action.” Conducting an analysis of the corporate ego will thus mean approaching the *Principal Navigations* the way we would approach any other narrative; to “read Hakluyt” will mean attending carefully to the formal properties of the corporate accounts he collects, to the details, the techniques, the linguistic gestures that allow the corporate person not simply to accumulate value but to *comprehend* that process—to represent that process to itself. Here, we must enter into somewhat technical territory and begin to borrow our methods from further afield: call it an introduction to the structural analysis of corporations, with the proviso that the notion of “structure” will itself require explanation—we are looking for tools, not metaphysical principles.

You will grant that every successful venture depends on two processes: the primary process of assembling commodity networks into which the corporate ego can invest its capital, using these networks in turn to generate further value, and the secondary process of collecting the narrative accounts that register those commodity networks in the “conscious” of the corporate ego. It is my view that these two processes are never fully distinct: they are always running alongside one another, sometimes overlapping, sometimes lagging, but never entirely separate.⁵⁴ As I have suggested, we may say that corporate agents “translate” back and forth among material and linguistic assemblages: these agents, acting on behalf of the corporate ego, seal particular objects in the world with a certain quota of value, and then submit these objects to various permutations in order to displace and manipulate that value through commodity networks. Those networks that endure do so because they are profitable, and enduring networks are rendered in prose form. Over time, those assemblages that are most enduring will fade from the narrative account into the zone of a non-narrated field—a black box we seal with the concept of the “market,” or the “unconscious,” or the “world,” or “nature”—while other assemblages that do not endure will never rise to the level of narrative representation in the first place.⁵⁵ In formal terms, the variety, complexity, and extent of corporate narration will correspond to the variety, complexity, and extent of the network it traces; indeed, the network as such, however independently it may exist in the historical world, is rendered for the corporate ego primarily through the narrative units and combinations that its agents generate. All of these agents understand these processes in different ways, and one of the most important effects of the corporation is to impose continuity by

formalizing the apprehension of the world and regularizing its networks of entities. “Structure” may therefore be a vital principle of the corporation, but it emerges *out of* the corporation’s own efforts to sustain itself. Terms such as *system* and *structure* bespeak the corporation as it *wishes* itself to be: they are the terms of a fantasy that the corporation seeks to impose upon the world and upon its own self-communications.

On the one hand, therefore, language provides a useful *analogy* for the organization of objects and substances into value-generating commodity networks. We need not use linguistic categories to describe these networks, but the analogy is a powerful and revealing one partly because language offers such a rich resource of concepts.³⁶ And let us not forget that the early moderns themselves reasoned in language to a degree that can be difficult for us to appreciate, having derived, via classical thought, their basic epistemological categories from grammatical relationships. On the other hand, language provides the very *medium* in which material commodity networks become comprehensible to the corporate ego and inscribed in its memory. We may say that the corporate ego is both a subject *of* language and subject *to* language; it speaks in recognizable propositions—commands, refusals, wishes, descriptive statements—but it is also *like* a language in its form and function. Or we may refer not to language but to *discourse*, the metalanguage of a language beyond the sentence that is the proper object of our analysis. The corporation generates large units of discourse and attempts to organize them; it provides a means for organizing experience into discourse; at the same time, the corporation is itself a *kind* of discourse, a distinctive way of categorizing and evaluating the world, of organizing it by means of narrative form, of addressing the world and of justifying the ends and means of its actions. Of course there are many aspects of corporate discourse that do not explicitly concern the trading process, and we may characterize them by assigning them to the different faculties that make up the corporate ego: its reasoning, perception, memory, judgment, and so forth. These include the orders and rules for governing the venture; the collection of information necessary to navigation; descriptions of locale, accidents, and encounters of all types; deliberations, the narration of actions undertaken, and the explanations necessary to justify them. But we should remember that *none* of these elements would exist without the underlying motive of capital expenditure and capital accumulation that drives the corporate ego, and with patient attention it is possible to establish a firm connection to this underlying motive for almost every single detail that appears in the accounts.

Let us proceed still further into what I have come to think of as the primitive narrative accumulation that is typical of corporate discourse. It employs two modes, which I shall term the “distributional” and the “integrational,” each of which may be found among the many different documents that Hakluyt collects.³⁷ The distributional mode is topographic, spatial, and horizontal in its orientation; it is cumulative or agglutinative in its syntactical structure, expanding outward in a linear fashion. This distributional mode corresponds to the temporal duration of corporate narration, its unfolding as a series of discursive units in response to problems of distance, of access and passage, of mapping and vectored orientation: it structures the events of corporate narration by organizing “what happens” in a sequence that we read across the page. The integrational mode is organizational, hierarchical, and vertical; it is subordinative and conjunctive in its syntax and organizes itself in layers or strata of propositions. The integrational mode contributes to the corporation’s administrative organization and creates the impression of its “deep structure”; it responds to problems of governance, coordination, communication, and control. If the distributional mode extends the corporation out laterally and increases its range and reach, tending to the descriptive or “realist” type of narration, the integrational mode concentrates the corporation, intensifying it, making it quicker, more efficient, and more capable of extraordinary action. Its grammatical mood is imperative but often also subjunctive and conditional: when speaking to its factors, the corporate ego is forced to compromise between an autocratic demand for power and the uncertainty that attends all future, as-yet-unaccomplished tasks.

We may also identify those elements of corporate discourse that pertain to what I shall call “function” and those that pertain to what I shall call “index.”³⁸ At a narrational level—the level at which we apprehend the corporate discourse while reading Hakluyt—the function describes any element that opens a sequence only to be closed later on, as in the completion of an electrical circuit. One of the main forms of suspense in corporate narration derives from the fact that its functions are new and thus relatively unformalized. To the corporate eye, a single object, action, event, or encounter may always form part of a hitherto unrecognized function, and everything depends on whether it can be functionalized, that is, brought under the mastery of the corporate ego so that it can proceed and survive. This explains the importance placed on “opportunity” and “occasion” in the corporation narratives; on the courage and judgment of the corporate representatives, who are valued for their prudence and *virtu*.

At the same time, embedded within this self-narrating process—visible to us only *as* this process—the commodity networks translated by corporate discourse display a homologous structure. Here the function describes any sequence of substances in a trading network: “rum, sugar, and slaves” is an infamous example from a later historical period, but it might also include the combination of ingredients that compose a single object (the use of hemp to make rope; the use of pitch to produce the tar necessary to build boats). Initially the corporate ego only recognizes *known* combinations of elements and seizes familiar opportunities for generating value; eventually it begins to think more creatively and to create new combinations, as the skillful eye comes to recognize potential functions latent within a single object; the judgment of the corporate ego resides in this ability to “interpret” material assemblages and even to invent new assemblages that may become profitable in the future.³⁹

So much for the concept of function; the concept of index is more difficult but also more fundamental, since it allows us to approach the very *raison d'être* of corporate being. In narrative, as we know, significance or meaning is communicated by the index, which stands as a sign for a certain connotative cluster. A set of attributes—marked ways of speaking and thinking, for instance, a tone of voice—collectively come to define a “character” and contribute to our overall sense of that character’s “personality,” even to the illusion that this character is speaking directly to us. Another set of connotative details may define thematic preoccupations or broader cultural ideas.⁴⁰ We may set aside for the moment those indices that have a referential rather than a connotative purpose, serving to “fix” the narration by attributing to it a reality effect—certainly these are common and important in corporate discourse, since in this class we may place all indications of time and position, of direction, of weather, of natural and geographical details, and of any general conditions for the journey.⁴¹ Indeed, some corporate accounts in Hakluyt consist of little else than these “informing” or referential indices, topographic traces arranged in a simple sequential order.

Much the way significance or meaning arises from the network of relations that constitute the narrative (as well as from its relationship to other narratives that precede and follow it: the problem of genre), in corporate discourse, too, significance or meaning becomes more complex as the narrative unfolds and with each subsequent account. The informing index (characterized by reference, factuality, the “real”) gradually converts into a connotative index, or index as *sign* (characterized by

representation, figuration, substitution, exchange); the account becomes “narrative” properly speaking; history approaches the “literary.” We often find that the corporate ego is poised precisely at the point where the reference *threatens* to become sign, where the banal neutrality of the fact shimmers with a potential significance that always remains opaque, unknown, indiscernible, and hence dangerous: the very condition and threshold of “discovery.” This essential mystery or suspense contributes to the narrating voice a mood of anxious hesitation, one best captured by the images of fog, mist, and sensory imperceptibility that all corporate narrators eventually touch upon, some to the point of virtual obsession.⁴² It is a place of special theoretical interest, since it marks the “navel” of corporate narration, a threshold, as in a dream, beyond which our analysis can proceed no further.

But the category of the index shows its decisive importance if we substitute for the concepts of significance and meaning the concept of *value*. For in corporate narration, value is *always* significant, is always meaningful: value is literally that which becomes noticeable to the corporate eye (and for this reason enters the discourse) such that the index really does become the mark of value.⁴³ At first the corporate ego is fixated, in the technical sense that psycho-analysis has given the term: it knows only certain investments in objects and tends to revert regressively to them, with the consequence that its narratives seem impoverished or clichéd, as the corporate ego proceeds by referring new experiences and new objects to those with which it is already acquainted. Gradually, the narratives collect a greater number and diversity of details and thus finer grades of distinguishing between them by marking their difference; over time, these stabilize into recognizable functions and patterns. As this occurs, details tend to become charged with connoted significance: this is possible because the network of substances has begun to blossom with value, has caught the attention of the corporate agent and excited the corporate ego, which becomes aware of its unprofitable state and seeks to generate further profit through expenditure. It is important to remember, however, that value is never a *singular* notion. To name only three possibilities, it may be *functional* (Marx’s use-value, a practical category); it may be one of *price* (Marx’s exchange-value, a quantified category); or it may be *symbolic*, the end by which the importance of the object is judged (often implicitly), an ethical category and the source of the “connoted” significance that we normally associate with narrative form. *The corporation seeks to reduce*

all values to the second kind: indeed, we may describe the corporation as a machine for reconciling differing systems of value by means of narration.

In my view, it is precisely because of this grand “function of functions” that we may regard the corporate as a fully *political* entity—to employ a Nietzschean definition of the political, if you will. But the corporation is a political entity for many other more conventional reasons, since the problems that it brings into focus are not merely economic or managerial but political problems of the type that were debated by many writers of Hakluyt’s period. What is the nature of an acephalous, or “headless,” community of equals, one that is ruled by all members rather than by a monarch? What ethical or virtuous qualities are required of the individual person as a member of this political community? What is the place of commercial enterprise and economic policy in securing the “common wealth”? How are private or individual concerns to be reconciled with the concerns of the collective, the desire for “private gain” subordinated to the needs of the “common good”? What technologies and what principles might be used to mediate among heterogeneous elements so as to render them equal or equivalent to one another? What systems of reasoning and what method of governance can reconcile the *one* with the *more than one*? How is the justice of the collective to be determined, especially if the determination of justice lay, for both Aristotle and Cicero, in the calculation of relative value among heterogeneous objects, in the distinction between private and common property, and in the upholding of contracts and obligations?

To these problems, all of which defined the conceptual terrain of English political theory during the sixteenth century, and especially “republican” political theory, we may add the problem of sovereignty or of supreme legal authority, which Hakluyt’s contemporaries had only begun to consider.⁴⁴ Here, too, the *Principal Navigations* is instructive, for it shows us a distinct historical movement in models of sovereignty from a feudal or monarchical to a corporate and constitutional form. On the one hand, the ordinances drafted by Cabot for the incipient Russia Company organize persons into “nested” group formations that are immanent to the whole and subordinated in allegiance, by oath, in a “stacked” model of sovereignty: from king to company counselors to the captain general, “with the pilot major, the masters, marchants & other officers, to be so knit and accorded in unitie, love, conformitie, and obedience in every degree on all sides, that no dissention, variance, or contention may rise or spring betwixt them and the mariners of this companie, to the damage

or hinderance of the voyage” (2: 195).⁴⁵ *Within* the corporate community of the English realm, the corporate trading company is restricted in sovereignty by being explicitly *subject to* the Crown and circumscribed by competing corporate persons of various types. The 1555 royal charter to the Russia Company limits them in the following terms: “[W]e will that [. . .] their acts, statutes and ordinances bee not against our prerogative, lawes, statutes, and customes of our realmes and Dominions [. . .] nor also to the prejudice of the *corporation of the Maior*, communalities and Citizens of our Citie of London, *nor to the prejudice of any person or persons, bodie politique, or corporate, or incorporate*, justly pretending, clayming, or having any liberties, franchises, priviledges, rightes or preheminences” (2: 311, my emphasis). Once outside of England, however, the corporation quickly probed the limits of its privileges and freedoms and began to emerge as nothing less than a fully sovereign entity to rival the Crown. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this power was to be exploited to the utmost by the East India Company, but it is evident already in the privileges granted by the Russian emperor to the Russia Company in 1555:

3 Item, we give and graunt, that the said Marchants, shal and may have free libertie, power, and authoritie to name, choose and assigne brokers, shippers, packers, weighers, measurers, wagoners and [. . .] give unto them [. . .] a corporall othe, to serve them well and truly in their offices, and finding them or any of them doing contrary to his or their othe, may punish and dismisse them [. . .] without contradiction, let, vexation or disturbance, either of us, our heires or successors, or of any other our Justices, officers, ministers or subjects whatsoever.

4 Item [. . .] [the company] shal have ful power and authoritie to governe and rule all Englishmen that have had, or shall have accesse, or repaire in or to this said Empire and jurisdictions [. . .] and may minister unto them, and every of them good justice in all their causes [. . .] and assemble, deliberate, consult, conclude, define, determine and make such actes and ordinances, as [they] shall thinke good and meete for the good order, government and rule of the said Marchants, and all other Englishmen repairing to this our saide empire and dominions. (2: 300–301, my emphasis)⁴⁶

Confronting the corporation, we realize that the problem of early modern political sovereignty cannot simply be stated as one of royal power, citizenship, state law, or nation formation but must include intra- and transnational sovereign entities that are at once below and beyond the scale of the nation-state. The corporation is endowed with rights and freedoms that are, paradoxically, *simultaneously rights of persons and rights of collectivities*. Its nearest kin is that person named “Leviathan” by Thomas Hobbes:

Nature (the art whereby God hath made and governs the world) is by the art of man, as in many other things, so in this also imitated, that it can make an artificial animal. For seeing life is but a motion of limbs, the beginning whereof is in some principal part within, why may we not say that all automata (engines that move themselves by springs and wheels as doth a watch) have an artificial life? For what is the heart, but a spring; and the nerves, but so many strings; and the joints, but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body, such as was intended by the artificer? Art goes yet further, imitating that rational and most excellent work of nature, man. For by art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMONWEALTH, or STATE (in Latin CIVITAS), which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended; and in which the sovereignty is an artificial soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body. (3)

In light of the evidence collected by Hakluyt in his *Principal Navigations*, we may suspect that Hobbes’s *Leviathan* is simply a philosophical countermeasure, formulated within the restricted sphere of properly “political” discourse, to the commercial corporation, which was quickly growing in its practical political importance precisely in Hobbes’s period, in the void left behind by the decapitation of Charles, that most unfortunate *corporation sole*. As a distinct domain of intellectual inquiry, seventeenth-century political theory would seem to define itself against the corporation by drawing an exclusionary line around matters economic and practical. Faced with a sudden vacuum, it produces its own artificial body in the form of a Frankenstein-state in order to seal off and isolate the growing power of rival artificial persons, naming them “systems” and forms of “body politic” that are subordinate to the king or commonwealth so that the sovereignty of the latter is never in question (Hobbes pt. 2, ch. 22, esp. 146–52). Hobbes, after all, was himself a shareholder in the Virginia

Company and may have understood its growing political and commercial power only too well (see Malcolm).

Having begun with the question of the human and its future, we are now faced with an artificial being who has many faces rather than one, a conglomerate mass that presents itself as a projected surface for an immanent series of *group* associations, *group* fantasies, *group* desires, *group* demands. But by “group” we often mean several ideas that are important to distinguish from one another. On the one hand, we mean positive, enduring, beneficial, and hierarchically organized models of group formation such as Hakluyt imagines in his preface to the *Principal Navigations*: comforting notions such as “Countrey” and “Common weale.” These are institutionalized models of group formation, political models in the traditional sense of the term. On the other hand, we find negative, mutating, amorphous, and threatening models of group formation: masses, multitudes, packs, and other undifferentiated constellations in which agency is distributed and organization is impossible to discern. They mark the limits of the human and are often imagined as threatening nonhuman forces: they are avatars of death. Examples are scattered throughout the *Principal Navigations* and lurk over every horizon: icebergs, winds, and “contagious fogge,” rising unpredictably to block a passage and scatter the fleet, itself a formation that must struggle, even “legislate,” to maintain itself as a coherent group;⁴⁷ natives who cluster on the shore, surging and withdrawing in no predictable fashion; nomad tribes who live in tents, with “no certaine habitations [. . .] in heards and companies by one hundred and two hundred,” as one narrator recounts;⁴⁸ mosquitoes that swarm around the corporate body, “certaine stinging Gnattes, which bite so fiercely, that the place where they bite shortly after swelleth and itcheth very sore.”⁴⁹ When he is not echoing the heroic phrasing of his contemporaries, exulting a Willoughby, a Chancellor, a Frobisher, a Gilbert, or a Raleigh for his singular virtues and motive power in the “action,” as the ventures are inevitably called, Hakluyt compares the English to swarming bees.⁵⁰ We begin to understand in a new way the Renaissance nightmare of the crowd or multitude as a many-headed monster, which suddenly appears as an uncanny doppelgänger for the early modern corporation. And we have a new grasp of the persistent fantasy of the cannibal, that famished, incorporating humanoid form that is so prevalent in the accounts that Hakluyt collects—for the cannibal is the projection of the corporation’s own voracious appetite.⁵¹ According to Thomas Harriot, the natives of Virginia speak of the English and their

“invisible bullets.” The phrase has become famous, and yet we have never understood it until now. It is Harriot’s translation of a native fear into his own “corporatist” terms; the Indians fear “invisible bullets” because they imagine the English themselves to be part of a much larger invisible body: “Those that were immediatly to come after us they imagined to be in the aire, yet invisible and without bodies, and that they by our intreatie and for the love of us did make the people to die in that sort as they did, by shooting invisible bullets into them” (8: 382).⁵² It is not the English who fire invisible bullets but a mysterious “those” and “they,” an unnamed, impersonal group formation that hovers around them without a tangible form. It is the corporate person who approaches, a person whose power *is* invisible, a power of death through abstraction and objectification, of partition and segmentation, the power to categorize and to convert each singular thing into the quantifiable values that all the corporate accounts point toward like a verbal equation.

Across these two models of group formation, the corporation extends itself and presents us with two methodological alternatives, and within the limits of my lecture, I have sought to entertain each in turn. On the one hand, we find the corporation as it wishes itself to be: powerful, willful, coherent, legitimate, enduring, and free, the dream of all persons, and the dream of all political communities. We may assist the corporation in its fantasy by tracing historically how the corporation as a specific type of legal and commercial institution contributed to the development of the political ideas that we know so well and that find their first “modern” articulation in the work of Hobbes. In doing so, we would suggest reasons why historians of political thought have overlooked the corporation, and we would seek to discern what logic, in the very historical constitution of the field of political thought, has excluded the corporation from its accounts.⁵⁵ But on the other hand, we find the corporation as a swarming, aggressive multitude, one that, furthermore, reveals a fallacy of modern political theory and indeed of all sciences that would try to theorize the group as a coherent and bounded totality. For such totalities, whether states or nations, never endure forever; indeed, we could say that in a certain sense they do not exist in the first place. They are reservoirs of affect and collective projections that we conjure in order to translate the swarm, the mass, the multitude, or the infinite network into a terrifying, quasi-divine personification or a comforting, enduring presence; they exist in the way that fictions and fantasies exist—for artificial persons are “fictions,” after all, as even Hobbes recognized.

Our analysis of the corporate ego has led us to a provocative claim: that instead of totalizing abstractions such as “state” and “nation,” there are *only* swarms and networks, fine webs and durable assemblages that we foreclose conceptually in order to purchase some conceptual, political, or psychic stability for ourselves. Historically, the body image has been one of our favorite tools for doing so.⁵⁴ But rather than setting arbitrary limits to the extension of these networks, can we not instead plunge into them, undertaking an intricate empirical and formal analysis of their specific points of conjunction and modification, of the forces necessary to maintain them, of the diverse grammars, syntaxes, and logics they employ, of the metaphors, arguments, and names they sponsor? Our alternative to maintaining the corporate fantasy, therefore, will be to examine what kinds of assemblages the corporate person conceals and how its networked mode of being arises from these assemblages—how it lives *in* these assemblages, creating new ones at every moment, for many different purposes, and then dissolving into others. This will require a most careful method, since like any patient the corporation will at one moment reveal to us the many processes of translation that are necessary to sustain it and in the next moment throw up grand images that it will use to deflect our interest: if the “body politic” is always there, unified through abstraction and a “representative” principle, then bodies do not need to be assembled. And yet the corporate body assembles itself at every moment, often at enormous cost both to itself and to others.

I said before that Hakluyt’s preface contains the kernel of the entire case, and we would do well now to recall it: like us and before us, Hakluyt is caught between the two alternatives I have described. As a patriot and promoter of discovery, he would like to write the history of his nation and contribute to the construction of an enduring “Countrey” and “Common weale.” He wishes for a coherent, beautiful *corpus*, since like every writer he is proud of his efforts and protective of his work. But Hakluyt wants even more to let the actors tell their own stories, with a minimum of intervention; he is scrupulously respectful, and he even translates their words as faithfully as possible when necessary. And in this sense, he is a model analyst, all too aware of the endless work before him, of the mutating body that confronts him, of the irony that even his own efforts contribute to its fragmentation.⁵⁵ For his archival impulse drives him to assemble as many singular details as possible, no matter the physical cost to himself; he cannot resist adding another account, another narrative layer, brushing against the fabric of a mysterious foreign world that, like

us, he knows only through writing. For Hakluyt never himself traveled beyond France, as remarkable as this may seem. Some of you may now be wondering how far his method of assemblage and translation extends: is he, too—are *we*, too—simply an imaginary creature, a figment of desire, a pattern that gradually assembles itself, only to dissolve in its own fashion? No doubt he is—but that is the topic of another lecture entirely.⁵⁶

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Notes

- 1 The point has been made elegantly and convincingly by Lee Edelman in *No Future*, with particular reference to Lacan and Hitchcock.
- 2 See Donna Haraway's rephrasing of Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern* in her recent *When Species Meet*, 9–10 and 305n9. Some of the most forceful critiques of the "human" have emerged out of Haraway's work and that of others working on the lives of animals, from theorists such as Cary Wolfe to writers such as J. M. Coetzee to philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Stanley Cavell, and Martha Nussbaum. N. Katherine Hayles and Timothy Lenoir are two notable examples of a "posthuman" critique drawn from science studies and digital technology; I myself have taken up the problem of the posthuman in reference to Shakespeare, biotechnology, and artificial life in "Life Science" and *Shakespeare's Double Helix*.
- 3 All biographical efforts must begin with *The Hakluyt Handbook* edited by D. B. Quinn, especially the valuable chronology (1: 263–331) and the essay on secondary works by Pennington, who cites the opinion of the early-twentieth-century historian of discovery, Walter Raleigh, that a conventional biography of Hakluyt is impossible (2: 576n1). Many important documents are collected in Taylor, *Original Writings*; major biographical studies include Mancall; Parks; Taylor, *Late Tudor* 14–26; and Watson.

- 4 Only a single copy survives in manuscript, now in the New York Public Library; the treatise was first printed by Taylor in *Original Writings* 2: 211–326 and has recently been reedited in a full facsimile edition by Quinn.
- 5 A notable exception is Armitage 72–76.
- 6 On this aspect of Hakluyt's work, see Helfers, esp. 165; Fuller also identifies "a kind of corporate authorship" ("Making" 19) as typical of Richard Eden's *Decades of the New World* (London, 1555), an important predecessor and source for the *Principal Navigations*. Fuller's earlier *Voyages in Print* is a pioneering study of early modern travel writing, with a major focus on Hakluyt and an approach analogous to that taken by Freud in this lecture. There, she observes that if travel writing "'made' individuals, it was to make *them* into large corporate or national bodies" (11; see also 15 and 141–74, esp. 142). Fuller's discussion of the formal properties of travel writing are highly relevant to what follows below, especially her emphasis on its referential and factual qualities. In one of the best recent discussions of Hakluyt, Sacks points out that the genre of the *Principal Navigations* is "puzzling" partly because "it tells its story mainly through its arrangement of texts and documents by diverse hands" (31); nevertheless, using a biographical approach to trace Hakluyt's ecclesiastical career and to analyze the work's "religious message" (37), Sacks argues that the work "manifests a coherent view of the world" (32). Whatever the value of the biographical approach (psychoanalysis would be nowhere without it), it is not the method taken in this lecture.
- 7 See Freud, *Group*, where both church and army are described as "highly organized, lasting and artificial groups" (93).
- 8 Maitland, "Corporation" 211; see also "Body Politic," "Crown," and "Moral"; and Pollock and Maitland 1: 486–511, 630–34, 669–87; 2: 244.
- 9 Good accounts may be found in Davis 2: 223–24; Holdsworth 3: 362–76; Kantorowicz 302–13; and Pollock and Maitland 1: 493–96.
- 10 See Davis 2: 238, 241–43, and 244; and Pollock and Maitland 1: 508n1, citing Bracton.
- 11 See Davis 2: 230–31, citing Bracton; Pollock and Maitland 1: 495–96.
- 12 Kantorowicz 193–232, 302–13, 403–9; Maitland, "Crown" esp. 248–51; Pollock and Maitland 1: 502–3, 509–10.
- 13 Kantorowicz 7–23; Maitland, "Crown" 247, 250–54; and Spenser's letter to Sir Walter Raleigh prefaced in the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene* 737–38.
- 14 Davis 2: 153; Heckscher 1: 326–455, esp. 373–92 and 392–410; Holdsworth 4: 319n5, 8: 206–7, 9: 206; and Scott 1: 1–104, esp. 17–21, 44–45, 59–63, and 2: 36–54 (on the Russia Company in Hakluyt's period).
- 15 For insights on the figure of prosopopoeia, see de Man, "Anthropomorphism" and "Autobiography"; and Johnson, "Anthropomorphism" and "Apostrophe."
- 16 See the analysis of early modern "investment" by Forman.
- 17 As in the inaugural journey of the Russia Company, when the two boats carrying Sir Hugh

- Willoughby, the voyage's captain general, lost contact with the remaining vessel; when Willoughby decided to winter over in Lapland, he and "all his companie died, being frozen to death" (*Principal* 2: 212). See also Master Steven Burrough's account of the 1556 voyage in *Principal Navigations*: "We thought that we had seen land [. . .] which afterwards proved to be a monstrous heape of ice. Within a little more then halfe an houre after [. . .] we were inclosed within it before we were aware of it, which was a fearefull sight to see [. . .] because of great and terrible abundance of ice which we saw with our eies [. . .] we doubt greater store abideth in those parts" (2: 335, 342). For accounts of Frobisher's three journeys in search of the Northwest Passage in 1576, 1577, and 1578, see 7: 207, 216–17, 231–42, an epic battle with icebergs.
- 18 See Latour, *Aramis* esp. 133, 181, 183.
- 19 See Ash 21–24.
- 20 Even hierarchical relationships (of governance, of control, of authority) are external relations that we translate, by metaphor or analogy, into a depth model: one entity is "above" another, even though it is really sitting alongside it. Similarly, information may be "withheld," "concealed," or "kept secret" from supervising entities, but this simply means that the information remains distinct from one assemblage and persists in another one alongside it.
- 21 Skelton 67–68; Wallis 69–73, with an image of the map reproduced on 62–63.
- 22 See also Willan 1–18, 19–47. Willan claims that despite the mention of a "grant of corporation" in the 1553 "ordinances," drafted by Sebastian Cabot, the company was not fully incorporated until the grant of Feb. 26, 1555 (6–10 and 6n5). See also Carey 171–74.
- 23 See Willan 7.
- 24 Relevant transcriptions of the charters and a history of the company's foundation may be found in Barbour. On May 23, 1609, Hakluyt is recorded as venturing £21 in two shares of £12 10s each (Quinn 1: 324).
- 25 The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides the following definitions for *utter*, all contemporary with Hakluyt:
To put (goods, wares, etc.) forth or upon the market; to issue, offer, or expose for sale or barter; to dispose of by way of trade; to vend, sell [. . .]. To send forth as a sound; to give out in an audible voice; to give vent or expression to (joy, etc.); to burst out with (a cry, yell, etc.) [. . .]. To give utterance to (words, speech, a sentence, etc.); to speak, say, or pronounce [. . .]. To declare, reveal, make known, or set forth the character or identity of (a person or thing).
- 26 See the brief description of the "coines, weights, and measures used in Russia" written in 1554 for the company by John Hasse (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 273–78).
- 27 See item 20 of Cabot's 1553 ordinances (2: 201); also the 1556 instructions for taking inventory and assembling the stock in its different forms (2: 317–22).
- 28 This is a major point of Fuller's *Voyages in Print*, with excellent analysis; see esp. 1–15.
- 29 "Articles conceived and determined [. . .] for the second voyage, 1555" (2: 283–84); see also item 12 (2: 284); item 7 of the original "ordinances" for the first voyage (2: 197); and the "instructions"

- to the pursers for the third voyage of 1556, esp. items 1 and 2 (2: 317–18).
- 30 See Ash's discussion of the "merchant advisor," a figure who was sometimes a factor, agent, former merchant, or pilot (as was Sebastian Cabot, first governor of the Russia Company), but who might not have had any firsthand, personal experience of overseas trade (as Hakluyt did not): these "advisors" had a particular expertise in the kind of knowledge and information that merchants needed to navigate across a wide variety of commercial situations and were often investors in the ventures for which they consulted. See esp. 9–12 (on the joint-stock company and the Russia Company, in particular), 13–21 (on the two Richard Hakluyts), and 27–29 (on Thomas Harriot, a third model).
- 31 Compare the concept of translation in Latour: see esp. *Aramis* 33, 42, 207–11; "Circulating" 69–74; *Pandora's* 311; "Science's" 87–98; *Science* 117, 129; and *We Have* 110. When the *primary* purpose of translation involves commercial value, we are dealing with the commodification process.
- 32 Compare Clement Adams's account of the first Russia Company voyages, which traces the literal construction of the corporate body in the form of the ships that merchants and shipwrights together assemble, along with the food necessary to sustain it (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 239–41).
- 33 The phrase was James Anthony Froude's in 1852, cited by Pennington 582. Fuller devotes the final chapter of *Voyages in Print* to Froude's notion and to Hakluyt's role as an editor of travel narratives; see 141–74, esp. 158–72.
- 34 Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, has demonstrated this point nicely.
- 35 Hasse concludes his account with a final sentence that marks this exact threshold: "There are many other trifles in Russia, as sope, mats, &c but I thinke there will bee no great account made of them" (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 278).
- 36 See Barthes, esp. "Introduction" and *S/Z*. Latour makes a similar analogy in *Aramis* 94–95, 102.
- 37 See Barthes, "Introduction" 85–86.
- 38 For Barthes, functions belong to the distributional level; they are syntagmatic and metonymic relations through which the significance of an initial event is completed by a second event further on in the narrative (purchasing a revolver and using it; picking up the telephone and setting it down); see "Introduction" 92–94. Indices belong to the integrational level; they are paradigmatic and metaphoric relations whose significance is connotative ("they refer to a signified, not to an 'operation'" [93]). Barthes distinguishes cardinal from catalyzing functions; the former are "hinge-points" in the narration with both a consequential and a consecutive importance (at once "chronological and logical," as Barthes puts it); the latter are merely consecutive and "fill in" the narrative.
- 39 Among many possible examples, we may again single out Hasse's account, which provides an inventory of Russian commodities and of the translation processes necessary to produce them, in this way allowing the corporate ego to collect classes of objects so that it can begin to compose its own networks of value, modeled on the networks that Hasse has already observed to exist (Hakluyt,

- Principal* 2: 276). Chancellor lists fishes, furs, flax, hemp, honey, and wax—the very emblem of the metamorphic translation process—as well as the geographic points of origin and exchange and distances to other trading sites (2: 224–25). Killingworth’s (the company’s first agent in Moscow) letter of November 27, 1555, includes even more detailed information (2: 291–97).
- 40 We could find no better example than Barthes’s *S/Z*.
- 41 Compare Barthes’s notion of “informants” in “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives” 96 and Latour’s “Circulating Reference” 24–79. Fuller’s *Voyages in Print* also singles out this aspect as typical of the *Principal Navigations*, as does Schleck 777–81.
- 42 As in the account of Master Steven Burrough in 1556 (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 324) and many other passages.
- 43 Fuller also considers the problem of value in Hakluyt, concentrating on how his editorial process endowed documents pertaining to the Russia Company with a different kind of value than those that pertained to ventures in Africa, since in her view the former were more important than the latter to Hakluyt’s project of national celebration (“Making”; for her analysis of Hakluyt’s treatment of the materials pertaining to Sir Francis Drake, see also “Writing”). Fuller does not focus as much attention on how the process of valuation and narration operates *within* the travel account and shapes it as a formal entity, although her reading of how gold signified in the Russia Company provides a nice example of how one might produce a reading along the lines that Freud is proposing here.
- 44 Modern political historians usually trace the first modern theory of sovereignty to Bodin (1576), translated into English by Knolles (1606).
- 45 See also items 2 and 3 in Cabot’s ordinances (2: 195–96).
- 46 Willan questions whether Hakluyt’s version represents the merchants’ ideal demands rather than the tsar’s actual grant but points out that subsequent grants were even more advantageous to the company (11–14). The significant point, of course, is that the company could imagine and articulate its rights in these sweeping terms in the first place.
- 47 See, in particular, the epic battles with the ice in the accounts of the Frobisher voyages, esp. *Principal Navigations* 7: 235–38 and 328–33, and the many explicit ordinances that seek to preserve the fleet as a coherent group.
- 48 “Certaine notes” by Richard Johnson for Richard Chancellor in 1556 (Hakluyt, *Principal* 2: 345). See Deleuze and Guattari, esp. 208–31, 351–87.
- 49 Master Dionise Settle’s account of Frobisher’s second 1577 voyage in search of the Northwest Passage (Hakluyt, *Principal* 7: 228).
- 50 In his dedicatory letter to Philip Sidney in his *Divers Voyages* (1582), printed in Taylor, *Original Writings* 1: 176.
- 51 Compare Cabot’s “ordinances” of 1553: “31 Item there are people that can swimme in the sea, havens, & rivers, naked, having bowes and shafts, coveting to draw nigh your ships, which if they shal finde not wel watched, or warded, they wil assault, desirous of the bodies of men, which they covet for meate” (2: 203)—a

- pure fantasy of the cannibal based on Cabot's experience in South America, as Carey points out (172), and hardly relevant to a trip to the frozen seas of Russia; Settle's account of Frobisher's 1577 voyage ("I think them rather Anthropophagi, or devourers of mans flesh" [7: 227]); and subsequent accounts, 7: 335, 370.
- 52 The citation is to Harriot's famous account of Virginia, which Hakluyt included in the *Principal Navigations* and then arranged to have published in a grand four-volume international edition by Theodor de Bry in 1590. See *Principal* 8: 382; and Quinn 1: 304.
- 53 Valuable steps in this direction might begin with Maitland's "Crown" and "Moral" and his extraordinary "Body," as well as with Davis 2:157–208, 264–69; Fitzmaurice, an excellent study of how the New World ventures were deliberately imagined as little commonwealths within humanist political thought; and Braddick, one of the best recent studies of the problems of the "state" in the early modern period (see esp. 397–419). Montag offers a valuable analysis of Hobbes in relation to the notion of the multitude (90–103).
- 54 See DeLanda, esp. 8–25.
- 55 See Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, on travel writing and travel "information [that] contained its own replicatory mechanisms [. . .] voyages reached through the documents recording them to engender more voyages" (148–49); see also her reading of Hakluyt's preface, where she presents Hakluyt as a neutral connector or node that links many different people, places, and events (150–56): "[T]he collection claims that its order is neither thematic nor argumentative but merely revelatory and clarifying" (152); the "body" he assembles is simultaneously that of the globe, that of a national memory, and that of the individual people who contributed accounts to his work. See also 166–67.
- 56 See Turner, "Life Science," for further discussion.

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