

Distant parts and the whole world: Intertextuality Pseudoworks in the Abbé Prévost's *Voyages de Robert Lade*

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Abstract: To reach a better understanding of the particularities of eighteenth-century prose narrative esthetics, this analysis of the Abbé Prévost's *Voyages de Robert Lade* uses the lens of intertextuality to examine the role of "pseudoworks," or texts that present themselves as independent works within another work.

Keywords: pseudowork, intertextuality, Abbé Prévost, *Voyages de Robert Lade*, eighteenth century, prose, narration, esthetics

Résumé: Afin d'élaborer une meilleure conception des particularités esthétiques de la prose narrative au dix-huitième siècle, cette analyse des *Voyages de Robert Lade* de l'abbé Prévost se sert de l'optique de l'intertextualité pour examiner le rôle des "œuvres intérieures," autrement dit des textes qui se présentent comme œuvres indépendantes à l'intérieure d'une autre œuvre.

Mots-clés: œuvre intérieure, intertextualité, l'abbé Prévost, *Voyages de Robert Lade*, prose, narration, esthétique

In this essay, I will argue that the eighteenth-century reading public had a different attitude toward the dialogical and polyphonic capacities of prose narrative than is prevalent among contemporary readers, and that much of the strangeness that eighteenth-century novels and other prose narratives hold for the modern reader stems from the fact that they come from a time when the modes of production and distribution encouraged the reading public to be more accepting of dialogism in such works than

later came to be the case. The text I'll be using to build my argument is a fictional travel journal by the Abbé Prévost entitled *Voyages de Robert Lade* (1744). Although much critical effort has been expended in search of the sources Prévost used in writing the *Voyages*, here I will investigate the effects of Prévost's decision to keep some of his "borrowed" material separate from the rest of the text, displaying its external origin, instead of attributing all of it to his narrator, Robert Lade. To that end I will mobilize the concept of intertextuality to examine the role within the *Voyages* of what I call "pseudoworks", which are portions of text that present themselves as independent from the main body of the work in which they appear—in other words, "works-within-works", in the sense of the "play-within-a-play".¹

Intertextual characteristics appear in the *Voyages* in two main ways: in a literal sense, the work places several texts in dialogue with one another, and in a more general sense it creates an arena for a confrontation between two persistent concepts in literary criticism: fiction and nonfiction. In the following analysis I will show how internalized intertextuality produces a dynamic threefold parallelism underlying the narrative structure of the *Voyages*: specifically 1) between the reader's encounter with the *Voyages* and Lade's encounter with the various texts that he inserts into his journal (pseudoworks); 2) between the reader's encounter with a foreign culture through reading Lade's journal and Lade's own encounters with the foreign cultures he visits (which are also mediated by translation); and 3) between Lade's role as a presenter of foreign documents and the same role played by the editor-translator of the *Voyages*. Dispersive intertextual impulses manifest themselves within each parallel pair of elements in this triangular system and in the relationships between the pairs, thus demonstrating the ultimate failure of the apparent linearity of narration to stabilize meaning. The diegetical authors of the pseudoworks that appear in the *Voyages* give up control over their work when they allow Lade to copy it, as Lade's use of the text for his own purposes proves. In a real-world parallel to the world of the diegesis, the real authors of the authentic texts from which Prévost took the material for these pseudoworks gave up control over their work when it was published, as shown by Prévost's appropriation of their material. Similarly, Lade gives up control of his text when it is published, as shown by the fact that it was translated (although he does prepare for that eventuality by leaving out certain elements, he leaves in other material

that seems fairly similar to what he leaves out). Publication is also responsible for the taking control over the text away from the fictional editor-translator of the French edition (who may or may not be identified with Prévost), as readers make their own meaning of the text when they interpret it. And although Prévost loses control of the *Voyages* at the moment of publication, the assumption of control by readers is not absolute, as demonstrated by the fact that they are manipulated by Prévost's disguising the true source of the pseudoworks that appear in the *Voyages* and the fictional nature of his narrator. Furthermore, the parallel between an "genuine" instance of lost control (Prévost's appropriation of the work of writers who really did exist) and a "false" one (Lade's appropriation of the work of fictional writers) suggests that that control never belonged to the "real" authors any more than it did to the "false" ones.

Recently, Colas Duflo has usefully demonstrated that the question of whether or not a text is fictional is not the only question to ask when dealing with a text such as the *Voyages*; it is also important to ask whether its primary aim is to entertain or to inform, to refer to a fictional world or to the real one (2009). Duflo argues that the primary purpose of the plot in the *Voyages* is to serve the work's informative objectives, not to provide the reader esthetic enjoyment (56-57). While modern readers might at first agree with Duflo, I would argue that the presence of narrative in the text suggests that Prévost's goals went beyond simply informing his readers. However informative the work was, and despite the fact that leading scientists of the time cited the *Voyages* as an authoritative source, the combination of narration and information indicates that the primary purpose of the work as a whole was to entertain its readers while informing them.² Duflo argues that the *Voyages* is a fundamentally contradictory work: if one considers only the predominance of description over narration, one will perceive it as a work of non-fiction, which is how many contemporary readers saw it; if, however, one considers the fact that its narrator never existed, one will perceive it as a work of fiction, which is why it is now most often categorized as a novel (58-59). However, the characteristics that make the *Voyages* "unreadable" for modern audiences, according to Duflo (58-59), did not have the same effect on eighteenth-century readers, but not because the work was perceived solely as an informative work, as Duflo further argues (62-64). Rather, the work has embodied both fictional and instructive aspects since its

publication, as the attitude of the Trévoux journalists towards the work's relationship to the real world shows:

De là il étoit allé relâcher à l'Isle de Fer, une des Canaries, où se rencontra un Navire Anglois, qui avoit été à Carthagène, & dans lequel Robert Lade trouva une Description de cette fameuse Ville, avec un état de son Commerce, dont il enrichi [sic] son Journal, aussi bien que de quantité d'Episodes de toutes les espèces, qu'il y insère, tantôt sur des oui dire, & tantôt sur de petites aventures, dont il a été témoin. Tout cela est bon à amuser un Lecteur oisif, qui ne cherche point autre chose dans les Relations des Voyageurs, & qui n'est pas toujours en état d'y distinguer le vrai d'avec le fabuleux, ni le certain d'avec l'incertain. Le mal est, qu'en lisant sans être en garde contre ce qu'on lit, ou regardant ces sortes d'Ouvrages comme d'agréables Romans, ou l'on ne croit rien du tout, & l'on ne profite point de ce qu'il y a de bon ; ou que ceux, qui donnent dans une extrémité contraire, se remplissent l'esprit de notions fausses, & de préjugés mal fondés, dont il [sic] ne reviennent point. (Lallemant, Berthier and Aubert 1745: 339-40)

The reviewers warn against what they see as a common problem for readers of their day: the tendency to accept the entirety of a travel journal at face value, or to consider all of it to be equally false. In the first case, the reader who fails to look at the text critically runs the risk of believing to be true things that are made up. In the second, the reader who dismisses the entire text as a work of fiction runs the risk of missing out on potential benefit from those of the work's observations that are accurate. In light of the Trévoux reviewer's views on this point I would like to add a nuance to Duflo's ideas by suggesting that reframing the question of how to categorize the Voyages in referential terms rather than in terms of an opposition between fiction and nonfiction does not fully account for eighteenth-century attitudes toward prose narrative. The similarity between a fictional travel account and a genuine one is potentially unimportant to an eighteenth-century reader who may only be seeking an interesting story, or one who finds fascination in the relation of outlandish details about faraway places, without necessarily needing to know that they are real, or, indeed, with the knowledge that they could be false always present somewhere in the back of the mind. Similarly, even readers who truly wanted to learn about distant cultures or landscapes could not afford to only take their knowledge from entirely "objective" sources, as modern readers expect to do. Distrust of novels was widespread in the eighteenth century, and even travel journals were seen as needing to be approached with caution,

by readers who valued them as a source of reliable information about the world, while other readers might have given up on distinguishing between the true and the false within travel journals, instead deciding to enjoy the fantastic anecdotes, but even such a position acknowledged that “fact” and “fiction” could coexist within a single work.

The presence of pseudoworks within the text of Lade's narrative does emphasize the text's nonfictional character, as Duflo argues, especially the fact that the first one appears quite early in the text (61-63). However, coming across these texts in the same way Lade did also has the effect of putting the reader in Lade's shoes. And while this technique does short-circuit the normal novelistic process of identification with the protagonist, the effacement of the protagonist that occurs when narrative authority passes from Lade to the pseudowork writers allows the reader to identify with the situation in which Lade found himself when he was confronted with the text he presents to his audience, rather than with Lade himself, thus achieving the identifying effect of fiction by different means. In the *Voyages*, Prévost manipulates the pseudoworks in ways that facilitate this identification. Although the inserted documents do not always, or even often, make their appearance elegantly, they provide evidence of Prévost's efforts to maximize the reader's identification with Lade's situation.

If the Trévoux reviewer is to be believed, in the eighteenth century a work such as the *Voyages* could be valued for gathering even unrelated accounts of travel to places unknown to the reader. By contrast, today the interest of the pseudoworks Lade includes lies not in the sources they allow Prévost to incorporate in a fictional work, but in the structure of value they create. Not all of these accounts are of equal value to all readers, but they are all candidates for the attribution of value. Their lack of relatedness to each other and to Lade's own narrative underscores, for the modern reader, the difference between modern and eighteenth-century expectations of narrative coherence. The pseudoworks allow us to see the difference between the readers' identification with characters, including the narrator, which arguably characterizes a modern novelistic esthetic, and identification with the narrated situation, which I argue characterizes eighteenth-century novelistic esthetic.

Though modern and postmodern novels may offer clearer examples of polyphony and dialogism than eighteenth-century novels, these two elements of intertextuality are nonetheless at work in the *Voyages*, most noticeably through the presence of

pseudoworks. The interface between the main body of the work and the pseudoworks that appear within it is one way in which the ever-extending web of intertextuality that is language manifests itself in Prévost's novels. The *Voyages* shows its polyphonic character in two ways: 1) covertly: the fictional narrator, Robert Lade, is made to appropriate the words of actual people when Prévost puts text from authentic travel journals into his mouth (this kind of covert polyphony is also at work when Prévost reattributes authorship of authentic text of external origin to his fictional characters); 2) overtly: the presence of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* constitutes an irruption of independent textual entities of external origin, preserving their own voice.

Like all of Prévost's works, like all eighteenth-century novels, and perhaps like all texts published in book form during the period, the *Voyages* has an intertextual relationship with itself in a way that distinguishes it from even the most "polyphonic" of modern or postmodern novels. Although the situation may be changing with the increasing influence of the internet on the publication industry, the current way in which novels are produced and distributed encourages the reading public to think of novels as self-contained textual entities that can be expressed in a finite, delineated, relatively fixed physical form, which becomes available at a particular moment in time.³ The fact that novels were often published in installments in the eighteenth century meant that audiences could never be truly certain whether a given textual entity that became available at a specific moment in time constituted the "whole" of the work, regardless of whether its textual conclusion coincided with a narrative resolution or not. Texts that related apparently concluded narratives could be continued—by the original author, or by a substitute, given the lack of robust copyright—if their popularity warranted it, while texts that seemed narratively unfinished at the end of any given installment might never have another installment, which would leave them "unfinished." Consequently, the various installments of a novel from this period maintain intertextual relationships with one another, and with implied or actual continuations.⁴ And while new installments of successful novels would usually appear once every year or so, occasionally there could be one or more, much longer gaps in publication, which would effectively create an intertextual relationship between each of the "periods" of the novel's publication. For this reason, even single-installment novels of the period can be said to maintain internal intertextual relationships with their hypothetical continuations

that never came into existence. The presence of pseudoworks in eighteenth century novels, then, is the type of internal intertextual relationship that most resembles something that can be seen at work in more recent novels, recalling similar techniques in postmodern novels.

Although we now know it to be “fake,” the *Voyages* was long taken by many readers to be an authentic travel journal, and this apparent change in the work's authenticity complicates the intertextual relationships it maintains with itself internally and those it maintains externally with other works, especially those works that are quoted within it. One question that arises is to ascertain the difference, if any, between “artificial” and “authentic” intertextuality; the latter being defined as the sum of intertextual relationships between two texts of known authenticity status, and the former being defined as the sum of intertextual relationships in which the authenticity status of at least one of the texts is uncertain or disguised. A fictional travel novel maintains intertextual relationships both with other examples of the genre as well as with other fictional texts, but it also necessarily exists in relationship to authentic travel journals. Bringing the *Voyages* back into the discussion, we might ask whether a fake travel journal, as distinguished from a novel in the form of a travel journal, has these same intertextual relationships. In other words, does the existence of a real person who can be identified with the “author” of a travel journal change the way it relates intertextually to other discourses? The difference is in the level of prestige accorded to different kinds of intertexts, or their degree of licitness or illicitness. In the eighteenth century, it was expected that any prose text, no matter how authentic it appeared to be, could be harboring—intentionally or not—some degree of intertextual relationship with fictional or inauthentic texts. Today, however, the discovery of any degree of intertextual relationship between authentic and inauthentic texts that fails to respect the separation between the two domains today brings into question a text's status.

Another question occasioned by the complicated authenticity status of the *Voyages* is to define the relationship between the eighteenth century's different attitude toward the fiction–nonfiction dichotomy and the parallel between the reader's cultural lensing of the *Voyages* and Lade's cultural lensing of the cultures he visits and the pseudoworks he presents. The relationship consists of two parallels. First, the reader's encounter with Lade's journal is analogous to Lade's encounters with the various texts

he inserts into his journal as pseudoworks. Second, the reader's interface with a foreign culture through the medium of translation, represented in the preface, is parallel to Lade's interface with foreign cultures through travel, as recorded throughout the text of his journal, which is always ultimately mediated by someone who "translates" even in the case of English-speaking colonies.

The way that intertextual relationships affect the ability of authentic and fictional travel journals to create meaning for readers depends on how those readers relate to the concepts of "authenticity" and "fictionality", which were less distinct for eighteenth-century readers than they are for contemporary ones. Although scholars generally agree that in most cases few eighteenth-century readers were fooled by the presentation of the fictional texts we now call novels as authentic documents, the reading public's confidence in the accuracy of authentic works was lower than what contemporary readers expect from non-fictional works. Eighteenth-century readers recognized that such works could contain inaccuracies for a variety of reasons—they could result from unintentional errors on the part of the author, or they could be the intentional products of the author's desire to embellish a text.

Today, as in the eighteenth century, sometimes these intertextual relationships manifest themselves overtly, as in the case of quotation, which can be acknowledged or unacknowledged. Acknowledged quotations offer a relatively clear case. As long as the author acknowledges the quotation, an authentic travel journal can contain material taken from either fictional or authentic travel journals without forfeiting their status as authentic documents, as in epigraphs, etc. Fictional travel journals can do the same for the sake of imitation. The case of unacknowledged quotations is more complicated: both the nature of the work containing the quotation and the nature of the text from which the quoted material comes have an effect on the authenticity of the quoting text. If an authentic travel journal contains unacknowledged quotations it retains at least partial authentic status, for the parts that describe travel actually undertaken by the author. An authentic travel journal that contains unacknowledged quotations from another authentic travel journal remains entirely authentic, despite being, at least in part, the product of plagiarism. If the "borrowed" material comes from a fictional source, though, only the parts describing travel actually undertaken by the author retain their authentic status, and the work as a whole.

For a modern reader, only acknowledged quotations presented in accordance with the authenticity status of their source entirely preserve the authenticity status of the work in which the quoted material appears. Buffon's reference to Robert Lade as an authoritative source would be an indelible stain on his work if he were writing today, even though the information Buffon takes from the *Voyages* ultimately comes from an "authentic" source. This is because under the modern paradigm, an "authentic" text that presents a "fictional" text as "authentic" loses its right to complete authenticity, even if the reference is made in good faith, because the author mistakenly believes the fictional source to be authentic, and even if the information taken from the inauthentic text is accurate—as is the case with the information Buffon takes from the *Voyages*, since Prévost's information comes from authentic sources—the stain would nevertheless remain because current conventions do not ascribe the same level of authority to "fictional" texts as to "non-fictional" ones.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to know what an average eighteenth-century reader would have thought of Buffon's reliance on the word of a fictional character. Perhaps discovering that Buffon had been taken in by Prévost's ruse would not have bothered most readers much, given that, according to the attitude expressed in the Trévoux review of the *Voyages*, one should always be on the lookout for suspicious information when reading travel journals, so that one would be able to separate the portion of the text that was most likely reliable. By extension, it would seem logical that many or most readers would expect Buffon, and any other naturalist or historian, to possess the ability to distinguish the true from the fabulous. Therefore, the reader's assessment of Buffon's text would be more affected by the reliability of the information Buffon took from Lade, than by the existence or non-existence of Lade himself as a real person. And given that the information Buffon took from Lade ultimately came from authentic sources, it seems likely that readers would have decided to trust it anyway, or, they would have been at least just as likely to do so as if they had encountered the information in its original context.

To understand the role of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* we must return to the title page, which informs the prospective reader that the text within is an "ouvrage traduit de l'anglais". Presenting this text as a translation gives it a dual nature. As a travel journal, it constitutes the record of one traveler's encounters with foreign cultures. More

specifically, however, as the translation of an English travel journal into French, the text itself constitutes a mechanism for instigating a cultural confrontation very similar to the ones it records. Although the work does not directly describe English culture, it does provide a window into the culture of its narrator, who is English. In other words, the work itself is a *mise en abyme* of its own reception by its intended audience. However, this is not merely a question of analogy between an Englishman's discovery of cultures x, y, and z, and French readers discovering English culture. Rather, the crucial parallel is between the narrator's culture as a lens for examining the cultures he encounters and the reader's culture as a lens for the narrator's report on his examination, because there we see a confrontation between different "semantic fields" or "textual systems" rather than between individual instances of discovery. The presence of pseudoworks within the *Voyages* recreates this *mise en abyme* at an additional level of removal from the readers by creating a parallel between Lade's viewpoint and that of the authors of the pseudoworks he includes in his journal. By reproducing the contrast between a pervasive field of vision and a discrete object to be viewed within that field, pseudoworks recreate this kind of relationship at an additional level of removal from the readers' worldview. This is exactly the effect that pseudoworks produce by virtue of being present within a larger work. To better demonstrate this effect, I will now analyze the first pseudowork that appears in the *Voyages*, which is important because it initiates the reader into a process that continues throughout the work.

The first pseudowork to appear in the *Voyages* appears after only 41 pages of the original edition—by comparison, the preface is only 16 pages long ([i]-xvi), and the pseudowork itself takes up 30 pages (41-72). At this point, Lade's personal narrative has undergone only two major developments: first, his departure from England on a ship captained by a man named Rindekly; and second, the efforts he and Rindekly make to acquire gold on the western coast of Africa. As the Trévoux reviewer mentions, the text of this pseudowork falls into Lade's hands by chance after a storm damages the ship, necessitating a stop for repairs at El Hierro, one of the Canary Islands. At El Hierro, Lade meets a certain Captain Flint, who has also come to the island to repair his ship after the storm. Flint has just come from Cartagena, and has written an account of the observations he made there. He shares the account with Lade, who makes a copy of it for himself, presenting it in his journal as an independent dispositive unit entitled *Mémoire*

sur la situation et le commerce de Cartagene [sic]. This is the second time in the *Voyages* that a textual boundary has served to effect a confrontation between cultures, the first being the title page. This time, though, the text representing the foreign culture makes its appearance within a context known explicitly to Prévost's readers, namely Lade's personal narrative, rather than within a context that Prévost's readers know intimately, but only implicitly, namely daily life in eighteenth-century France.

Such a sophisticated and gradual process of weaving together narrative and description prepares demonstrates the parallel between Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire* and the readers' approach to texts about unfamiliar cultures and places. In fact, the transitional process mimics the path of Prévost's readers to the *Voyages*. This parallel structure underscore the analogy between the readers' and Lade's respective situations: just as the appearance of the *Mémoire* at this particular point in the text is not necessary in narrative terms, but the result of a coherent and logical chain of events, so Prévost's readers were never fated to read the *Voyage*, but each one decided to do so as the result of a series of logically-determined actions. Because the pseudoworks are only partially integrated into the structure of the novel, they cannot be simply dismissed by a reader who only wants to focus on the narrator's story; rather, this partial integration necessitates readerly engagement with the narrator's situation, rather than with the personal narrative of the journal-writer as a protagonist. Instead of seeing the partial integration of the pseudowork as a writer's mistake, it is more productive to read the very incompleteness of the integration as a compositional technique that calls attention to the parallel between the reader's encounter with the *Voyages* and Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire*, both texts being artifacts that have no immediate specific use to the individuals who come across them, but which excites their curiosity nonetheless. This displacement of focus from the narrator to the narrator's situation occurs as a result of a three-stage process by which Prévost gradually modifies his text, first to make space for technical details within a work that begins as a personal narrative, then to allow descriptive details unrelated to advancing the plot to coexist with details that do, and lastly to activate the mechanism created by the modifications in the first two phases, and thus complete the preparation for presenting the first pseudowork.

The first stage of the transition leading from Lade's narrative frame to the first pseudowork displaces the primary focus of the text from the personal to the technical. This displacement mirrors the reader's choice of a genre after having decided to read a book. Just as Lade has reasons for choosing maritime trade, an eighteenth-century reader would have had reasons for choosing a travel journal rather than, say, a novel.⁵ Both Lade and the reader find themselves in need of undertaking a productive activity, and both must decide what kind of activity to undertake. The fact that both choices ultimately lead to discovering foreign cultures shows that there is an element of the decision-making process that both decisions share. The technical details begin to multiply as Lade's plans materialize,⁶ and the reader's attention moves from a personal to a more abstract focus, from Lade himself to Lade's situation. The additional navigational details that start to appear when Lade finally sets sail further this effect. Lade's narration quickly distinguishes itself from that of Prévost's other narrators by incorporating numerous navigational details including meteorological phenomena, the use of charts to avoid navigational hazards such as sand banks, and the use of soundings to navigate close to shore, and Lade's account begins to incorporate dates in log-book fashion, all of which details Lade includes regardless of whether they have an effect on the progress of his narration (10-11).⁷ These narrative strategies increase the text's ability to incorporate primarily informational material alongside material of a more predominantly narrative character, a combination that prepares readers for the appearance of the first pseudowork, and for those that follow throughout the rest of the *Voyages*.

The second stage of the transition occurs when the expedition arrives at its first destination, mirroring a reader's choice of a specific work within a genre. Once Lade and his fellow voyagers begin to interact with the inhabitants of the area near their anchorage, Lade's narration begins to incorporate descriptions of the inhabitants' habits and customs into his narration of their interactions with him and the other members of the expedition. As with the additional navigational details of the previous stage, some of these have nothing to do with advancing the plot, as in the case of a group of Africans who row out to meet the ship as it approaches the shore: "[I]ls monterent [sic] hardiment sur notre Bord, leurs épaules étoient couvertes d'une peau d'animal sauvage; ils en portoient une autre autour des reins, qui leur couvroit les parties naturelles" (12).

Other descriptive details have a direct impact on subsequent events, such as the fact that some of the Africans wear golden earrings, from which fact Lade deduces, correctly, that Rindekly has come to this part of the coast hoping to acquire gold (14-15). These examples show how the descriptive and informative aspect of the work coexists with the narrative aspect. As the story of the expedition's efforts to acquire gold from the Africans progresses, Lade continues to include descriptions of the Africans and their territory that far exceed the needs of the plot (12-34). Here, Prévost manipulates the text to divert the reader's natural burgeoning identification with the protagonist of a prose narrative to an identification with the protagonist's situation: it is not so much Lade's personality that allow readers to imagine themselves in his shoes, but a description of the "shoes" themselves.

The third stage of transition consists of anchoring the descriptive aspect of the text more firmly in the narrative aspect, as the events of Lade's personal narrative become a frame for what is clearly, in the eyes of the modern reader, a geographical description lifted from an external source. This process mirrors what happens when readers reflect on what they have read, which involves integrating it into the narrative of their own lives. Even though the transition from major work to pseudowork up to this point has been gradual, it is possible to locate the precise moment when the final transition occurs midway through the sentence in which Lade describes how his ship entered the port alongside Flint's vessel: "Nous entrâmes ensemble dans la Rade, qui est naturellement sûre & commode, & qui pourroit le devenir encore plus avec quelque secours de l'art" (38-39). This sentence bridges the distinction between narration and information in a progression of three clauses. The first clause, which deals only with what Lade and the other members of his expedition did ("Nous entrâmes ensemble dans la Rade"), is primarily narrative, while the third clause, which contains only description of a significant geographical feature ("& qui pourroit le devenir encore plus avec quelque secours de l'art"), is primarily informative. The middle clause, which contains details that would be equally at home in the relation of a voyage and in a geographical text ("qui est naturellement sûre & commode"), takes advantage of the word "rade," which comes from the technical jargon of geography and navigation, to meld narrative and informative registers without any grammatical or thematic disjunction between the two. A full-page description of the island follows in the original edition. The didactic tone of

this passage completes the pervasion of descriptive text into the narrative, consummating the preparation for the pseudowork about to appear.

The three-stage process outlined above establishes a context within which an external textual entity can intrude into a narration, just as the *Voyages* comes to the reader's attention within a context. Having gradually transformed the *Voyages* in such a way that it can accommodate informational and narrative content with equal ease, Prévost then braids in another strand of the plot to explain the pseudowork's origin and to underscore the similarities between Lade's encounter with the *Mémoire* and his readers' encounter with the *Voyages*:

Pendant qu'on travailloit à réparer les deux Vaisseaux, M. Flint nous apprit les circonstances de son Voyage, & celles de la tempête qui l'avoit ennuyée. Il venoit des parties méridionales de l'Amérique, où il étoit allé de Carthagène pour recueillir des sommes considérables qui lui étoient dûes dans divers Ports. Comme il avoit fait un long séjour à Carthagène, il nous communiqua des Observations si curieuses sur la situation de cette fameuse Ville & sur l'état de son commerce, que l'intérêt commun à tous les Anglois de connoître un des principaux centres de leurs affaires, me fit souhaiter de prendre une copie de ses Mémoires. Je la placerai ici, telle qu'il eut la bonté de me l'accorder (40).

Like Lade, Flint gives a background account of himself, then presents the textual product of his voyage (40). Lade's role as narrator here also resembles that of the anonymous editor-translator of the *Voyages* in the preface, although Lade makes no mention of any modifications to Lade's text: on the contrary he claims that the text remains the same as it was when it was given to him, whereas the editor claims to have cut out the less trustworthy-seeming passages of Lade's text (xiii-xv). Here we see a nexus of intertextual relationships: Lade's fictionality and Prévost's attribution of pseudoworks to fictional characters destabilizes the meaning of the text today and in the eighteenth-century, making it impossible for the text to fully conform to readerly expectations regarding either novels or travel journals. However, this destabilization occurs through different mechanisms for the reading publics of each period. For eighteenth-century readers unaware of the text's true authenticity status, the pseudoworks transform what would otherwise have been the record of one traveler's experiences into a heteroclite assemblage of textual entities representing historical,

geographical, and cultural information, some of which stem directly from the traveler's narration, while others come from other narrators, some of which are themselves narrative in character, while others are strictly informative. For modern readers who know that the text of the pseudoworks comes from authentic sources, and that the sources to which Lade attributes them are fictional, the presence of pseudoworks brings into question the relationship of the *Voyages* to the very concept of authenticity.

Even book design underscores this complex relation between main work and pseudowork. In the original edition, this introduction to the *Mémoire* is followed by an ornamental design in the blank area at the bottom of the page signaling an important dispositive transition (40, see fig. 1). The *Mémoire* itself begins on a new page, separated from the preceding text by a horizontal line followed by a title page with the word "MEMOIRE" in large capital letters, and a subtitle, "Sur la Situation & le Commerce de Carthagene [sic]" in a slightly smaller typeface that is still somewhat larger than that of the main body text (41, see fig. 2). These dispositive marks do not rise to the level of those that set off the beginning of Lade's journal, which include a wider, more ornate bar depicting foliage and other decorative elements in place of a simple line, and whose title is written entirely in capital letters, in four different sizes, the largest being significantly larger than that used for the word "MEMOIRE" (see fig. 3). Even the editor's preface features an ornamental bar with an ornate border and various decorative elements such as diamonds and miniature foliage, and whose title, "P R É F A C E" is set in quite a large typeface with extra spacing between the letters (see fig. 4). However, although the textual features that set the *Mémoire* apart from the rest of Lade's narration are not as elaborate as those employed on the work's main title page or at the beginning of the editor-translator's preface, the *Mémoire* remains a distinct entity—although only in part, as examination of the pseudowork's conclusion will show.

A gradual transition back from the pseudo-work to Lade's journal begins when the text of the *Mémoire* proper gives way to an annexed *Relation* recounting the capture of Cartagena by Francis Drake. There is no obvious visual transition marking the end of the *Mémoire* and the *Relation* that comes after it (see fig. 5), only a brief introduction by Lade:

A ce Mémoire, le Capitaine ajoûta une Relation fort curieuse de la prise de Carthagéne en 1585 par le Chevalier Drake. Il la tenoit de son pere, qui servoit alors dans la Flotte Angloise, & qui avoit écrit les événemens dont il avoit été témoin. (58)

This addition underscores the effect of the pseudowork on the larger work. Placing what is in effect a pseudowork within a pseudowork normalizes the structural technique that is to characterize the entire work. Just as Lade sees fit to insert whatever potentially useful material comes his way into his journal, the authors of the texts he inserts do the same to their own texts.

This set of nested quotations also provides a measure of continuity in a text composed of heterogenous elements. The lack of a visually obvious conclusion to this Relation makes it more likely that readers will read through the entire text without skipping over inserted sections, although it is not an absolute guarantee against discontinuous reading (see fig. 6). Those who do read through the entire text discover connections between the apparently unrelated or barely-related inserted texts. For example, the “commerce des chaloupes,” that Captain Flint mentions in his Mémoire, and which comes up again when Lade and Rindekly engage in it themselves, is mentioned in the Relation as well (PAGES). After the last paragraph containing an incontrovertible sign that it belongs to the Relation—it mentions Sir Francis Drake—there is another paragraph before the first explicit indication that the narration has passed back into Lade’s own voice. This intermediary paragraph brings the narration closer to the time of Lade’s voyage, mentioning that “Carthagene [sic] s’est vengée depuis ce tems-là des Anglois, non seulement par la ruine du Commerce des Chaloupes, mais en prenant sur eux l’Isle de la Providence, que les Espagnols ont nommé Santa Catalina”, and discusses the geographical features of that island (72). While nothing in this paragraph explicitly identifies it as being Lade’s personal contribution to his journal, the subject matter suggests that it is not part of the Relation provided by Flint’s father, to whom Lade only attributes responsibility only for narration of the events of Drake’s taking of Cartagena. It is possible that the paragraph represents a return to Flint’s Mémoire, in which case it would be a sign of even greater structural similarity between it and Lade’s journal.

Just as no obvious dispositive distinction separates the Mémoire proper from the Relation that follows it, there is no obvious break between the Relation and the

continuation of Lade's own narrative. Lade simply begins a new paragraph in which he discusses the role of the *Mémoire* in the *Voyages*:

Je ne prévoyois point en tirant la copie de ce *Mémoire*, qu'il dût jamais contribuer ou nuire à ma sûreté. L'envie de m'instruire étoit mon unique motif, & ce fut elle encore qui me fit commencer dès le même jour à faire exactement le *Journal* de mon *Voyage*. Je commis seulement une imprudence en gardant à part le *Mémoire* de Carthagene [sic], & l'on me fit connoître dans la suite qu'il m'auroit été moins dangereux, si j'eusse pris soin de le mêler comme indifféremment dans mon *Journal*. (73)

This commentary brings the reader's attention to the relationship between this pseudowork, which is a "whole" in its own right, and the "whole" work of which it is a part. The reader learns that Lade originally kept the *Mémoire* separate from his own journal, which suggests that the two texts are independent entities. Furthermore, the *Mémoire* constitutes a "whole" work to the extent that it represents a self-sufficient entity handed over to Lade as-is by Flint.

Such complex relations help constitute a distinctive narrative aesthetic of wholeness, but not the kind of wholeness that comes from a perfect design in which every element serves a specific purpose in harmony with every other element, rather a wholeness born from the organic process that Flint engaged in to produce it. The way that Lade only partially integrates the text of the *Mémoire* within the fabric of the *Voyages* is both an example and a thematization of this kind of wholeness, and Lade's commentary brings the reader's attention to that thematization. Fully integrating the text of the *Mémoires* into the main body of the *Voyages* would show the reader what it would have been like for Lade to mingle his copy of Flint's writings into his journal, but doing so would have obscured what actually happened, since Lade kept his copy separate from the rest of his journal. Similarly, marking off both the beginning and the end of the *Mémoire* would create an overly stark contrast between it and the rest of the *Voyages*, which would prevent the reader from appreciating it as an integral part of the overall work. On a practical level, the *Mémoire*'s lack of a clear end-boundary makes it difficult for a reader inclined to skip over inserted pseudo-works to do so. The combination of a clear beginning and a hidden end provides the best of both worlds:

both the added interest and authenticity of an inserted pseudo-work and the continuity and organicity of a sustained narrative.

Because both travel literature and the travel that provides its inspiration depend on dividing the whole world into parts, travel literature of any period necessarily thematizes the distinction between part and whole by putting different parts of the world into relation with each other. As my analysis of the *Voyages* demonstrates, eighteenth-century travel literature exhibits its own peculiar ideas about the unity of a text. These ideas are particularly evident in the simultaneous integration and separateness of pseudoworks in the *Voyages*. The paradoxical status of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* suggests that the subordination of all parts to a harmonious whole was not a high priority in eighteenth-century prose narrative esthetics, and that the presence of fragments was, on the contrary, tolerated even if they lacked a high a degree of integration with the subject matter of the rest of the work. Eighteenth-century travel novels such as the *Voyages* thus reveal a particular understanding of how relationships between the spatial units that make up a journey should be represented in prose narrative form, as can further be seen in the full title of the *Voyages*, which is *Voyages du capitaine Robert Lade en différentes parties de l'Afrique, de l'Asie et de l'Amérique : contenant L'Histoire de sa fortune, & ses Observations sur les Colonies & le Commerce des Espagnols, des Anglois, des Hollandois, &c. Ouvrage traduit de l'Anglois*. The title's length might be its most salient feature for those unfamiliar with eighteenth-century literature, although it is not at all unusual for the period, but I would like to focus on the phrase "différentes parties," which might initially seem superfluous. It seems unlikely that a reasonable reader would expect an account of "voyages en Afrique, en Asie et en Amerique" to contain exhaustive descriptions of those continents in their entirety. What, then, is the reason for the title's specificity? Calling attention to the relation between parts and to the situation of the protagonist demonstrates the significance of the effects of modes of production and distribution on eighteenth-century narrative aesthetics. The title emblemizes the way the work itself is divided up into parts. My analysis has shown how the presence of pseudoworks in the *Voyages* also calls attention to the relationship between parts, and points to a narrative esthetic that rather than encouraging identification with the protagonist encourages identification with the protagonist's situation. Rather than focus on how this kind of narrative fails to match

our current ideas about how texts like this should work, it is worthwhile to focus on what this technique positively accomplishes. What it positively accomplishes is to place the reader into a situation analogous to that of the narrator, and while it pushes the reader away from identification with the narrator, which we think of as being associated with the novel, it encourages a more analytical and reflective approach to the work as a whole.

Figure 1



Figure 2

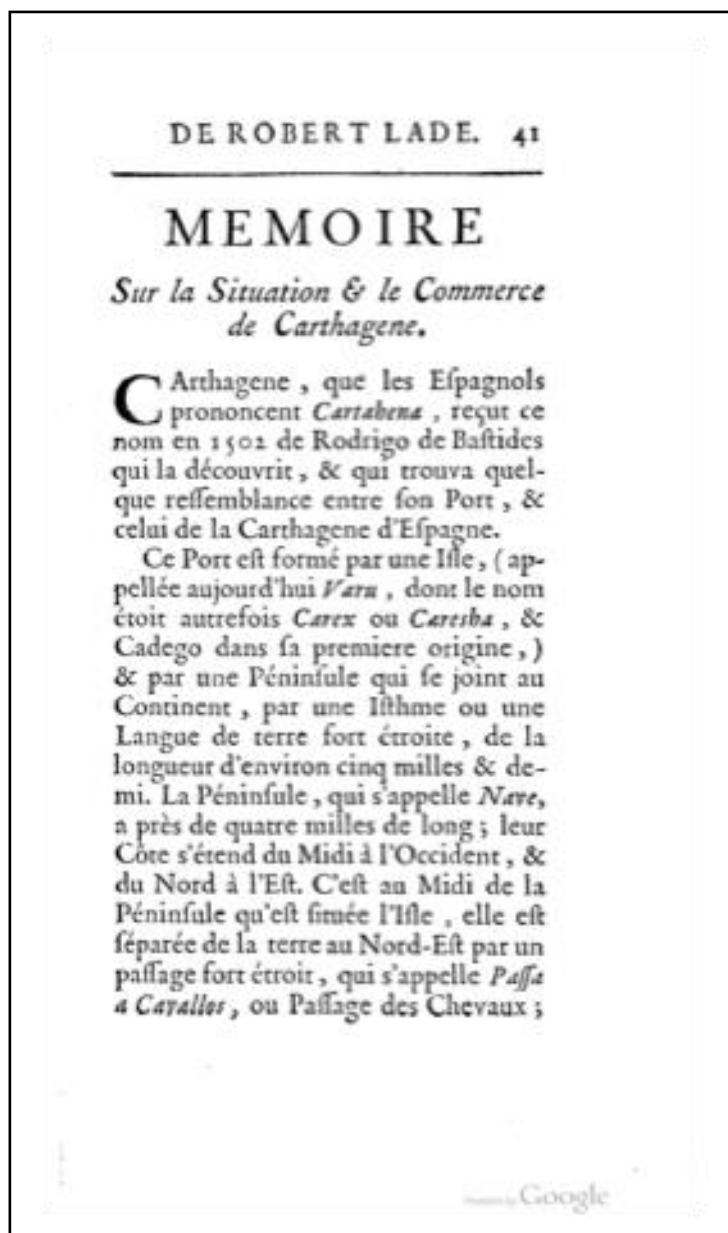


Figure 3

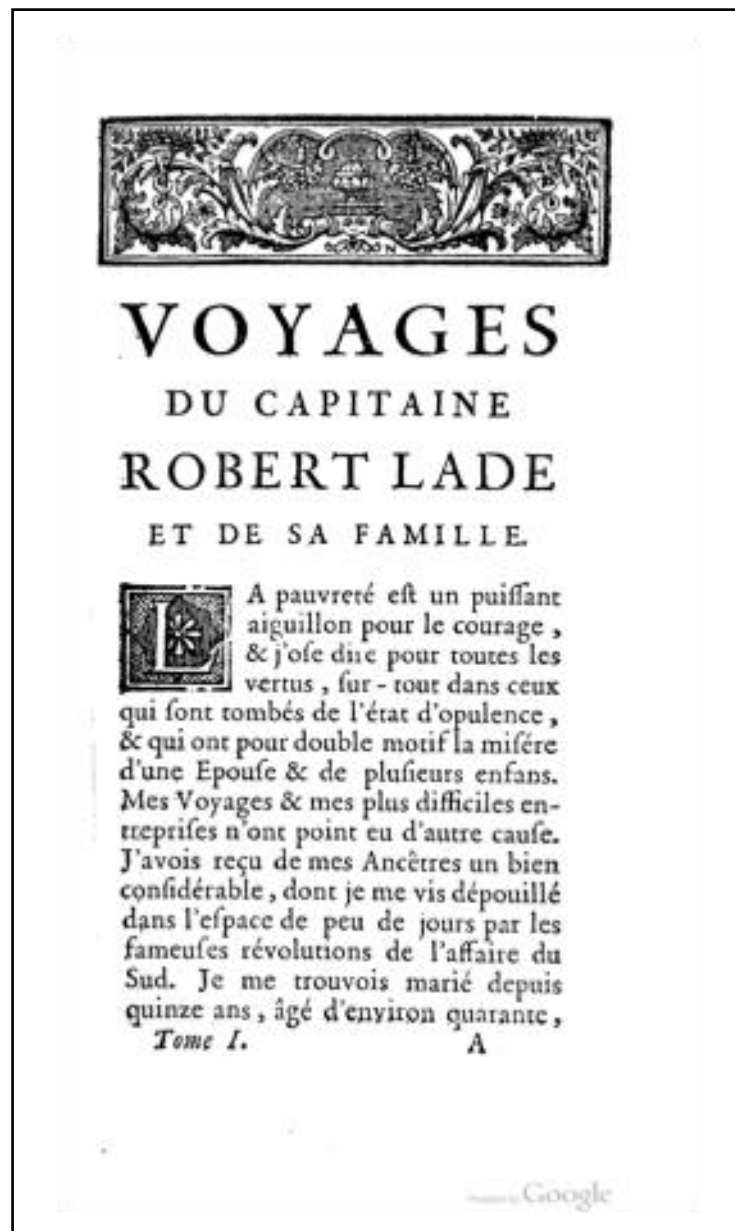


Figure 4

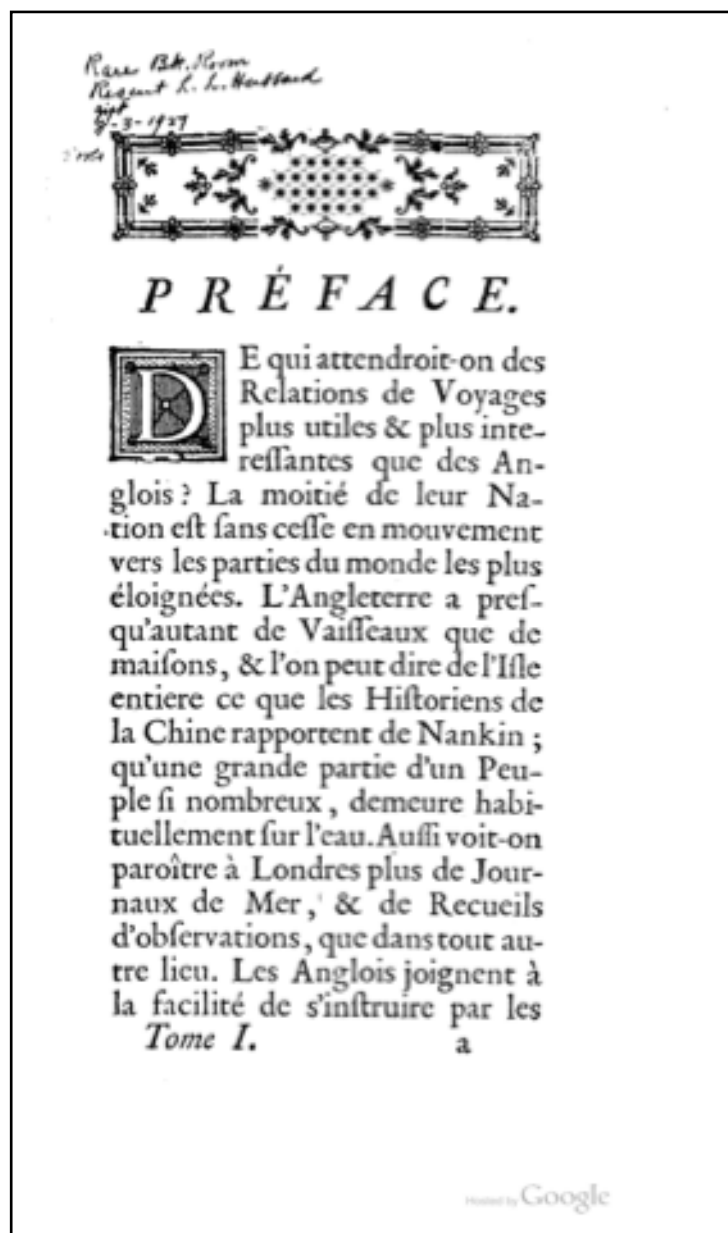
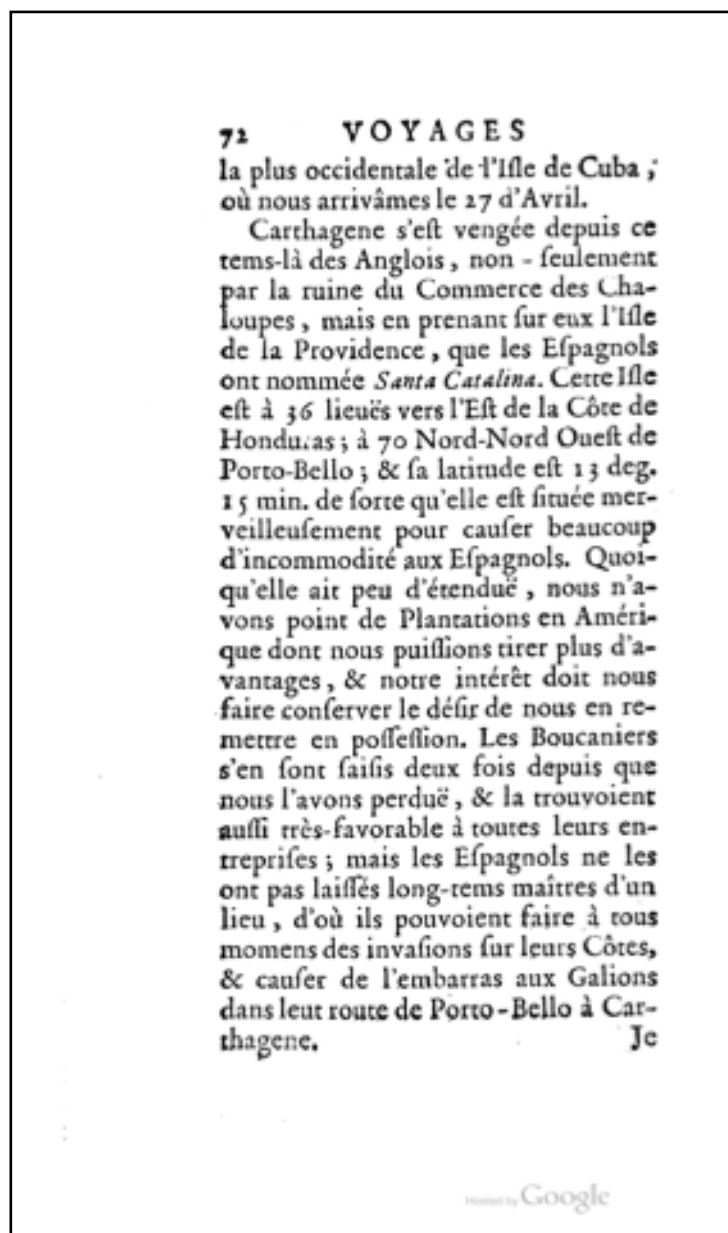


Figure 5



Figure 6



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NOTES

¹ The pseudoworks Prévost employs in throughout his body of work vary in length, with the shortest consisting of only a few paragraphs and the longest reaching proportions approaching those of a full-fledged independent novel. Indeed, Prévost's best-known "novel", *Manon Lescaut*, was originally published as part of the *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde*, the novel that established Prévost's reputation, and can be considered a pseudowork that eventually gained independence from the work of which it was originally an integral part.

² Even scientists may have been attracted by the combination of useful information and entertaining narration—Colas Duflo suggests that Buffon's multiple citations from the *Voyages* indicate that he enjoyed reading it (55).

³ Unitary publication is, I would argue, the prototypical case for the modern novel, from which individual instances may vary extensively, while still retaining the unitary novel as a point of reference. Notable exceptions include the *feuilletons* and *romans fleuve* of the nineteenth century and Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

⁴ This paper is part of a doctoral thesis project, and elsewhere I examine other ways in which Prévost's novels exhibit internal reflexive intertextual relationships through the interaction between two coexisting structural systems, one based on narrative units (phases of narrative development, often delineated by instances of intra-homodiegetic recapitulation of the preceding narrative) and one based on dispositive units (tomes, books, chapters, etc.). In particular, I demonstrate how the dynamic of fluctuating tension and cooperation between the dispositive system and the narrative system responds to the eighteenth-century mode of novelistic production. Here I use the term coined by Ugo Dionne in his work *La Voie aux chapitres* to refer to the chapters, parts, books, volumes, and other units that make up a novel's disposition.

⁵ Specifically, Lade determines that he has to engage in some kind of commercial activity to earn back his family fortune, but he needs the help of a merchant acquaintance to figure out how exactly to do so (2-3). This part of Lade's experience resembles the scenario of receiving a reading recommendation from a friend who works with literature—perhaps as a critic, instructor, or author. The parallel between Lade's need for expert advice and the reader's similar need deepens our understanding of this displacement by fulfilling a precondition for the curiosity that further drives the encounter with the foreign.

⁶ He takes a position as a supercargo with the promise of employment in the shipowner's office located at the final port of the journey (3-4), he has to figure out how to support his family while he's gone (4-5), etc

⁷ Lade's description of the first leg of his voyage begins in somewhat similar fashion to what one might expect in one of Prévost's more conventionally novelistic works: "Le vent fut si favorable à notre navigation, qu'ayant

doublé les Caps d’Espagne en six jours, nous découvrîmes vers le soir du neuvième [sic] jour les Côtes d’Afrique” (10). And while the increasing level of technical detail soon to enter into the text belies this initial resemblance to analogous phrases in Cleveland and elsewhere, even this very beginning sentence contains more geographical specificity than the rest of Prévost’s body of work typically exhibits.