Local Transcendence: Cultural Criticism, Postmodernism, and the Romanticism of Detail

I struck, and struck again,
And, growing still in stature, the huge cliff
Rose up between me and the stars, and still
With measured motion, like a living thing
Strode after me. With trembling hands I turned
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the cavern of the willow-tree.

after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being. In my thoughts
There was a darkness—call it solitude
Or blank desertion—no familiar shapes
Of hourly objects, images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields,
But huge and mighty forms that do not live
Like living men moved slowly through my mind.

—William Wordsworth, The Prelude (1805)

A year here and he still dreamed of cyberspace, hope fading nightly. All the speed he took, all the turns he’d taken and the corners he’d cut in Night City, and still he’d see the matrix in his sleep, bright lattices of logic unfolding across that colorless void. . . . The dreams came on in the Japanese night like live wire voodoo, and he’d cry for it, cry in his sleep, and wake alone in the dark, curled in his capsule in some coffin hotel, his hands clawed into the bed slab, temperfoam bunched between his fingers, trying to reach the console that wasn’t there. . . .

Cyberspace. A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation. . . . A graphic representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding . . .

—William Gibson, Neuromancer (1984)
TO IMAGINE WORDSWORTH with his hands on a personal computer is to
glimpse a descent, as if of software, from the romantic release of imagination to its various
postmodern releases. Cyberpunk, for example. Romantic imagination is the source code (by
way of Edgar Allan Poe, the Beats, Thomas Pynchon, and others) of Neuromancer, the
novel that marked the emergence of the “cyberpunk” or “mirrorshades” movement in post-
modern science fiction. The comparison is vulgar, but precisely so. Perhaps only our vulgate
bards match the original banality, the transcendental everydayness, of the poet of Lyrical
Ballads.

Transcendence is the issue. Romantic imagination was a mediation between the worldly
and otherworldly whose definitive act was the simulation of transcendental release. In such
spots of time in The Prelude as the Boat Stealing or Snowdon episodes, Mind was the
visionary medium that coded the world as otherworldly. But the dark ricorso of such sim-
ulation was what Geoffrey Hartman (in his book on Wordsworth) called the “return to
nature.” The thief in the boat turns back from transgressive transcendence to a Platonic
cave of legitimacy. The poet on Snowdon views a cloud-video “perfect image of a mighty
mind” but then corrects the simulation, turns it at last into an ode to duty: “hence religion,
faith,... Hence truth in moral judgements; and delight! That fails not, in the external
universe.” Transcendence is recuperated within the banal—the denotative banal of com-
monplace experience, perhaps also the connotative and ideological banal: the trite, hack-
neyed, contained, bourgeois.

Just so, neuromantic imagination simulates release. The visionary medium is now
Mind in direct interface with silicon (and secondarily with a kaleidoscope of synthetic drugs,
updating romantic opium), and the function of the synthetic imagination is once more to
allow the world—now corporate, multinational, informatic—to feign the otherworldly.
Fashioned in much the same mold of existential theft as Wordsworth’s boat stealer, the hero
of Gibson’s novel, Case, is an outlaw, a “cowboy” hacker riding “viruses” into bright corpo-
rate databases. Gliding in cool stealth along datapath traceries of the corporate network,
Case is Kerouac on the road, Slothrop in the Zone, the street that jinks between corporation
headquarters. But at last, this thief also ends in the double bind of transgression become
legitimation. In the great legitimation crisis of the novel, he raids an evil corporate colossus
that is the postindustrial imagination of Milton’s Pandemonium. The resulting subversion
is transcendental, apocalyptically so—but also, we recognize, indistinguishable in outcome
from what economic journalism calls a “minor correction” of the market: a corporate raid,
a takeover, a taking care of what Case—in his street talk—has all along called “biz.” In
this novel, too, transcendence is ultimately banal, which in postmodern science fiction often
means that it is parasitic upon a mock-Japanese ideology of ordinariness: corporation consen-
sus, performativity, zaibatsu rectitude. In Gibson’s drug-sharp image of his hero
bunching his fingers in cold withdrawal from his keyboard (in the electric “Japanese night”)
we recognize a consummate need for the corporate grid.

On one great screen, then: romantic “unknown modes of being.” On the other: “cyber-
space” or, in other cyberpunk idiom, the “matrix,” “network,” “grid,” “Plateau.” The media
of dependency in both instances is the same: an ecstatic mind caught in an endless loop between transgressive transcendence and corrective legitimation. Transcendence is a goto routine of the imagination that goes nowhere.

But a detail: what about that insistent “willow-tree” in Wordsworth (thrice mentioned in the Boat Stealing episode)? Or the “temperfoam” in the passage from Gibson? What do these ultrahonal details embedded in the routine of transcendence—together with a whole manifold of arbitrary particulars elsewhere in these works—offer the romantic or neoromantic imagination? Haiku, after all, shows how little is needed to simulate a world. Why does the vision of One Life or One Matrix need such a level of detail in its simulation of release from the world? Why not be content with a more select repertory of motifs or images adequate for simulation: Wordsworth’s imagery of “darkness,” for example, or Gibson’s of “bright lattices of logic . . . like city lights, receding”? Or is it the case that gray background—neutraliy, static, the noise between channels—is the very possibility of romantic/postmodern simulation? The meanest flower that blows as well as such routine products of materials science as temperfoam: Is this the stuff of under-allegory, under-symbol, or, perhaps, the most hallucinatory of all simulations, “context”?

Overview:
The Rhetoric of Detail

I wish in this essay to criticize cultural criticism in what may be called its high postmodernist forms: cultural anthropology, new cultural history, New Historicism, New Pragmatism, new and/or post-Marxism, and finally that side of French theory—overlapping with post-Marxism—that may be labeled French pragmatism (i.e., the “practice” philosophy and/or semiotic “pragmatics” of the later Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel de Certeau, Jean-François Lyotard). These aggressively “new” forms of contextualism do not exhaust the field of postmodern cultural criticism, and a fuller study would need to include the different emphases of ethnic, gender, and area studies as well as of British cultural materialism. But for now we can stay high. “High” distinguishes neither the theoretical from the practical, the high cultural from the populist, nor the neoconservative from the leftist. Rather, it indicates a shared mode of cultural engagement that undercuts all such polemics dividing the field to project an increasingly generic discourse of contextualism. This mode of engagement may be called detached immanence. Detached immanence amid worlds of context is the distinctively postmodern, the “new,” in cultural criticism.

But we must descend to particulars. I refer to a tenet so elementary, pervasive, and insist in all the high cultural criticisms that it appears foundational (despite the method’s avowed philosophical antifoundationalism). The basis of high cultural criticism is its belief that criticism can, and must, engage with context
in a manner so close, bit-mapped, or microbial (to use some of the method's paradigms) that the critic appears no farther from the cultural object than a cybernetic or biological virus from its host at the moment of code exchange. We live in an age of "detailism" characterized by the "pervasive valorization of the minute, the partial, and the marginal," Naomi Schor says in her intriguing Reading in Detail, a study of the genealogy of detailism leading up to modernist and poststructuralist aesthetics. High cultural criticism is an aesthetics—and much more—of specifically postmodern detailism. Or to name the method's related leading concepts: it is particularism, localism, regionalism, relative autonomism, incommensurabilism, accidentalism (or contingency), anecdotalism, historicism, and—to draw attention to a set of curiously prominent Greek prefixes in the method—"micro-" "hetero-," and "poly-"ism. "All these," we may say in words borrowed from Clifford Geertz's Local Knowledge, "are products of a certain cast of thought, one rather entranced with the diversity of things." Or as Richard Rorty sums it up, "All that can be done to explicate 'truth,' 'knowledge,' 'morality,' 'virtue' is to refer us back to the concrete details of the culture in which these terms grew up." And most succinctly, that unofficial motto repeated several times in Jerome McGann's Social Values and Poetic Acts: "I make for myself a picture of great detail."

I will want to return to Schor's and McGann's books in particular because their emphases are eminently relevant for us here, but at present I borrow only McGann's recommendation of a non-narrative form suited to displaying detailism: the array or matrix. Here is a matrix of cultural-critical phrases rendered in all their (self-thematized) disconnection as if they were so many piles of Lyotardian phrases, snatches of Rortyian conversation, pastiches of New Historicist paradigms, or sound bites of Baudrillardian media. Media-oriented readers, indeed, may wish to view this matrix as if with remote control in hand—flitting from channel to channel and sentence fragment to fragment in a hallucinatory blur of strangely continuous discontinuity:

THE MATRIX OF DETAIL

CHANNEL 1: CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
Clifford Geertz: "local knowledge" "the massive fact of cultural and historical particularity" "the most local of local detail" "the road to the grand abstractions of science winds through a thicket of singular facts."

CHANNEL 2: NEW CULTURAL HISTORY
Roger Chartier: "multiple intellectual configurations by which reality is constructed in contradictory ways" "a specific way of being in the world" "history is turning to practices that give meaning to the world in plural and even contradictory ways." Robert Darnton: "a patchwork of regions" "a specific field for the exercise of cat power" "he wanted to capture his entire city, every bit of it, and so he wrote on and on—for 426 manuscript pages, covering every chapel, every wig maker, every stray dog." Natalie Zemon Davis: "consider the disor-
derly woman in more detail” “rather than thinking diffusely about the people,” I am trying wherever possible to ask how printing affected more carefully defined milieus “local context” “a salty, particularistic, resourceful layer of culture.” Carlo Ginzburg: “reconstruct a fragment” “a narrow investigation on a solitary miller” “the anecdote” “a microcosm.” Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie: “analysis that is not only general . . . but also detailed” “particular detail” “regional evidence” “in its smallest detail.”

Channel 3: New Historicism
(Renaissance studies) Stephen Greenblatt: “some fragment of a lost life” “my vision is necessarily more fragmentary” “particular and local pressures” “partial, fragmentary, conflicual.” Richard Helgerson: “the experience of particular communities” “individual autonomy . . . communal autonomy . . . national autonomy” “the land in all its most particular divisions.” Leah S. Marcus: “particular cultural situations” “local reading” “localization” “radical varieties of regionalism” “a patchwork of local differences.” Louis Adrian Montrose: “the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing” “the pressure and particularity of material interests” “relative autonomy of specific discourses.” Steven Mullaney: “a detailed mise-en-scène of Brazilian culture” “richly detailed” “preternatural detail.”

(Romantic studies) Jon P. Klancher: “a reader situated in a particular social space” “crowding of cultural fragments” “a rich array of socially individuated types.” Marjorie Levinson: “disturbing particular” “very concretely situated” “the particular and particularly constrained” “deeply specific” “epochal specificity” “we are the effects of particular pasts.” Alan Liu: “concrete, highly charged phenomena . . . phenomenal spots of history” “uncountable local variations” “the scandal of the particular and partisan.” Jerome J. McGann: “the concrete, the material, and the particular” “the local, the topical, the circumstantial” “the polymorphous and the heteroglot” “daily life in a particular community” “incommensurate detail” “elementary particulars” “heuristic isolates” “minute particulars” “grains of sand in which the world may be seen” “minute particulars of time, place, and circumstance.” David Simpson: “particular details—the details of disposition and empirical contingency” “small details of everyday life” “we are inevitably committed to a careful and detailed examination of particulars” “minute particulars.”

Channel 4: New Pragmatism
Stanley Fish: “all aesthetics, then, are local and conventional” “context specific” “parochial perspective of some local or partisan point of view” “contingent practices of particular communities.” Frank Lentricchia: “specific, detailed, everyday functioning” “real local effects” “beliefs . . . are born locally in crisis and have local consequences only” “a heterogeneous space of dispersed histories” “the ‘eaches’ the particular, the local, the secret self” “pragmatism is an epistemology for isolatos who experiment at the frontier.” Richard Rorty: “criticism of one’s culture can only be piecemeal and partial” “microprocesses” “ordinary, retail, detailed, concrete” “alternative, concrete, detailed cosmologies” “thousands of small mutations finding niches” “atoms in a DNA molecule” “local final vocabulary.”

Channel 5: New Marxism
Louis Althusser: “specific object of a specific discourse” “this particular unity” “a peculiar real system . . . a specific system” “no practice in general, but only distinct practices” “I shall call Ideological State Apparatuses a certain number of realities which present themselves . . . in the form of distinct and specialized institutions.” Fredric Jameson: “the specificity and radical difference of the social and cultural past” “the specificity of the political content of everyday life” “a purely local validity in cultural analysis” “the fragments, the incommen-
urable levels, the heterogeneous impulses" "isolated, disconnected, discontinuous material signifiers." Pierre Macherey: "the specificity of the literary work" "product of a specific labour" "a specific but undisguised . . . relation with history."

Channel 6: French Post-Marxism/Pragmatism

Jean Baudrillard: "bits" "little black boxes" "bodily cells, electronic cells, party cells, micro-biological cells . . . the tiniest, indivisible element" "the play of molecules . . . the play of infinitesimal signifiers" "tiniest disjunctive unities" "the operationalism of the smallest detail." Pierre Bourdieu: "an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the habitus" "the discontinuous, patchy space of practical paths" "polythesis." Michel de Certeau: "a science of singularity" "microbe-like operations" "a 'polytheism' of scattered practices" "encysted in particularity" "microbe-like, singular and plural practices" "micro-stories." Jean-François Lyotard: "a pragmatics of language particles . . . a heterogeneity of elements . . . institutions in patches—local determinism" "nodal points of specific communication circuits, however tiny" "petit récit" "petites histoires." Michel Foucault: "a 'new micro-physics' of power" "a political economy of detail" "a multiple network of diverse forces" "particular, local, regional knowledge" "the 'specific' intellectual" "dispersed, heteromorphous, localised procedures of power" "a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case" "a specific type of discourse on sex . . . appearing historically and in specific places."

This, we recognize, is the rhetoric of a method, a sheer virtuosity of detail. Of course, this is not the whole picture of great detail. Indeed, it may be appropriate to interject a rhetorical gesture of our own imitating a topos we will see throughout the discourses of particularity: inexpressibility or incompleteness. A fuller study of detail would need to bolster its canon not only with more authors than I have been able to array here but with other disciplines (historian film studies, for instance, where Philip Rosen's work on cinematic detail and film studio production is provocative). It would also need to consider at length the applied side of cultural criticism: the grounding of its rhetoric on various thorough or haphazard projects of recovering specific contexts of detail. Methodological vocabulary alone tells us relatively little, for example, about the assumptions embedded in the genre, style, tense, quotation strategy, and even type size of New Historicism's paradigms, Geertz's cockfights, or Bourdieu's slices of anthropology. Finally, a fuller study would advert to the sometimes massive discourse of detailism in such modern or structuralist forebears of the postmodern scene as traditional American pragmatism, Fernand Braudel's historiography, Georg Lukács on the "special," Theodor Adorno's "micrological" aesthetics, Mikhail Bakhtin's "heteroglossia," formalist "close reading," or Roland Barthes on the "reality effect."

But all such gestures of incompleteness, we know, end by crossing their fingers: let us say, then, that the matrix I have presented is sufficient to simulate the whole. What we observe in the matrix is a revisionary idea of culture whose full sweep could be conveniently analyzed as a cultural empires, pragmatics, and dialogics—in short, a whole methodology for thinking the cultural world. Or rather, "thinking."
should not put us too much in mind of an orderly discourse of knowledge based on a set of operations for transforming discrete perceptions into cognition. Detail is the very instrument of the antifoundational and anti-epistemological imperative in high cultural criticism: its contention is that there is no reason (other than fidelity to quaint notions of philosophy) why contexts of discretely perceived particulars should resolve into culture as a single, grounded, and knowable order. The empirics, pragmatics, and dialogics of high cultural criticism are finally methodologies as much against as of knowledge—a methodical antimethod.

But there is a danger in antimethod, of course. It is possible to discern in the all too often trenchant formulations of cultural criticism precisely an incipient method or meta-way (met hod od ot al ot er no 1) of alternative knowledge. This is the criticism of hidden foundationalism that has long haunted Marxist criticism, for example. Or again, we can think of the polemical hard edges of other cultural criticisms: Geertz’s antifunctionalism, New Historicism’s antiformalism, or the anti-Annales movement in New Cultural History—all of which wear their dissent, perhaps, with too heightened a sense of the sanctity of their meta-way. As when we read through the sequence of Rorty’s works, which have essentially one thing to say but are adept at repeating the gospel again and again with wider relevance, the method of antimethod can at times seem too dogmatic, too much of a piece. It overdoses Rorty’s prescription for pragmatist philosophy: to improvise upon one of his favorite phrases, the picture of detail not only shows “how things, in the broadest possible sense of the term, hang together” but perhaps hangs together all too much—like a history painting on a wall. The picture of great detail, as it were, threatens to become a great picture of detail.

How to discern in our matrix a “thought” or “idea” of culture, then, without being too knowing even in the way of antiknowing? The answer, I suggest, lies precisely under the sign of a very old antifoundationalism or sophistry: rhetoric. In reading our matrix and the methods it indexes, we should be aware that we are indeed reading—that we are dealing with rhetoric as the facsimile knowledge or pseudo-analytic whose distinctive method is its tendency to lose its way at decisive moments, to pose a logic of detail only then to thwart itself (in the essential de Manian reading) by interposing incommensurable logics. In particular, our matrix of phrases declares that the methodology of high cultural criticism is really an incoherence of three rhetorical “moments.” For ease of reference, these may be called immanence, commitment, and detachment. It is immanence that speaks within cultural criticism’s empirics of the Real; commitment within its pragmatics of variously oppositional or neoconservative “practice”; and detachment within its cool dialogics of improvised conversation or petits récits (the “culture rap,” that is, thematized by authors as diverse as Rorty, Darnton, de Certeau, Lyotard). Each such rhetorical moment at the core of the method, I suggest, is not an integral discourse but the site of an instability or turning in rhetoric. After all, only inner
roping allows method to be perceived as rhetoric in the first place—as a way of knowing prevented from hardening into dogma (especially when it is being most polemical or rhetorical) by the arbitrary intervention of its media.

Of course, our most recent avatar of rhetoricity certainly holds to its own meta-way. But deconstructive method will serve as a salutary corrective to cultural-critical method so long as we persist in seeing rhetoric as mediational to the end—that is, as perpetually a media or means rather than end. Rhetoric will be our means of referring cultural-critical method to the ultimate antifoundationalism or endless end: history. History, or "elsewhereness" as I have called it elsewhere, is alienated foundation.23 It is what orders the thought and, within thought, rhetoric of cultural criticism into a characteristic sequence whose logical necessity is subordinated to the phantom necessity of contingency.

What I mean here may be educed from the detectable tug of diachrony in high cultural-critical argument, the tendency in the method to marshals reasons and discourses in a certain order unpredictable from within the system. As "thought," to begin with, cultural criticism follows a logical order that is pseudosyllogistic. Consider as evidence, for instance, the strong drift in Geertz's cockfight essay from counting bets to meditating on aesthetics; or, again, witness the glide in Rorty's Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity toward a culminating discussion of literature.24 Paralleling such linear movements of exposition are cultural-critical works that establish an axiology according to which art is the highest, most privileged, or otherwise most special form. (Thus one of the distinctive features of McGann's Social Values and Poetic Acts is its strong advocacy of "poetry" as a unique discourse that "performs a critical function which is not found in other forms of discourse.").25 What such directional arguments indicate is that high cultural critics more often than not argue from the major premise of empirical reality, through minor premises of pragmatism (the idea of "specific" practice, indeed, is analogous in function to a minor premise in classical syllogism), to a conclusion in aesthetics, dialogics, or media studies. "In conclusion," we hear them say, "it is as if specific practices enacted in plays, novels, stories, jokes, anecdotes, and other representations of culture were reality."

The arbitrariness of such syllogism comes clear when we remember that cultural criticism (at least in theory) eschews any foundational major premise or conclusion and makes "reality," "practice," and "discourse" all equivalent minor premises. What is it that drives the system of thought in a particular direction? The answer is already whispered in the deflected logic of the figurative/aesthetic "as if" at the conclusion of the cultural-critical syllogism (as I ventriloquized it above: "It is as if specific practices enacted in plays, novels... "). Such deflection is the very signature of the fact that the arbitrary direction of the syllogism is controlled internally by an equally arbitrary sequence of rhetorical moments from immanence through commitment to aesthetic detachment. And controlling this discursive sequence in turn is the bottomless foundation that sponsors any arbi-
trary sequence: a series of purely contingent, historical moments. Putting the case in overview: high cultural criticism is a system in which thought is subjected through the mediation of rhetoric to that ultimate disruption of thought, *history* of thought.26

We will need to grow more specific in identifying the historical moments that regulate the system of high cultural criticism. In terms of a general history of thought, however (no doubt too neat to serve as more than a scaffolding for research into the history of cultural criticism), it may be suggested that the interior trajectory of high cultural criticism is along a succession of intellectual-historical moments from the premodern through the modern to the postmodern—from immanental empirics through an originally Deweyan, Marxist, or New Critical praxis to distantiated dialogics.27 The historically given logics of the Real, the Practical, and the Simulated—with their underlying rhetorics of immanence, commitment, and detachment—blur in fast forward or filmic dissolve, and the overall result is the Baudrillardian sense of simulated reality, of remote or tele-engagement, that I have called detached immanence.

**The Romanticism of Detail**

The present essay focuses on the “first” or opening rhetoric of high cultural criticism: immanence.28 Here we are closest to foundationalism. Like pitons driven by the climber into a mountain face, details in the rhetoric of immanence are points of attachment where we experience such hands-on knowledge of the gritty cultural mass that we seem to feel the very quiddity of culture, the Real.

We will have reason to climb mountains later, but perhaps first we should be empirical and look at atoms. The sense of immanental reality I indicate lies screened behind the scientistic logic of high cultural criticism: the Whole Sick Crew (to allude to Pynchon’s technovisionary fiction) of “highly charged phenomena,” “atoms,” “molecules,” “micro-physics,” “micro-processes,” “DNA molecules,” “microbiological cells,” “microbe-like operations,” “small mutations,” “little black boxes,” and so forth (all phrases from our matrix). More generally, immanence is screened by a broadly empirical view of culture, and if scientific idiom will not serve, then equally technical-sounding terminology must be invented—“micro-stories,” for instance, or “multiple intellectual configurations,” “a specific field for the exercise of cat power,” “heuristic isolates.” And this is not even to mention the massive traces of scientism in the more anthropological, sociological, statistical, or structuralist cultural criticisms.

What such empirics projects is a view of cultural matter (economic, social, political, or ideological) so objective that materialism seems to obey the dynamics of literal matter. We can take as our explanatory paradigm the sometimes explicit
conceit in cultural criticism that details are "atoms." Observe that our matrix of phrases repeatedly isolates "atoms," "tiniest, indivisible elements," "elementary particulars," "highly charged phenomena," and ultimately "molecules" akin to what Arthur O. Lovejoy's history of ideas once called "unit-ideas." Details, that is, are elementary particles engaged in an overall systemics of combination much like the molecularism for which Louis O. Mink once criticized Lovejoy. But a discrimination is in order. As calibrated by such pervasive cultural-critical modifiers as "determinate" and "specific" ("deeply specific," Marjorie Levinson says), elementary particularism is innocent of the fuzzy probabilities of current particle science. The Greek prefixes I earlier touched upon are emblematic: cultural criticism remembers in the detail something like Democritan atomism as well as the geopolitical insularity of Greek city-states. The atom of detail is a classically hard, discrete unit. Or put neoclassically: the unit-detail analytic indicates the residual hold of Newtonian physics and of the emergent philosophy of Newton's age: Locke's program of elementary "ideas" and/or social-contract individuals associating in compound aggregates. With associational mechanics in mind, indeed, we might reinforce that great pillar of materialism throughout cultural criticism: the "concrete." Phrases in our matrix such as "concretely situated," "the concrete, the material, and the particular," or "ordinary, retail, detailed, concrete" build a world that is exactly concrete: a cement aggregate of specific and determinate particularity.

Such unit-detail atomism is ubiquitous, affecting even the most sophisticated interpreter whenever argument turns in the direction of empirical investigation. To come directly to the heart of the "matter," we need only foreground what our matrix of phrases has already enacted: the strangely overdetermined role of matrix forms throughout cultural criticism. Matrices are the method's great aggregates of atomistic detail. To read at any length in cultural criticism, after all, is often precisely to read at length—an effect consisting not so much in the actual number of pages as in the wet-cement quality of the reading experience. Cultural criticism dilates discourse through interpolated arrays of particulars, a sort of blason of the mundane or what Rorty (inspired by a Philip Larkin poem) calls "lading lists" of the world. Indeed, it is precisely the list form (or simple matrix of one axis) that is most pervasive. Here is a short list of lists:

_Darnton_: The Italian motifs remained recognizable enough for one to be able to classify the tale in the Aarne-Thompson scheme (it is tale type 2032). But everything else about the story—its frame, figures of speech, allusions, style, and general feel—had become intensely Zuni.

_Geertz_: Actually, the typing of cocks, which is extremely elaborate (I have collected more than twenty classes, certainly not a complete list), is not based on color alone, but on a series of independent, interacting, dimensions, which include—besides color—size, bone thickness, plumage, and temperament.
Althusser: I shall call Ideological State Apparatuses a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions. I propose an empirical list of these which will obviously have to be examined in detail. . . . —the religious ISA . . . —the educational ISA . . . —the family ISA, —the legal ISA, —the political ISA.\textsuperscript{34}

Lytotard: To paragraph is to write \textit{And, And moreover, And nevertheless} . . . The differend is reintroduced [the elision is Lyotard's]\textsuperscript{36}

The science of the list may be stated: wholes are knowable only as aggregates in which the detail has no interior detail. Cultural-critical detail, that is, is as much a resistance to, as enactment of, the more radical detailism of fractal and chaos theory in postmodern science proper. It is clear that the particulars gathered by Darnton and Geertz, for example, have no visible interior detail—no more so than the \textit{And, And moreover, And nevertheless} in Lyotard's great work of/about lists (what he terms phrases "linked" in disconnection by their "differends"). "Frame, figures of speech," "size, bone thickness," and, and, . . . exist at that lower event horizon known to all empirical investigators of culture where evidentiary authority must at last rest upon sketchy, borrowed, or otherwise uncooked "facts" collected without linkage in a notebook.\textsuperscript{36} At that event horizon there is no substantive difference between traditional empiricists and such \textit{outré} "scientists" of culture as structural anthropologists or structural Marxists. "Structure" itself reduces to lists. However much Althusser's overall theory is structural, for example, it is evident that his "empirical list" cements rough-hewn institutions \textit{en bloc} in an essentially aggregate social whole. Similarly, the few details he does offer about the internal practices of religious and educational institutions accrue in an essentially mechanistic manner. "Apparatus," we may say, is the bureaucratization of the Lockean aggregate. "Thus Schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection, etc.," Althusser says at one point, checking off the particulars of superstructure on a lading list of undetailed details punctuated by an \textit{etc}.\textsuperscript{37}

And with this \textit{etc}. we come to the heart of the matter: the strange interface where the science of the list reveals its rhetoricity and, indexed by rhetoricity, its historicity. Seen one way, after all, the science of lists depends on a convention of figuration rather than of induction: a syntagmatics or metonymics whose illusion is that wholes are polymers of parts. What makes such figuration visible is an interior instability where saying one thing—in this case, listing atoms—suddenly seems equivalent to saying something else. What else does high cultural criticism have to say in the very act of reciting lists as if syntagm were its only discourse?

It has a lot to say, namely "\textit{etc}". One of Althusser's most characteristic devices, we recognize, is the \textit{etc} in alliance with such cognates as the elision (\ldots ). The very subtitle of the "Ideological State Apparatuses" essay is an implicit elision: "Notes Towards an Investigation." So, too, review in our list of lists Geertz's "certainly
not...complete list" or Lyotard's "..." In every cultural critic, I hazard, there is an essential et cetera or similar stigma of incompleteness far in excess of the margin-of-error requirements of normal science. What is the thought behind the et or troubled Lyotardian and haunting cultural criticism? The antifoundational answer, of course, is that there is no thought: thought, logic, grounded Newtonian science ends. Once we walk off the plank of serial evidence into seas of etc., there can be heard only cultural-critical topoi of inexpressibility, vain apologies, elegiac or whimsical plays upon incompleteness, and other such recognitions that the science of the atomistic list was all along rhetorical.38

Etc., I suggest, is a trope of inexpressibility that introduces within atomism a rhetoric-within-rhetoric. Besides metonymy, after all, there is also that variant, more expansive play on particulars: synecdoche. It is synecdoche that redeems the etc. from the wasteland of endless syntagm (which some cultural criticisms also call consumerism) by transforming incompleteness into the figure of fulfillment: a symbolics or iconic metaphors putting the part for the cultural whole.39 I refer to the implicit rhetorical turn heard in such phrases from our matrix as "some fragment of a lost life," "my vision is necessarily more fragmentary," or "the fragments, the incommensurable levels, the heterogeneous impulses." Such rhetoric clearly confesses incompleteness, but, at last, also the unmistakable sign of synecdoche. Fragments, after all, are by definition not "particles" (which exist whether or not they join in a larger unit); they can only be parts-of-a-whole. A phrase such as some fragment of a lost life thus implies by its genitive construction that "lost life" is not really lost, that "some fragment" despite its discontinuity with the lost life-world can be discovered to be part "of" the lost world and thus to be big with wholeness. Not a scientific method in which limits of error bracket literal incompletenesses, then (or, more recently, in which incompletely known "butterfly effects" wander a local-chaos universe of patterned error), but the kind of etc. by which Everyman in his very partialness once figured the whole body politic or cosmos. The fragmentary atomism of cultural-critical detail harbors a huge error or trope: "microcosm" in the old sense.40

Or rather, the detail is big with a slightly more recent, if still premodern, rhetoric of microcosm—with the rhetoric of parts-become-wholes, indeed, that originally arose to combat Lockean systemics. Here I advance the historical complement to rhetorical analysis. The moment of immanence is "first" in cultural criticism, as I have said, not because it is a priori but because it initiates an embedded historical sequence of rhetorics. It would be possible, for example, to refer postmodern cultural criticism at this point to modernist aesthetics. The "ontological particularity" or "iconics" that John Crowe Ransom argued in notably scientific style is apropos.41 Or to vary upon the other prescriptives of close reading: it is now culture that is ambiguous and paradoxical in its tense complexity of particularity, its texture of "local irrelevance." It is culture that should not mean, but—with all the ontological zing of the Real—be. Thus arises
our new concrete universal: the cultural rather than verbal icon. But instead of bringing us back to the regime of Eliotic fragments shored against ruin, I will here drink deeply from the source. Let me refer postmodern cultural criticism to the movement that modernist aesthetics itself—together with such parallels as Deweyan philosophy—so aggressively sublated: romanticism. Cultural criticism is "first" of all an allusion to the moment when the rhetoric of empiricism confronted the early regime of the fragment: an emerging romantic rhetoric.

Witness, therefore, the broad, deep, and explicit remembrance of high romanticism—both literary and philosophical—in high postmodern cultural criticism. Without exaggeration, it may be said that romanticism is the most common ancestor of the various cultural criticisms: more basic, more shared than such polemically charged and relatively recent parent figures as Marx, Nietzsche, Dewey, Braudel, or Malinowski. Romanticism, as it were, is the grandparent or grandmuse: a grand-matrix of thought that, precisely because it is more distanced from current struggles for and against Marx, Nietzsche, Dewey, etc., indulges the most uncritical statements. A first evidence consists in such unabashed allusions in our matrix as "minute particulars," "grains of sand in which the world may be seen," "minute particulars of time, place, and circumstance," and (in imitation of Wordsworth's spots of time) "phenomenal spots of history." But the evidence runs deeper than spot allusions. There is a whole subgenre in cultural criticism of sustained and egregiously adventitious uses of romanticism—gorgeous insets of romantic consciousness so well wrought, so self-sustaining, that we wonder whether cultural criticism is at last something like Keats's Grecian Urn: a mere fretwork of culture (some "little town by river or sea shore . . . emptied of [its] folk") silhouetted against an ideal ground.

A prime example is the New Historicism, whose frequent dependence on assumptions of romanticism and nineteenth-century historicism I have discussed elsewhere. In its many invocations of Hegelian "dialectic" together with its master-servant or "containment/subversion" analytic of power, for instance, Renaissance New Historicism is big with Spirit. Greenblatt's massively antithetical notion of Renaissance self-fashioning (outlined in his introduction) could thus be mapped directly over a previous, celebrated work about self-fashioning: Hartman's Wordsworth's Poetry. But it is in romantics New Historicism that romanticism redux is most brazen. McGann's Social Values and Poetic Acts, for example, is an exhilaratingly polymorphous, heterocosmic, or—Americanizing the prefix—coon-curious work that chases the argument of cultural detailism through many fields of inquiry. Two fields, however, stand out: romantic literature and postmodernism. Whether these two are polymorphs or isomorphs is open to question: there is a strong presumption throughout the book that Blakean, Byronic, and other aspects of romanticism simply are postmodern. "Insofar as works like [Blake's] Songs and Marriage are nonnarratives which do not involve themselves in forms of atonement," McGann can thus say, "they resemble various kinds of
poststructural discourse, in particular the work now commonly known as L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E Writing." My own book on Wordsworth, I am compelled to add, is a sustained project of detailism that jumps implicitly (and at times explicitly) between the particulars of the French Revolution period and our post-modern sense of a "differential," fractured, refugee culture. Or again, there is David Simpson's Wordsworth's Historical Imagination, whose attack on totalizing theory in favor of minute "particularity" parallels Wordsworth's own cultural-linguistic attack on "gaudiness and inane phraseology" in defense of the "language really used by men."

Similarly, romanticism exerts an inordinate influence on the New Pragmatism. It is intriguing, for instance, to consider the infamous setpiece at the center of Steven Knapp and Walter Benn Michaels's "Against Theory." When that Lucy poem ("A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal") washes up on the beach as if by natural process without "intention," we are certainly being instructed in the manner of the philosophical traditions succeeding original pragmatism: analytical philosophy and its strong revision, "ordinary language" philosophy. Compensating for a bluntly denotative style with loony, pure thought-experiment examples ("The universe has expanded to twice its original size this night," "Suppose that in a distant galaxy there is the twin of our earth," "1227 is a rhombus," "Caesar is a prime number," "Should unusual, brilliant patterns suddenly appear in the sky—even if they took the form of letters which seemed to compose a sentence . . ."), analytical and ordinary language philosophy formed New Pragmatism in its image. Plain, blunt, and trenchant to the point of exaggeration, New Pragmatist discourse also favors "pure" examples—paradigms so denotatively complex but connotatively insensitive that they resemble Rube Goldberg contraptions. "Suppose that you're walking along a beach and you come upon a curious sequence of squiggles in the sand." Knapp and Michaels begin, and then set up their contraption: "You step back a few paces and notice that they spell out the following words: 'A slumber did my spirit seal. . .'."

But if we attend to the undertow of allusion, we will recognize that the contraption washes up on a berm of romanticism. Surely, after all, we are in the wake of Lyrical Ballads with its original "ordinary language." Surely (to allude to The Prelude) we stand by some glimmering lake where a boy halts his owl songs to feel with shock the "voice" and "imagery" of the landscape sinking "unawares into his mind." Or again, to invoke "The Sensitive-Plant," we pause by some Shelleyan ocean "whose waves never mark, though they ever impress / The light sand which paves it—Consciousness." What hidden romantic current, after all, washes a Lucy poem onto Knapp and Michaels's shifting sands of antifoundationalism? Further considerations: Knapp and Michaels's full thesis is that the notion of an unauthored and intentionless Lucy poem is absurd. Intentionality is innately part of what we mean by texts because we would not otherwise perceive textuality in

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the first place (only "squiggles" in the sand). Is innately intentional textuality therefore the same as romantic Nature, every part of which—whether a Lucy-poem landscape or squiggles of "little lines / Of sportive wood run wild"—is an inscription signing some fulfillment (or tragedy) of romantic intention (i.e., "mind," "imagination")? Or again: when Knapp and Michaels state that "the meaning of a text is simply identical to the author's intended meaning" such that "the project of grounding meaning in intention becomes incoherent," what does "simple" mean?32 Does the standard New Pragmatist argument by dismissal (of the sort: "It simply is this way," "Nothing interesting can be said; they just are that way") mean that the premise of authorial intention is so natural that it could be an appendix to that romantic theory of simplicity: the Preface to Lyrical Ballads? (Wordsworth on intention: rustic existence is paradigmatic because "in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity" and because rustics "convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions.") Is intention, in sum, as "simple" as Lucy, whatever Wordsworth intended by that name?33

But perhaps I make too much of Wordsworth, the original against-theorist (or what James K. Chandler calls Burkan ideologue-against-ideology), in Knapp and Michaels's essay.34 The full significance of such romantic vignettes set within New Pragmatist discourse only comes to view when we peruse the broad wash effects of romanticism in an extended corpus of cultural criticism such as Richard Rorty's (and, in the background, John Dewey's and William James's).35 There are Rorty's direct quotations and allusions, for example: "something far more deeply interfused," "murder to dissect," "negative capability," "clerisy of the nation," "create the taste by which he will be judged," "I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's," and so forth.36 (Dewey: "The 'magic' of poetry—and pregnant experience has poetical quality—is precisely the revelation of meaning in the old effected by its presentation through the new. It radiates the light that never was on land and sea"; James: "As Wordsworth says, 'thought is not; in enjoyment it expires.'")37 And there is Rorty's consistent use of "romantic" as a period concept designed at once to instruct philosophy in the imaginative groundlessness of romantic world making and to criticize the too idealist goal of the original romantic world makers. Particularly dependent upon the romantic period concept are essays such as "Professionalized Philosophy," "Idealism and Textualism," and the "Contingency" series. To make a collage:

Let me call "romanticism" the thesis that what is most important for human life is not what propositions we believe but what vocabulary we use. . . . Not until the Romantics did books become so various as to create readers who see what has been written as having no containing framework. . . . Since the Romantics, we have been helped most of all by the poets, the novelists, and the ideologues. . . . The Phenomenology of Spirit taught us to see not only the history of philosophy, but that of Europe, as portions of a Bildungsroman. . . . What
survived from the disappearance of metaphysical idealism as a scientific, arguable thesis was, simply, romanticism. . . . Romanticism was aufgehoben in pragmatism. . . . The important philosophers of our own century are those who have tried to follow through on the Romantic poets.\textsuperscript{44}

It is not coincidental that one of Rorty's latest heroes of "postphilosophical" culture is Harold Bloom.\textsuperscript{59} Romanticism is Rorty's archetype for a universe in which the ground is stable only between world-expunging and world-making swerves.

Finally, I invoke just one other side of high postmodern cultural criticism: French postmodern/pragmatist theory as represented, for example, by Lyotard's *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute.*\textsuperscript{60} *The Differend* is emphatically a work of cultural criticism not only because it draws its semiotics from the "pragmatics" tradition launched by C. S. Peirce, G. H. Mead, and Charles Morris\textsuperscript{61} but because it sets its finally postsemiotic world of splintered phrase universes on a primordial scene of (post)culture: Auschwitz. Auschwitz—and, since this remains an ineluctably French work, secondarily the terror of the French Revolution—is where old philosophers come to dispute their final truth-solutions: epistemological, metaphysical, even syntactical "realities." Is there a speakable and verifiable truth communicable between phrase universes? How can there be such "linkage" if some final solutions silence an entire class of speakers, an entire testament of phrases? In truth, did the Final Solution, did Auschwitz really happen?\textsuperscript{62} Philosophers come to offer their judgments. And two of the philosophers who walk most largely are Kant and Hegel. Tutelary geniuses of some of Lyotard's most sustained "Notices," Kant and Hegel are the bookends of Enlightenment and romanticism between which the "differend" is the book burning. The differend is a "feeling" for the unspeakability of any Truth about final solutions, a noncognitive reaching after unspeakable words, a silent grasping for . . . As Lyotard says immediately after his third Kant Notice: "Is this the sense in which we are not modern? Incommensurability, heterogeneity, the differend, the persistence of proper names, the absence of a supreme tribunal? Or, on the other hand, is this the continuation of romanticism, the nostalgia that accompanies the retreat of . . . , etc.?" (Lyotard's elision).\textsuperscript{63}

More such fragments of romanticism could be gathered. Cultural criticism's pragmatics of "everyday" or "ordinary" "experience," for example, is in part certifiably romantic. So, too, there is romanticism in the dialogics of cultural criticism: the view that culture is no more than a series of conversational improvisations, stories, or *petits récits.* The ordinary and the storied, after all, is the heartland of *Lyrical Ballads.* But perhaps our fragments already limn the whole. To view cultural-critical atomism in historical perspective is to discover precisely what I earlier called an iconic metaphors, or, to use the romantic rather than modernist concept, the symbol. As Coleridge might phrase it, cultural-critical "detail" is the part through which the whole shines translucently.\textsuperscript{64} Thus listen again to the unmistakable allusions in our matrix: "minute particulars," "grains of sand in
which the world may be seen,” “minute particulars of time, place, and circumstance,” and “phenomenal spots of history.”

Or we might look from the grain of sand to the parallel Blakean symbolics of inverted space—of “vortexes,” “ordered spaces,” or visionary “Globules of Man’s blood” each of which expands into a whole cosmos when viewed from inside. Cultural criticism remembers the process of micro-world making by which children sporting upon the shore, the boy in the boat, the gibbet mast, and so on once created phenomenally entire universes within the local or regional. I underscore here an aspect of high cultural criticism so sustained and colorful that in all likelihood it will be the method’s most anthologized element, its “best” work. Cultural criticism’s best is its passion for constructing micro-worlds each as intricately detailed, yet also as expansive in mythic possibility, as a Wordsworthian Lakeland, Blakean ordered space, Keatsian Grecian Urn, or—to cite a modern but deeply romantic analogue—Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha County. When we sift the richly worked anecdotes of the New Historicism (e.g., any of Greenblatt’s or Steven Mullaney’s inaugural paradigms); when we caress the even more lovingly reconstructed micro-worlds of the New Cultural History (the universes of heretic millers, false Martin Guerres, cat-killing apprentices, or Le Roy Ladurie’s Pays d’Oc); when we regard the intricately mediated Cashinahua “Notice” and other vignettes of philosophy-as-life in Lyotard’s Differend; and when we enjoy New Pragmatism’s comically inventive alternate universes done up in analytic-philosophy fashion (worlds in which poems wash up on beaches complete with submarines in the distance, Rorty’s neo-Swiftian society of Antipodeans)—in sum, when we read any of these miraculously sustained bubbles of recreated or created context, we are for a moment again a child shaking one of those globed, water-filled landscapes filled with miniature snowflakes. The flakes of detail fall into place, and we are charmed by both their slow suspense and the crystal clarity of the scene when all has settled into mock reality. Or to magnify the miniature: this is what Jean Baudrillard calls “our only architecture today: great screens on which are reflected atoms, particles, molecules in motion. Not a public scene or true public space but gigantic spaces of circulation, ventilation, and ephemeral connections.”

In the picture of great detail, in sum, the local threatens to go transcendental: detailism becomes what Baudrillard calls “molecular transcendence,” the “idealism of the molecule.” Cultural critics, we note, recognize this witching moment of local transcendence in their works. In some of their most meditative passages, they pause on the threshold of transcendence aware that Keatsian magic casements of detail are about to open on a foam of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. In this moment (“Forlorn! the very word is like a bell/ To toll [them] back...”), they become critics of cultural criticism. Only so does their critical sense survive, in a self-reflexive rather than social gaze. Leah Marcus thus observes reflexively in the epilogue to her fine book on topical or local reading: “The
project for localization sets itself resolutely against the general and the universal, but has its own ways of creating generalities, leaping over difference in order to construct an alternative order of ‘essences’ out of the materials of history”; and again, “Generating a plenitude of particulars is not the same as appealing to a realm of ultimate truths, yet there may be important ways in which the two activities are functionally similar.” Stephen Greenblatt inquires,

But what if we refuse the lure of a totalizing vision? The alternative frequently proposed is a relativism that refuses to privilege one narrative over another, that celebrates the uniqueness of each cultural moment. But this stance—akin to congratulating both the real and the pretended Martin Guerre for their superb performances—is not, I think, either promising or realistic. For thorough-going relativism has a curious resemblance to the universalizing that it proposes to displace.

Foucault adds: “Is it not perhaps the case that these fragments of genealogies are no sooner brought to light . . . than they run the risk of re-codification, re-colonisation [within unitary discourses]? . . . And if we want to protect these only lately liberated fragments are we not in danger of ourselves constructing, with our own hands, that unitary discourse . . .?” And I have accused myself in the epilogue to Wordsworth: The Sense of History. “There is the faintest unmistakable taint of transcendence about your whole project.”

_Thus we can take a page from Naomi Schor’s Reading in Detail._ The “threshold” of transcendence on which high cultural criticism pauses is the sublime. In a series of chapters tracing the tradition of detailism from Sir Joshua Reynolds through Hegel, Freud, Barthes (and others), Schor comes to the crucial insight that detailism overthrew neoclassical generalization to dominate in the age of romanticism and the realistic novel only because it was made subservient to the aesthetics of sublimity. The spot-of-time detail was a help (and, in Schor’s gender argument, helpmeet) to transcendence. It is our own modernist and poststructuralist age, she argues, that at last “desublimes” the “detail ideal.” Addressed specifically to the postmodern, my own argument diverges in a direction suggested by Lyotard’s “What Is Postmodernism?” Lyotard argues: “Modern aesthetics is an aesthetic of the sublime, though a nostalgic one. . . . The postmodern would be that which, in the modern . . . searches for new presentations . . . in order to impart a stronger sense of the [sublimely] unrepresentable. Postmodernism, that is, re-presents modernism but is continuous with it and its romantic predecessor: the moment of sublimity is there at the root.

If Thomas Weiskel were writing now, perhaps, he would enroll cultural criticism alongside structuralism and psychoanalysis in _The Romantic Sublime_. The etc. of cultural-critical detail is at base emphatically sublime. Cultural criticism looks out on perilous seas of detail, but—blocked from any overview by its casement view or local perspectivism—experiences a crisis of incompleteness, of significance drowned in insignificance. The details are so many details. Only the
reactive phase of the romantic sublime (specifically, Kant's "mathematical sublime") can intervene: insignificance becomes the trope of transcendental meaning. By this trope, the least detail points to total understanding; as we say, history is in the details. Culture, that is, can be understood in its totality only if we believe that our inability to understand totality is the total truth.

And with this copular is we at last come to the Real. The Real in cultural criticism is indistinguishable from figure. How else could we understand what is by what is not except by synecdoche, metaphor, or symbol so extreme that it is catachresis? To change our own figure from perilous seas to high sierras: when we face the massif of detail piled up by high cultural criticism, we at last truly climb mountains. We end on some cloud-wrapped Snowdon or nimbus-nomenon where any visible detail—say the way a rift in the clouds sublimes all the underlying voices of the world—marks the threshold of the visionary. The visionary "is," the Real.

Or perhaps "visionary" and "transcendental" are too otherworldly to map cultural criticism, which, while it eschews foundational ground, makes its home not in the abyss of seas or the inverted abyss of mountains (the two sublime bounds of Braudeil's precedent-setting work of detailism, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World) but on the firm terra cognita of the great coastal plains of civilization. Let us say instead, therefore, that the objectivist and scientific discourse of cultural criticism at last sublimes into immanence. Immanence is transcendence sunk in the mundane. It is what Dewey, in his modern anticipation, meant when he said:

Modern life involves the deification of the here and the now; of the specific, the particular, the unique, that which happens once and has no measure of value save such as it brings with itself. Such deification is monstrous fetishism, unless the deity be there; unless the universal lives, moves, and has its being in experience as individualized.

To complete this picture of great detail, we need now only rename the "atom" so as to restore the discourse of scientism and immanence to the sphere of culture proper. Other names in high cultural criticism for the atom are "individual" and "community"—the progressively enlarged horizons of local detail.

What is the "subject," that vexed unit of identity in cultural criticism? In one view, the subject is the immanent individual: the "individual" who fends off totalism in de Certeau's The Practice of Everyday Life and that Lentricchia in his "The Return of William James" calls "the particular, the local, the secret self," the "isolatos . . . at the frontier." In its reverence for detail, I suggest, cultural criticism reveals a hidden agenda of Western individualism not clearly distinguished from what Lentricchia recalls to us in his essay on James: an original-pragmatist nostalgia for the colonial or nineteenth-century frontiersman of can-do sufficiency. Such is true also of all the more-or-less Marxist authors in our matrix. It may be said about the materialist side of New Historicism, for example, that...