

The **Transnational** in
**ENGLISH
LITERATURE**

Shakespeare to the Modern



PRAMOD K. NAYAR

ROUTLEDGE

THE TRANSNATIONAL IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Transnational in English Literature surveys English literary history through its transnational engagements and argues that every period of English literature can be examined through its global relations. English identity and nationhood is therefore defined through its negotiation with other regions and cultures.

In the first book to look at the entirety of English literature through a transnational lens, Pramod Nayar:

- Maps the discourses that constitute the global in every age, from the Early Modern to the twentieth century.
- Offers readings of representative texts in poetry, fiction, essay and drama, covering a variety of genres such as Early Modern tragedy, the adventure novel, the narrative poem, Gothic and utopian fiction.
- Examines major authors including Shakespeare, Defoe, Behn, Swift, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Austen, Mary Shelley, the Brontës, Doyle, Ballantyne, Orwell, Conrad, Kipling and Forster.
- Looks at themes such as travel and discovery, exoticism, mercantilism, commodities, the civilizational mission and the multiculturalization of England.

Useful for students and academics alike, this book offers a comprehensive survey of the English canon questioning and analyzing the transnational and global engagements of English literature.

Pramod K. Nayar teaches English at the University of Hyderabad, India.

This page intentionally left blank

THE TRANSNATIONAL IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Shakespeare to the Modern

Pramod K. Nayar

First published 2015
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2015 Pramod K. Nayar

The right of Pramod K. Nayar to be identified as author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Nayar, Pramod K.

The transnational in English literature : Shakespeare to the modern / Pramod K. Nayar.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. English literature—History and criticism. 2. Transnationalism in literature.
3. National characteristics, English, in literature. I. Title.

PR125.N39 2015

820.9—dc23

2015001816

ISBN: 978-0-415-84001-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-415-84002-6 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-74921-1 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo
by Taylor & Francis Books

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
1 Introduction: globality and Englishness	1
2 Worlds and voyages: English itinerancy and the spaces of Otherness	10
<i>England travels</i>	13
<i>The ethnography of the Other</i>	39
<i>Triumphalist geography</i>	62
3 Difference and desire: the exoticized Other	74
<i>The savage exotic</i>	78
<i>The Noble Savage</i>	87
<i>The erotic exotic</i>	91
4 Consume and commodify: the objectified Other	130
<i>The vocabulary of things</i>	132
<i>The rhetoric of objectification</i>	154
5 Disease and degeneration: the pathologized Other	175
<i>Foreign matter/s</i>	180
<i>Foreign bodies</i>	188
<i>Cultural invasion</i>	205

vi Contents

	<i>Transnational networks of vice</i>	218
	<i>The 'Parliament of Monsters' and the degeneration of London/England</i>	225
6	Civilize and collapse: improveable Others, disintegrating English	238
	<i>The global project of moral imperialism</i>	241
	<i>Amelioration and improvement</i>	246
	<i>Discrepant geographies</i>	272
	<i>Bibliography</i>	293
	<i>Index</i>	313

PREFACE

England's literary history is a legacy of its transnational linkages, as this book sets out to demonstrate. It argues that, right from the 1550s, the racial-cultural Other was not simply 'out there': it was very much constitutive of English domestic, social and cultural imaginary, life and discourse. Dan Vitkus, Lisa Jardine, Jonathan Gil Harris and others have demonstrated the transnational connections of Early Modern England. Works by Catherine Hall and Antoinette Burton have underscored the centrality of the Empire and its peripheries to the making of imperial Victorian England. In similar fashion, this book makes a case for seeing the peripheries of the known world central to England's cultural landscape from even *before* the age of Empire. English literature's discursive field embodies what I am terming a 'globality', the construction in fictional texts of the space of intercultural, interracial encounter of England and Englishness made possible through the journey, by men and women, into various diverse and distant places on earth and those places arriving in some form in England's homes, streets and intellectual spaces.

The examples are indicative and illustrative and not exhaustive. They are necessarily selective but wide-ranging enough to show how discourses of Otherness and Othering operate across centuries. The book makes use of select texts for this purpose, and is more interested in pointing out continuities in literary fictions of Otherness than in tracing each fiction's historical location and specificity. It does not propose a 'one age—one discourse' kind of scheme, opting instead for clusters or constellations of dominant discourses across the ages. As such, the book does *not* locate every age or period's specific historical contexts for forms, themes and tropes. It does not seek to contextualize every trope, theme and motif. Thus, the different traditions of the Gothic or variants in Early Modern/Elizabethan drama are ignored, along with their historical formations, in favour of *continuities* of themes and tropes. These continuities, the book demonstrates, are England's

concerns with and consumption of racial-cultural Others in various forms, as people, ideas, spaces and commodities.

PKN
Hyderabad
December 2014

Note

All references from Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by S. Greenblatt, J.E. Howard and K.E. Maus. New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2008.

References from Gutenberg and other online editions of texts are unpaginated. All online sources were last accessed in July 2014.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Polly Dodson at Routledge for the enthusiasm with which she greeted the early, admittedly sketchy, ideas for this book – a special thank you right away.

This book took a while to write, unusually. And a part of the pleasure of this sometimes interminable-looking project was a revisit to old haunts: it caused me to return to texts I had forgotten – *Captain Singleton*, *The Masque of Blackness*, *The Giaour*, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, among others. In the process I also discovered another pleasure derived from the reading I was doing: discussing supposedly forgotten texts with people like Narayana Chandran and Anna Kurian.

I would like to acknowledge the sustained help from Saradindu Bhattacharya for sourcing essays, and to V. Premlata for sending me materials she thought I would find useful for the project.

Nandana Dutta loaned me her copy of the Norton *Utopia*, and through the project encouraged ('I am *really* looking forward to this book') me with her special brand of friendship and the SMSs about some literary text, genre or theme.

To K. Narayana Chandran (KNC) for his spectacular memory of both canonical and obscure texts and incisive insights into them, from which I continue to learn, I owe a debt that these lines cannot even begin to capture. The passing textual references and obtuse connections that he sprinkles conversations with have made me aware that scholarship amplified with generosity is as rare as it is valuable.

To my parents, parents-in-law, Nandini and Pranav for their prayers, support and miraculous good cheer under the usual pressures of having me around, working away: the usual unquantifiable gratitude.

To my friends who make sure the conversations are *not* (always) about books, many thanks: Ibrahim, Ajeet, Molly, Saraswathy Rajagopalan, Premlata, Debjani Majumdar, Rita Kothari, Josy Joseph and Panikkar.

To the inimitable Neelu (whose store of jokes forwarded on WhatsApp would require a few gigabytes of space) with her solicitous enquiry daily and the incredible cheeriness (dating back to the MA days): thank you, much.

x Acknowledgements

To Soma Ghosh, for her smiling courage these last two years, and her friendship, much admiration and appreciation.

The chapter on material culture appeared first in abbreviated form in the *Indian Journal of English Studies*. Parts of this chapter were also delivered as a talk, 'The Transnational Turn in English Literature', at the Dept. of Liberal Arts, Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, October 2013.

Sections of Chapters 2, 3 and 4 were delivered as the Inaugural Professorial Lecture at the University of Hyderabad, 3 March 2014.

The section on Alice Perrin's empire fiction in Chapter 2 first appeared in *Bmo Studies in English* 38.1 (2012): 123–38.

Parts of the arguments on Dacre's *Zofloya* appeared in the essay, 'The Interracial Sublime: Gender and Race in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya*', *Géneros* 2.3 (2013): 233–54.

I should acknowledge my debt to the early builders of the English collections of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Library, The University of Hyderabad, Professor S. Nagarajan and Professor S. Vishwanathan, for the foresight with which they acquired the standard editions of the texts from the English canon, whether it was the Oxford Wordsworth, the Yale Ben Jonson or the Spedding edition of Francis Bacon. This kind of book would not have been possible without such a collection.

Anna Kurian, in the midst of her own writing, found the time (no surprises there, though, sterling First Reader and loyal friend) to read and comment on chapters. For her fund of Shakespeareana (Shakespeareanna?) – 'there is *this* theme in Shakespeare *too*' – and the Early Modern, I should add a separate 'thank you'. Like its predecessors, this book could not have happened without her.

At Routledge I would also like to acknowledge Ruth Moody.

1

INTRODUCTION

Globality and Englishness

In Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596), towards the end of Book I, Spenser predicts a battle between the Queen of England and a Saracen king:

Faire Goddess lay that furious fit aside,
Till I of warres and bloody Mars do sing,
And Briton fields with Sarazin bloud bedyde,
Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim king.

(1. 11.7. Spenser 1984: 144)

The fields of Britain, predicts Spenser, would be dyed with Saracen blood. Spenser's gory image actually serves the useful purpose, as far as this book is concerned, of demonstrating how Englishness, embodied in the very materiality of English soil, is imbued ('dyed', in Spenser's term) through and through with a foreign 'contaminant', addition and excess. Englishness seems to mark itself through, first, a conflict with a racial-cultural Other and, second, through its ability to absorb this Other. English identity, it would appear from Spenser's formulation, right from the Early Modern and Elizabethan age, characterized as the age of the first wave of globalization, was always already imbricated with the racial-cultural Other as a visible or invisible but always palpable presence. As such, the image of English fields soaked with the blood of the racial-cultural Other seems a gross but appropriately 'incorporative' or assimilative metaphor with which to start thinking of the inter-racial, multicultural and cosmopolitan transactions and exchanges that enabled the fashioning of English identity across ages. Later Byron would be full of admiration for a cosmopolitan Englishman/European in *Don Juan* (1819):

The man who has stood on the Acropolis,
And look'd down over Attica; or he

2 Introduction

Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is,
Or seen Timbuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh.

(Byron 1975: 789)

The present work is informed by the assumption that the exchange, movement, assimilation and appropriation of goods, ideas, people, money across vast distances, dating back to the Early Modern world and continuing through many pathways to date, has influenced the cultural identities of European nations, and more specifically for purposes of this book, England. A related assumption is that Englishness is not a prior condition, but something that is lived and experienced across multiple sites – symbolic, affective and material – and one such site of this *performance* of Englishness is its literary text.

Recent studies, inaugurated by Abu-Lughod (1989), among others, push the 'era' and 'origin' of globalization further back in time, and enable us to see how cultural and national identities were by no means self-contained, coherent and autochthonous. In fact cultural identities were forged through constant, often frictional, encounters with commodities, people and products originating well outside the geopolitical borders. England, like much of Europe, was being continually transformed through these encounters with spice, tea, chintz, chinaware, arithmetic, jugglers, rhinoceros, women, scriptural texts, literary works, opium, elephants, tobacco, among others, from all over the world – America and the 'New World', Africa and Asia – from the sixteenth century. If Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez (cited in McCants 2007: 436) date globalization to 1571 – when direct and permanent linkages were set up between the Americas and East Asia via Manila – others argue that forces of globalization also came out of the Middle East (McCants 2007: 437) in the Early Modern period. This book examines a particular site – English literary texts – where the impact of these cultural forces and influences might be made visible.

It was not Romanticism alone that was, in Saree Makdisi's phrase, 'worldly, but also global' (1998: xii), but practically all of England's literary movements and moments. The book makes a case for treating England's literary history, from the Renaissance and Early Modern period to the modern, as a *history of its transnational engagements*. While I am perhaps using the term 'transnational' anachronistically to work with periods when the nation-state as we now know it didn't exist, it serves the useful purpose of focusing on connections and interactions rather than boundedness and containment. The 'transnational' therefore is a way to think about England's varied connections through the 400 years starting with the early voyages in quest of trade routes and colonies to the twentieth century when its Empire began to break up. This book suggests that in every period of English literature we can locate major movements, authors and texts who/that define English identity and nationhood via a dialectic, a negotiation with Arab, Indian, Chinese and other Asian regions and cultures. Literature is a site where the engagement with difference marks a discourse of Englishness within a discourse of 'globality'.

I use ‘globality’ in opposition to the ‘tropicality’ that Nancy Stepan (2001) and David Arnold (2005b) discern in nineteenth-century English discourses about African and Asian regions. It also resonates with Mary Louise Pratt’s influential argument about a Eurocentric ‘planetary consciousness’ that she traces to eighteenth-century natural history (2003). The construction of globality is an ideological move that enables the textual colonization of the distant parts of the world to be produced under the sign of the literary. These texts effect an act of discursive globalization and colonization. The literary is the domain within which science, navigation, trade, conquest, profit, humanitarianism and development might be subsumed. ‘Globality’ is the discursive construction in fictional texts of *a space of intercultural, interracial encounter of England and Englishness made possible through the Englishman’s journey into various diverse and distant places on earth and those places arriving in some form in England’s homes, streets and intellectual spaces*. The Englishman’s idea of the globe, or the world, was a particular kind of space represented through a repertoire of images that is immediately identifiable in its difference from England, and is also a space of the Englishman’s *engagement* with this difference. This cultural space of difference offers a vision of intercultural encounters and the understanding of difference and Otherness in ways that are appealing and accessible.

The ‘world’ therefore is more than just a geographical concept. It signifies a space of irreducible Otherness of many kinds, but an Otherness with which English identity engages. ‘World’ here is not to be taken as the entire entity of the earth, but as a set of places far away from ‘home’.¹ Hence this book’s abiding concern is with spaces in English writings: spaces of Africa, Asia, the poles, Australia and even Europe. Such an idea of globality draws, obviously, from material practices of globalization. Globalization has been underway in the form of economic and cultural networks at least since the fifteenth century according to numerous commentators (Abu-Lughod 1989, Nussbaum 2003). The European Renaissance, for instance, was definitively a product of global exchanges and interactions (Jardine 1996). Every age of course had its specific modes of exchanges and interactions. But what has emerged in critical studies of globalization since the 1990s is the decisive interpretation of European cultures and imaginations as always having grappled with the global. This process of imagining the globe is what I am calling here globality, or the discursive construction of the globe. Literature is one of the cultural practices in which this construction has been achieved.

Globality, manifest as the theme of transnational Otherness, this book proposes, is itself a national project: of English identity-building. *The idea of the English nation is implicitly, but often explicitly, the discourse of the racial-cultural Other*. The loci of English identity, therefore, lie not in England but are constructed across *multiple* sites and spaces. The group of islands might offer a geographical specificity to this construction. However, as will be seen, it is this island’s engagements with diverse and dispersed sites over the globe that produces its identity as ‘England’ and as ‘Great Britain’. ‘England’ or ‘Great Britain’ is the conceptualization of the islands *in* the world, and Englishness is the Englishness *within* the world made of many races and cultures.

4 Introduction

Every age in England's literary history, from the Early Modern to the Modernists, demonstrates instantiations of these transnational concerns, interests and anxieties. The racial-cultural Other is not merely the backdrop to England's national identity: it is central to the process of England's identity-building. While writers from the 1550s seem, at first reading of the discursive field of English literature, to be concerned only with English culture and identity, this book argues that the Asian, African, Arab and Chinese were constituents of this field. Whether it is English domesticity (as we shall see in Chapter 4) or English travel (Chapter 2), the racial-cultural Other is a part of the English social imaginary. Asia, Arabia, China shape England's imaginary from the *inside*, by being a part of its homes, consumption, world of ideas, and lives (of soldiers, merchants, travellers). This is the globality of English literature the present book hopes to map.

England or Great Britain did not merely 'imagine' a national identity, as Benedict Anderson's influential argument about nationalism (1991) has proposed, or 'forge a nation', as Linda Colley argued (1992) – it did both imagining and forging through an active, consistent engagement with a racial-cultural Other. An English identity was crafted when Britain faced and negotiated 'otherness' in the very real *material* processes of travel, trade, war, conquest, interpersonal relationships, and commodities. Britain/England, to adapt Mary Louise Pratt's words, 'construct[ed] itself from the outside in, out of materials infiltrated, donated, absorbed, appropriated, and imposed' (2003: 137). Britain's imagining itself as a nation was almost always grounded in Otherness. England's cultural identity, as this book treats it, from the period of proto-colonial explorations of the early sixteenth century to the age of decolonization in the twentieth, was constantly negotiated through cultural referents both within and outside the geopolitical territory of the island. Othering is the process of negotiating with such external cultural referents in order for England to develop a sense of self, society and the world. This of course assumes, in Benedict Robinson's formulation (2007: 11) that literary texts and genres imagined, engaged and formed the *world*, especially the world's conflicts, contests and tensions in which England's multiple identities were formed. This book thus treats English literature as a cultural formation constituted out of a constant circulation of material goods, people and ideas between Britain and other cultures (including but not restricted to her colonies). If, as Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine and Frank Trentmann point out, 'the significance of transnationalism reaches beyond spatial movements and physical connections, involving distinct multilocal sets of identities and memories, fluid and hybrid forms of cultural reproduction, and transnational flows of money and expertise' (2007: 1–2), then this book examines the multilocal nature of English identity as a result of its international linkages. That is, the circulation of goods, people and ideas created not only shared economic and administrative realms (imperial Britain) but also a cultural space – that of literature – that brought together Englishness and its racial-cultural Other, Chinese, Asian, African, Arabic and also, on occasion, Europe's internal Others such as the Romany (gypsies) and East Europeans (notably from Transylvania, in *Dracula*, 1897).² English literature was inextricably bound up with the globe.

This shift in focus to the globality of English literature is *not* to reject local histories and social contexts that produced English literature and its concerns. Regicide, food riots, industrialization, social mobilities, literacy and other local factors did of course play a crucial role in shaping the nation's literature. Rather, a study of England's transnational and global connections offers us a more nuanced local and national contextualization of the canon. It shows us exactly how local literary themes and concerns were constituted within a transnational and global world 'system' or set of processes.

This transnational turn to studies of English national identity is visible in collections such as *The Global Renaissance* that treat the discourse of identity, manifest in literary and other texts, as instantiating a globalism. This book situates itself in this transnational turn, and sets out to examine the 'provisional instances' (Aravamudan's term, 2005, to which I shall return below) where English literary texts, even as they showcased a national, racial and cultural identity, did so with considerable awareness and narrative cognition of the world and racial-cultural Others.

The 'transnational' in its adjectival form describes 'processes between or beyond national boundaries involving several nations or nationalities'. As a noun, it describes 'someone operating in several countries' (*American Heritage Dictionary*). As Donald Pease notes in his introduction to a volume on transnationalism and American studies, when used as a noun, 'transnational' refers to a condition of 'in-betweenness ... flexibility, non-identification, hybridity, and mobility' (2011: 4). Since it lacks a 'thematic unity', it refers at once to 'factual states of affairs' as well as to 'the interpretive framework through which to make sense of them' (4). Pease further notes that the term frequently 'bears the traces of the violent sociohistorical processes to which it alludes' (4).

I employ the term 'transnational' in this dual sense of a state of affairs as well as an interpretive frame. The state of affairs the term invokes in this book is England's national-cultural imaginary, in every age, of hybridity, mobility, diffuse spatial coordinates – from England to Europe and the world beyond – that explicitly or implicitly reference its racial-cultural Other. As an interpretive framework it re-evaluates social and cultural formations within England's national imaginaries by showing/tracing how identities, people, objects and ideas were never bound within national borders, or even national identifications. That is, my dual sense of the term 'transnational' refers to (1) England's very *real* ideational, material and political engagements with a world (or perhaps that should be 'worlds') outside its national borders and identity through travel, expansion, colonial dominance, trade, tourism, literary-cultural assimilation, labour, etc. and (2) a *reframing* of England's *national* literary past in the light of new coordinates – of the cultural encounter with Otherness.

The book proposes a move from an area (the transnational, with all its flows, convergences, boundary-breaking and remaking) to a number of *sites* where the internal and external of 'England' encounter each other. These sites in the present book are *localized* domains of analysis in which this merging and flows of the transnational might be discerned. It reinterprets England's literary themes in terms

of these flows but, for purposes of focus and clarity, does so within specific themes and domains. These sites include the ‘fact’ of mobility and travel, the ideology of exoticism (and a sub-genre, of erotic exoticism), the culture of commodities and materiality, the politics of pathologization and medicalization, the ‘project’ of England’s virtuous labour on behalf of the Other, and finally the technologies of aesthetic understanding and assimilation.

Literary examples in the chapters that follow illustrate the arguments but are not intended to convey any *genealogy* of a discourse. The chapters are interested in examining a cluster of tropes, themes and images in literary text that convey the ur-discourse of transnational English identity. It therefore studies clusters of sub-discourses, such as travel or objectification, in order to map *continuities* in England’s multiple, multi-layered engagements with Otherness.

Like all discourses the discourse of transnational English identity was of a diffuse, unsystematic and uneven nature, appearing in very different ways and modes, subtle or amplified, in literary texts. The transnational often manifests, in other words, in an unevenness and heterogeneity of engagements with other cultural referents rather than in any systematically articulated ideology in English literature. This book maps the heterogeneous, uneven and fragmented discourse of globality (which I take to be a synonym for the transnational throughout this book).

Studies of genres like the English novel have pointed to its multicultural, multiregional, multilingual and multiracial origins (Hunter 1990, Doody 1998). English subjectivity in the genre, the critics tell us, was formed within the crucible of such comparative, mobile and multiple racial interactions, transactions and locations, whether these are Irish, Scottish, African or Asian. Writing about the iconic *English* literary genre, the eighteenth-century novel, Srinivas Aravamudan argues that ‘various fictions, including oriental tales and surveillance chronicles, are provisional instances of the translational and transnational aspects of the multitudinous outside excluded by acts of enclosure around the novel’ (2005: 50. Also see Dow 2014).

Admittedly, every age has a few *dominant* discourses of Otherness. In the Early Modern it was the discourse of exploration, voyage and discovery. In the Romantic age, Orientalism and its attendant forms of exoticism were in the ascendant. In the Victorian era with its obsession with disease and pathology, the diseased Other (in the form of vampires as well) was the dominant discourse about non-Europeans. The book follows this broad organization of dominant discourses.

It does not seek to situate every literary theme within its historical context. Discourses, admittedly, are context-specific, and as such need to be studied both synchronically and diachronically, especially in the case of colonialism. However, this book sets out to do something else altogether: it maps literary discourses as self-contained and tracks their themes within the literary alone. Echoes and allusions that suggest continuities of thematic concerns of the nineteenth century with the eighteenth are mapped, but without showing the embeddedness of either within

their specific contexts. The aim is to show a continuing literary preoccupation with the theme of Otherness.

**

The book begins by framing the transnational theme within the theme of mobility. Travel and voyage, exploration and discovery, resettlement and displacement are all framed under 'mobility' where, as John Urry theorizes, cultural artefacts and practices are 'mobilized' (Urry 2007: 7). Chapter 2 demonstrates how an engagement with the racial, cultural Other in English literature from the Early Modern period to the twentieth century might be profitably read within a discourse of travel and space. The cosmographic and geographical imagination in fictions of travel was articulated through specific rhetorical modes. The fantasy of travel and its related themes of discovery or profit becomes a way of imagining the world but also of imagining England's *place* within this world that was opening up. The chapter then moves on to discuss the discourse of itinerancy as it was organized around three principal axes, spatial distancing, antiquarianism or temporal distancing and somatic geography. This discourse, I argue, conveys significant geopolitical connotations, for it suggested a right of way through Other spaces for the Westerner. In the process of this itinerancy, I argue in the next section of this chapter, an entire ethnography of the Other was instituted to provide detailed information about the exotic, distanced and unknowable Other. This ethnography also captured, I show, the variety of the world. In the final section of the chapter I propose that a triumphalist geography emerges in English writings about distant places. This geographical discourse documents the expansion of the Englishman's agency into new territory, focusing on the dangers faced by the Englishman in new climes and areas and eventual success through sheer 'Brit grit', endurance and physical labour.

I explore the discourses of exoticism in Chapter 3, principally the literary representations of the savage/barbarian and the racially different woman. The savage serves as the exotic backdrop to English adventure, exploration and the colonial project itself. Exoticism here serves the important purpose of marking particular cultural, military and culinary practices against which England defines itself. In certain cases, the chapter shows, the savage exists in and appeals to the British as well. The Noble Savage in such accounts symptomizes the English attempt to come to terms with not only racial-cultural difference but also its ideas of moral universals. For the English and Europeans in general the civil savage epitomizes the civilizational mission itself: that these are humans who can be 'improved'. Reading representations of the Arab harem and the English/European woman's own presence in the Oriental world, I argue that an eroticization of the exotic space of the Other is achieved not only through extensive descriptions of native sexuality and sensuality but through the relocation or transposition of a European femininity into a 'native' context. It is the presence of the European man or woman in exotic settings that also contributes to the erotic charge of the Other place. Despite the cultural difference, or perhaps because of it, there is a sense of

the English negotiating with the intimate spaces of the racially different feminine. I thus argue that the representation of the possibilities of interracial intimacies in English literature render the harem the space of the Englishman's or woman's intimate cosmopolitanism. Particular discourses of femininity and masculinity – European – emerge in the presence of and engagement with the Other's intimate spaces, I argue.

The globality of English literature might be found, Chapter 4 demonstrates, in its negotiations with objects and commodities. That is, we can think of a *globality of objects*, of various kinds, values, significations and symbolisms, that signal English literature's transnational engagements. It examines English literature's literal and metaphoric commodification of the Other within a vocabulary of objects. The assimilation of tea, chinaware, coffee, Kashmiri shawls into the daily lives of English, as portrayed in numerous texts, the chapter argues, suggests an English identity built around a cosmopolitan and transnational domesticity and taste. The arrival and circulation of exotic objects were instrumental in forming English cosmopolitan tastes in art or gardening or décor but also ensured that English homes, museums and gardens were spaces of assimilation of these accidental or intentional by-products of English imperial processes. In the last section of the chapter I look at the representation of blacks and slaves as emotional objects in what I call the rhetoric of objectification. I argue that the emotional responses to the condition of slaves enable a construction of the sentimental-but-political British subject when s/he encounters and engages with the purely sentimental indigenous object.

In Chapter 5 I turn to a very different form of transnational engagement in English literature. The arrival of the migrant, in the form of commodities, people or pathogens, from the Other space frequently induced panic and anxiety. Difference was the subject of a pathogenic discourse, especially when this difference *entered* the British home, family, street and public space, very often in the form of the inhuman, the monstrous, the addictive or the corrupted, dehumanized Englishman himself. Thus stigmatizing the foreign body in literature as a biological, moral or cultural pathogen might be read as an expression of the anxieties over England's transnational identity-making processes. Material threats, as seen in many texts, while cautioning against the undermining of English economy, production and consumption, also warned about the decadence, corruption and degradation of English character. Invasive and unnameable 'things' that entered England – whether as disease or as vampires – produced alterations within England. Literary texts also focused on cultural invasions where hybridization and multiculturalization led to the degeneration of Englishness. England, in this discourse of the pathogenic Other, *fashions itself an identity under threat of dissolution*.

In the final chapter I turn to another common dimension of England's transnational engagements: its civilizing mission in the colonies. The racial-cultural Other was now, besides being discovered, exoticized, commodified and pathologized, an improveable Other, just as the imperialist was the heroic Englishman/woman seeking to improve the suffering Other. Thus central to England's transnational engagements was a discursive binary constructed around the figures of the to-be-

improved native and the improving Englishman or woman. However, concomitant with the literature's discourse of improvement England's literature also demonstrates a certain discrepant geography where the English were the cause of native ruin *and* themselves experienced disintegration, dehumanization and death. After examining the moral imperialism of English literature (which proposed a unification of the world under England's moral leadership), the chapter explores the discourse of the improveable Other, which is often initiated as a discourse of cultural defects. Having until then mapped the cultural defects of the racial-cultural Other, English literary texts from the 1820s are seen to foreground the ameliorative role to be played by Englishmen and women. This includes, as the chapter shows, a deculturation of the native, and by extension an assimilation of English ways. In the last section of the chapter I point to numerous texts where, not only has the civilizational mission of colonial rule failed, but colonization has produced monsters of both English and natives. English literature redraws, the chapter argues, the geography of the world in the form of a discrepant geography.

Notes

- 1 I also follow Mary Baine Campbell's definition of the world as a space that is habitable or inhabited (1999: 10).
- 2 For England's Chinese influences see Min (2010), Chang (2010) and the work of David Porter (1999, 2002). For Islam's impact, especially in the Early Modern period, see Benedict Robinson (2007) and Vitkus (1997, 2006, 2007). On gypsies and the Romany in English writing see Behlmer (1985) and Bardi (2006).

2

WORLDS AND VOYAGES

English itinerancy and the spaces of Otherness

This chapter frames the transnational theme in English literature within the theme of itinerancy. It demonstrates how an engagement with the Other in English literature, right from the Early Modern period to the twentieth century, might be profitably read within a *discourse of travel and space*. It is in the persistent and repetitive tropes of travel, distance, discovery and the pursuit of knowledge about the stranger-foreigner, all of which I group under 'itinerancy', that we see manifest England's transnational concerns, interests and anxieties. In order to read this discourse of itinerancy in English literature, the chapter focuses on literary representations of English travels into Africa, Asia and other regions.

The foundational assumption of this chapter is that a key site of the English engagement with the Other, manifest in its literature, is *mobility*, of (1) Englishmen and women out into the wider world or (2) the mobility of the world, in the form of commodities, people, ideas, into and through England. My focus in this chapter is on the former, the English travels into the world, represented in the form of fictions of travel. Concomitant with this discourse of itinerancy is a deep engagement with foreign spaces, territories and terrain. As literary texts map journeys of the Englishmen and women, they also map embodied engagements with other, new spaces and cultures. Fictional journeys therefore deploy, in addition to the thematic of itinerancy, a *spatial* imagination or a *geographic* sensibility. Together, *the journey and the experience of a space outside and beyond one's national-geopolitical borders constitutes an engagement with the Other*. England finds itself at the site of the Other – what we can think of as an out-site – beyond its borders, when it journeys out. But before I turn to the study of this discourse of itinerancy, let me foreground the centrality of mobility to the transnational nature of English literature.

The chapter takes its cue from Rüdiger Kunow who, examining the mobile foundations of the contemporary transnational, argues that since mobilities constitute cultural relations, then mobility must become 'part of ... the critical lexicon

wherein a field of study defines itself as cross-cultural, comparatist, and transnational' (2011: 245). From a different critical perspective, theorists of the genre of travel literature treat travel as a mode of exploration of the Self even as it is an exploration of the Other. In their 'discourse on the encounter with foreign Otherness, we witness the travellers' uncertainty of their own religious and cultural Selves, but we also face the discursive construction of an "I" which struggles for new stability', writes Helga Quadfleig (2004: 27). English literature, from the Early Modern period to the twentieth century, foregrounds mobility not only as individual journeys but, very frequently, as *national* projects. Therefore it is possible to see the journeys of a Crusoe, the (unnamed) eyewitness of Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* (1688), a Quatermain or a Marlow as embodying a national project wherein the English Self encounters a cultural-racial Other and thus formulates a sense of the Self, whether in the age of exploration or the age of Empire. I treat individual mobility as metonymic of a national mobility itself, and therefore travel as effecting changes in a nation's sense of itself and its identity. But this metonymy is not my focus here. I am interested in the discourse of itinerancy that constructs a cultural space, in an Other *geographical* location or terrain, within which England's engagement with diversity and difference is possible. The imaginative construction of this cultural space founded on itinerancy and spatial difference I have termed 'globality'. Globality in English literature is constructed within a cluster of mutually enabling, supplementing discourses, all of which have to do with journeys and spaces as the English attempted to provide compendious and comprehensive information about the Other. The discourse of itinerancy's representations of the geography of difference offers the facility for the 'apprehension of political systems, social hierarchies, kinship systems, gender relations, sexual practices and terms of being and happiness different from the manners and institutions of the developing national-imperial culture of Britain' (Kaul 2009: 127). But such a geography of difference also enables the construction of an English character in confrontation, conflict, tension and collaboration with its spatially and culturally distant Others.¹ A nation traveling, in real-material terms and in the imaginative-discursive mode, engages with difference and through several such engagements constructs a map of the world, of home and abroad. Globality is predicated upon, and in turn influences, a system of representations of itinerancy into the spaces of the Other.

The Englishman's understanding of the globe across historical periods reflects, to adapt Nancy Stepan's phrasing, aesthetic, political and other projects that expand or limit the Englishman's engagement with the world (2001). My thesis in this chapter is that globality is the *cumulative set of imaginative constructions of (other) places to which the Englishman materially or imaginatively travels*.

Forms of literature that were concerned with discovery, journeys and voyages, explorations, cultural exchanges and encounters with new people are key constituents in the process of globalization, and the imagining of the globe. Literary texts that dealt with travel were instrumental in envisioning even utopias, where utopias might be treated as 'global' texts due to their interest in travel and spaces beyond the national borders (Houston 2009: 84). Globality in literary texts

employs a geoaesthetics, an aesthetics of distance, journey, relocation, adaptation and return 'home'. It involves an engagement with sights, sounds, ideas and objects transmitted across distances, and a transformation in the very imagining of space and time as a consequence. Geoaesthetics contributes to the simultaneous process of the shrinking of the world and the expansion of the home. The telescope ensured this dual process of shrinking and expansion in the Early Modern period, just as the Hubble telescope, the *Pioneer* and space travel in the twentieth century have shrunk the universe for us. The circulation of commodities (tea, coffee, chocolate, spices, cotton, animal-heads, precious stones) and people (slaves, Asian sailors and African travellers, and people brought back as exhibits) and narratives of Englishmen's journeys into various parts of the world had the same effect in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Mobility – travel – was the dominant mode of this globalizing geoaesthetic.² However, this study of English geoaesthetics does not develop a taxonomy of travellers or even forms of travel – exploration, soldiering campaigns, evangelical-missionary, tourism – choosing instead to collapse different forms of travel and travellers into one literary theme, of itinerancy.

This collapse of categories of travel and travellers in my analysis has a specific discursive teleology in English literary texts about the Other itself. Racial categories blur in several texts from the Early Modern period. Images of Anne Bracegirdle (the mezzotint engraving by W. Vincent) playing the Indian queen Semerina in Aphra Behn's posthumously produced *The Widow Ranter* (1690) showed her being attended to by children wearing plumes and who seem to combine the racial characteristics of American Indians and Africans. Thus a white English woman plays an American Indian and black African children play her attendants. While this theatrical space, as Margaret Ferguson rightly points out (1996: 250), offers up problems of objectification and subjectivity it also conflates racial and ethnic categories. Felicity Nussbaum has persuasively argued that the category of 'black' or 'brown' during the seventeenth and eighteenth century was not entirely rigid, nor even well demarcated in English or European writings. Nussbaum proposes that the history of racial thinking demonstrates a more messy categorization. Nussbaum writes:

representations of people of colour in the eighteenth century mutate through the spectrum of tawny, sallow, olive, mulatto, sooty, and ebony of East Indian, West Indian, American Indian, Pacific Islander, and North and sub Saharan African, all of whom are at times designated in British (if not American) parlance as 'black'. In some cases we can assign the muddles to historical accident, and in others to geographical confusion ... In the imaginative geography of the eighteenth century, Ethiopia (often a synonym for Africa) seems to migrate from Africa to Arabia and back again. It is sometimes contiguous to Egypt and sometimes depicted on the western side of the continent, though Ethiopia eventually comes to represent a lost and unrecoverable premodern glory in the later Ethiopianism movement.

(2009: 143–9)³

This ‘portability’ (as Nussbaum calls it) of the category ‘black’ through continents and cultures means that we can treat English literature’s representation of numerous racial and ethnic Others as resulting from a category confusion, but also as an immanent feature of the concept of ‘race’. My conflation of readings of texts that look at African, Turkish, Asian or South American races and spaces is founded on this assumption that numerous races constituted Britain’s racial-cultural Other with little to distinguish *among* these races, at least from/in the British perspective. While this does confound the historical specificity of English representations of the South Seas and, say, India, it indicates the broad brushstrokes of a racializing imaginary that itself was not concerned with these specificities, drawing, instead, from a cultural unconscious that simply consigned shades of blackness, physiognomies and cultural practices to one category: the Other. Globality and itinerancy, therefore, was a mixed-up discourse of the Other that, even as it accounted for the heterogeneity and alterity of Africans or Asians from the English, homogenized several kinds of Asians or Africans into one category: the Other. It can of course be pointed out that every age had its own social attitudes, often conflicted, towards travel. Thus if Thomas Nashe (*The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594), Joseph Hall (*Mundus Alter et Idem [Another World and Yet the Same]*, 1605) and others expressed anxiety about travel in Early Modern England, others of the same period, such as Francis Bacon (‘Of Travel’, 1625), prepared extensive templates for the travellers to fill in information about Other cultures, thus signalling the key role of travel for English culture and identity.⁴ For the Victorians, since the age of discovery was behind them, travel enabled the quest for extreme exotic spaces, such as interior Africa or the wilds of the Himalayan foothills. The fiction of the age would of course reflect these tensions and attitudes vis-à-vis travel. However, this chapter sacrifices historical specificity regarding the nature of, attitude towards, tensions within and stylistic modes of representing travel for the sake of unravelling patterns within clusters of discourses around mobility.

This chapter is interested in the *persistence* of the discourse of itinerancy, tropes of travel, and the interrelated spatial themes of wandering, exploration and resettlement across English literary history. The persistence of such a discourse of itinerancy over the centuries, mostly in canonical texts of English literature, offers us a way of perceiving how the English engaged with the world. The chapter thus attempts to map this cluster of discourses of itinerancy and geography, many overlapping, some conflictual, across England’s literary history. These discourses, as the chapter treats them, are to be seen as *localized* instances, moments and domains of the larger narrative of the transnational.

England travels

The discourse of English itinerancy across centuries is manifest in specific *spatial* tropes and themes in fictions of travel about Other places. What must be kept in mind is the interplay of fact and fiction in the representation of Other spaces. Thus, the fictional accounts of utopias somewhere off America, paradisaical islands (with

some cannibals) in the Caribbean, or Solomon's mines in Africa are not always at the opposite end from, or in discursive conflict with, geographical discoveries of the poles, sea routes and passages to new worlds. Literary articulations of different spaces might be read as the essential *supplements* that are both excessive and essential to the completion of any 'real' geographical narratives. Two key discourses that constitute the larger discourse of itinerancy can now be mapped: (1) the imagining of new geographies of the world in fictions of travel and (2) the theme of actual movement and English engagement with new spaces.

Cosmography and the geographical imagination

Mary Baine Campbell proposes that 'harmless' travel fictions such as Thomas More's were rhetorical strategies in and through which 'the desire for a better (or different) world can be expressed and satisfied without corrupting the sources of practical geographical knowledge' (1988: 212–13). Before actual travel to strange, new or familiar places, there was the *imagining* of and *desire* for Other places, of the world itself. England in the Early Modern period, for instance, began to imagine the place of the Other, or the Other in its place. The cosmographic and geographical imagination in fictions of travel was articulated, this section demonstrates, through specific rhetorical modes. The fantasy of travel and its related themes of discovery or profit become a way of imagining the world but also, and this is my key point, of imagining England's place within this world that was opening up.

The *Theatrum Orbis terrarum*, the Western world's first atlas prepared by Abraham Ortelius and published in 1570, offered not only a map of the known world but also a metaphor for literary imaginations to work with: the *theatre* of the world. Fuelling the geographical imagination, atlases and maps produced an entire range of accounts of the worlds beyond England and Europe, ready for conquest or mercantile purposes. Martin Behaim, the Nuremberg cartographer, published a globe in 1492 (Magellan was one of the explorers who used this globe), in which he not only annotated the known world but also carefully inventoried the customs duties to be paid at each port in the course of the spice trade (Jardine 1996: 296).⁵

Therefore the 'theatre of the world' was at once a cartographic project as it was a literary theme and trope. Encoded within the cosmographic theme and the imagining of a new geography of the world were the themes of discovery, variety, the unknown and the mysterious along with the hopeful themes of conquest, knowledge and profit.⁶

Very often this theatre of the world was played out on the site of the human body in the Early Modern where the 'introduction of the body is simultaneous with the discovery and fledgling colonization of new worlds' (Sell 2006: 181). The theatre of the world mapped on to the geography of the human form inscribed globality on to the closest terrain a human possesses or is familiar with: the body. This conflation of anatomy and geography is most clearly visible in the Early Modern period.

When John Donne declared ‘all the world grows transparent, and I see/through all’ (‘Obsequies to the Lord Harrington’, 1975: 257) he was not only working with extant images of visual explorations of the world and the heavens (made possible by devices such as the microscope and the telescope) but also encoding a fantasy of visual conquest and epistemological understanding of the known and available worlds (like all Donne poems, this one too is loaded with geographical imagery). It is this kind of anatomo-geographical imagination that, I propose, prepares for the discourse of itinerancy in English writings. Others before and after Donne would also map bodies and worlds into one seamless unity. Henry Peacham in Emblem 28 in his *Minerva Britannia* described the human this way:

Hear what's the reason why a man we call
 A little world? And what the wiser meant
 By this new name? Two lights celestial
 Are in his head, as in the element;
 Eke as the wearied sun at night is spent,
 So seemeth but the life of man a day,
 At morn he's borne, at night he flits away.
 Of heat and cold as is the air composed,
 So likewise man we see breath's whot and cold,
 His body's earthy: in lungs enclosed,
 Remains the air, his brain doth moisture hold,
 His heart and liver, do the heat enfold:
 Of earth, fire, water, man thus framed is,
 Of elements the threefold qualities.

(1612: 190)

In the human body Peacham finds the world itself. The variety of the world is unified/united within the human form. Shakespeare was also reconstituting the map of the known world in the human form. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, for instance, Cleopatra describes Antony thus:

His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
 Crested the world; his voice was propertyed
 As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
 But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
 He was rattling thunder. For his bounty,
 There was no winter in't an autumn it was
 That grew the more by reaping. His delights
 Were dolphin-like; they showed his back above
 The element they lived in. In his livery
 Walked and crowns and crownets; realms and islands were
 As plates dropped from his pocket.

(V.2, ll. 81–90)

In *The Comedy of Errors* the kitchen wench is fantasized by Dromio as ‘spherical, like a globe’ in which/whom he ‘could find out countries’ (III.2, ll. 113–14). Later, this somatic geography would assert itself in a slightly different way where fictional representations of English itinerancy foregrounded the corporeal experience of Other places, as we shall see.

Somatic geography of this kind also found expression in eroticized images of the world and the Other places. Offering a fantasy narrative of discovery, exploration and conquest representations of the human form conflated with geography appear regularly in John Donne. In his ‘Love’s Progress’ Donne mapped fantasy spaces of various kinds:

the straight Hellespont between
The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts,
(Not of two lovers, but two loves the nests)
Succeeds a boundless sea, but yet thine eye
Some island moles may scattered there descry;
And sailing towards her India, in that way
Shall at her fair Atlantic navel stay.

(1975: 123)

Elsewhere in ‘The Second Anniversarie’ Donne would write:

The Western treasure, Eastern spicerie,
Europe, and Afrique, and the unknown rest
Were easily found, or what in them was best;
And when w’have made this large discoverie
Of all, in her some one part then will bee
Twenty such parts, whose plenty and riches is
Enough to make twenty such worlds as this.

(1975: 293)

Working with the vocabulary of discovery, appropriation and property, Donne not only eroticizes distant worlds but also sees these worlds (like the woman’s body) as possessing the potential for England’s rejuvenation (Sawday 1996: 26). These are fantasies of possession and promise. From such a view of the woman/land, a fantasy of conquest follows almost naturally in Donne’s (notoriously sexist) verse in ‘To his Mistress Going to Bed’:

Licence my roving hands, and let them go,
Before, behind, between, above, below.
O my America! My new-found-land,
My kingdome, safeliest when with one man man’d,
My myne of precious stones, My Emperie,
How blest am I in this discovering thee!

To enter in these bonds, is to be free;
Then where my hand is set, my seal shall be.

(1975: 125)

A century and half later, in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), Immalee/Isidora lives away from all eligible males, on an uninhabited island in the Indian sea, somewhere off Calcutta, a place unknown to Europeans. Melmoth then sets out to seduce her, thus reiterating an erotic geography. Like the island, Immalee is the desirable Other for the European.

But geography was not only the geography of the human form in fantasy narratives. Fantasies of discovery, exploration and control of Other places have figured in English literature from the Early Modern period. Very often these fantasies appear in the form of massive catalogues of places. The *index locorum* (the indexing of places) unifies these distant places within the narrative – thus proposing a fantastic editorial and textual control over these Other places – but also offering the readers an itinerary of the English nation itself. Note, for example, Spenser's geographical fantasy of England's 'reach' in *The Faerie Queene* (Book 2, proem) where he maps Ireland, Europe, the East Indies and the West Indies:

And dayly how through hardy enterprize,
Many great Regions are discovered,
Which to late age were neuer mentioned.
Who euer heard of th'Indian *Peru*?
Or who in venturous vessell measured
The *Amazon* huge riuer now found trew?
Or fruitfulest *Virginia* who did euer vew?

(Spenser 1984: 169)

Spenser is speaking of the mercantile dimension ('hardy investment') of voyages and travels to distant places but he is also underscoring the theme of *discovery*, and therefore of the expansion of the epistemological empire of England. (It must be noted that Spenser dedicated the book to 'Elizabeth ... Queen of England ... and Virginia'.) In *Epithalamion* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, Louis Montrose argues, the Irish allusions enable Spenser to 'create a locus of meaning and value that is defined in part by its otherness from London, the court, and the Queen' (1996: 109).

This geographical imagining of the known world positions England as possessing the potential to discover, conquer, explore and profit from new places and regions that the voyages were revealing. England would bring these distant places closer, unite them, under her banner. Spenser also cleverly positions his discourse of globality within the discourse of epistemology, understanding and measurement. Hearing, seeing and measuring the world constitute Spenser's engagement with regions beyond the national borders as he imagines the globe.

We see this ambitious and fantastic geography reflected in Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Part One – set in the period before 1492 and Columbus – which offers a map of the world as was then known:

I will confuse those blind geographers
That make a triple region in the world.
Excluding regions that I mean to trace,
And with this pen reduce them to a map,
Calling the provinces, cities, and towns
After my name and thine, Zenocrate.

(IV.4, ll. 81–6. 1975: 160)⁷

Marlowe's hero hopes to not only alter the world map but plans to rename portions of it after himself. Significantly, the ambition that the English Marlowe displaces on to the Oriental king is of this unification of the earth's distant corners under one name/body/person. Globality is the conjunction of bodies and technologies of mapping and naming.

In Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* we find a repetition of this cosmographic imagination in the catalogue of places and kings that Octavius Caesar pronounces:

he hath assembled
Bocchus, the king of Libya; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, king
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Malchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, king
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
With a more larger list of sceptres.

(III.6, ll. 68–76)

In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare would list Antonio's mercantile world:

From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?

(III.3, ll. 265–6)

Portia, says Shakespeare in this same play, is renowned worldwide: 'nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth/for the four winds blow in from every coast' (1.1.167–8). That Shakespeare's plays were performed at The Globe should also tell us something about the Early Modern interest in the theatres of humanity itself.

Shakespeare's Hamlet spoke of the 'undiscovered country from whose bourn/no traveller returns' (II.1, l. 81. 2008: 1734). Central to the geographical imagination

was the imagination of the empty spaces and the unknown. But also crucial was that the map represented spaces where the Englishman, or even boy, could see a future unfolding. Thus, paradoxically, English dreams consisted in several cases of being *elsewhere*, away from England and home.

In the Early Modern period this elsewhere could very well be utopia. Travel writing and utopia both ‘imagine’, as Chloe Houston notes, a ‘different society’ (2010: 4). Utopian literature is a ‘form of fictional travel writing which engages both with the desire for information and the concern with the spiritual, exotic or rewarding journey’ (6). Raphael Hythloday, the hero of Thomas More’s *Utopia*, on his return, is able to enlighten the listeners (More and Peter Giles) about the politics, social structure and culture of the island. Such texts offered visions of new worlds, new peoples and new cultures. When Amerigo Vespucci, after whom the continent would be named, announced ‘surely if the terrestrial paradise be in any part of this earth, I esteem that it is not far distant from those parts’ (cited in Houston 2010: 8), he was indicating the fantasy but also the *reality* of newly discovered worlds. Further, science fictional texts such as those by Frances Godwin (*The Man in the Moon*), Johannes Kepler (*Somnium*), Margaret Cavendish (*The Blazing World*) and others often offered up possible worlds, although not always ideal ones. What is certain is that right from the Early Modern period Europe was interested in Other worlds, and Other peoples in those worlds.⁸

Maps, globes and the theatre of the world also helped produce fantasies of war, conquest, profit and expansion. Empty and distant lands could also become spaces of adventure wherein the Englishman could encounter difficulties and become a full-fledged man.⁹

In Ben Jonson’s *The Alchemist* (1610) Sir Epicure Mammon, who is seeking the philosopher’s stone, tells the gamester Surly:

Come on sir. Now you set your foot on shore
 In *novo orbe*; here’s the rich Peru:
 Great Solomon’s Ophir! He was sailing to’t
 Three years, but we have reached it in ten months.

(2.1: 1–6. Jonson 1979: 44)

The reference here is to the fabled voyage to Ophir, the Biblical land famed for its wealth, to which Solomon is believed to have travelled. Ophir had been variously identified with parts of Africa, with Columbus believing it was somewhere in China, and others in Peru. Jonson, as David Harris Sacks notes, is sarcastic about Mammon’s reasons for travelling (2010: 18–19).

Even pirates and buccaneers like William Dampier and their travel writings were inserted into this English cosmographic imagining of the world, as Anna Neill (2000) and Claire Jowitt (2010) have demonstrated. Such pirate voyages were treated not only as travel for ‘business practice’ (Jowitt 2010: 116) but as adding to the information-base of a nation seeking imperial pastures. The quest for fantastic lands with wealth that would, therefore, further England’s profits and imperial

ambitions underwrites the discourse of itinerancy and geography of plenty in several texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In John Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), wherein he begins by referring to the obstruction of flows of trade and concludes with the British triumph over Holland (historically referencing the Anglo-Dutch war of 1665), he writes:

Trade, which, like blood, should circularly flow,
 Stopp'd in their channels, found its freedom lost:
 Thither the wealth of all the world did go,
 And seem'd but shipwreck'd on so base a coast.
 For them alone the heavens had kindly heat;
 In eastern quarries ripening precious dew:
 For them the Idumæan balm did sweat,
 And in hot Ceylon spicy forests grew.
 The sun but seem'd the labourer of the year;
 Each waxing moon supplied her watery store,
 To swell those tides, which from the line did bear
 Their brimful vessels to the Belgian shore.
 Thus mighty in her ships, stood Carthage long,
 And swept the riches of the world from far;
 Yet stoop'd to Rome, less wealthy, but more strong:
 And this may prove our second Punick war.

(Dryden 1956: 59–60)

Writing about the competition and the ruins of English trade, Dryden says:

Some English wool, vex'd in a Belgian loom,
 And into cloth of spungy softness made:
 Did into France or colder Denmark doom,
 To ruin with worse ware our staple trade.

(1956: 90–1)

Dryden is describing the geography of numerous places where Britain has triumphed, but also proposing a unification of diverse lands under the British banner.¹⁰ Itinerancy here is the focused journeys for trade and profit that not only financially benefit England but also give her a sense of national identity, suggests Dryden.

If Dryden saw profits in a nation's travels, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw conquest, settlement and domination. Note here Gulliver's ambitions:

My design was, if possible, to discover some small island uninhabited, yet sufficient, by my labour, to furnish me with the necessaries of life, which I would have thought a greater happiness, than to be first minister in the politest court of Europe; so horrible was the idea I conceived of returning to

live in the society, and under the government of *Yahoos*. For in such a solitude as I desired, I could at least enjoy my own thoughts, and reflect with delight on the virtues of those inimitable *Houyhnhnms*, without an opportunity of degenerating into the vices and corruptions of my own species.

(Swift 1960a: 228)

Gulliver's ambition, or fantasy, is really of possible alternative worlds for the Englishman bored of England. It is a fantasy of resettlement, of a self-contained world (which of course is satirized by Swift when Gulliver is shot at and he despondently swims away!). Swift would satirize this English desire for empty spaces elsewhere too in 'Poetry: A Rhapsody' (1733):

So geographers in Afric – maps
With savage – pictures fill their gaps;
And o'er uninhabitable Downs
Place elephants for want of towns.

(Swift 1967: 574)

Australia, in particular, was consistently portrayed as the *terra nullius*, an empty space – ignoring, of course, the aboriginal inhabitants – by Europeans. As late as the twentieth century, D.H. Lawrence spoke of the 'soft, blue, humanless sky of Australia, the pale, white, unwritten atmosphere of Australia' (cited in Ryan 1994: 129).

In *Roderick Random* (1748), Tobias Smollett's Crab encourages Random to go to sea:

Before I was your age, I was broiling on the coast of Guinea. – Damne! What's to hinder you from profiting by the war, which will certainly be declared in a short time against Spain? – You may easily get on board of a king's ship in quality of a surgeon's mate, where you will certainly see a great deal of practice, and stand a good chance of getting prize money.

(Smollett 1979: 30)

For Colonel Brandon in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) the 'much encumbered' Englishman has to opt for military service in the East Indies where, Austen suggests, he might even get corrupted amongst the 'nabobs, gold mohrs and palanquins' (unpaginated, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/austen/jane/a93s/>). Gillian Russell points out that in Austen the militia offers 'opportunities for geographical and class mobility' (2009: 262). What Russell is pointing to is motility, the structures that enable movement. In this case the military and oppressive family finances are the structural conditions that cause the Englishman to travel. For Random and Brandon, the military offers the opportunity to travel.

Steerforth in *David Copperfield* (1850) is a man with wanderlust:

Afloat, wrapped in fisherman's clothes, whole moonlight nights, and coming back when the morning tide was at flood. By this time, however, I knew his restless nature and bold spirits delighted to find a vent in rough toil and hard weather, as in any other means of excitement that presented itself freshly to him.

(Dickens 1992: 302)

Like Crusoe and Gulliver before him and Marlow after, Steerforth is not simply adrift on open seas: he is *in his mind* a free-floating wanderer. The discourse of itinerancy in such fiction fixes wanderlust as a psychological trait of particular Englishmen (many of whom are 'ruined' as Defoe admits – Steerforth, of course, dies in Dickens' novel – due to the wandering impulse). Itinerancy is a cultural phenomenon, in this reading.

Dickens would declare in *Dombey and Son* (1846–8): 'the earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light ... stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre' (unpaginated, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/dickens/charles/d54ds>). London becomes, as in Dryden's poem quoted above, the centre from which English itinerancy would originate and map, conquer, explore, dominate and profit from the globe:

Pictures of ships speeding away full sail to all parts of the world; outfitting warehouses ready to pack off anybody anywhere, fully equipped in half an hour; and little timber midshipmen in obsolete naval uniforms, eternally employed outside the shop doors of nautical instrument-makers.

(unpaginated, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/dickens/charles/d54ds>)¹¹

Dickens, like Dryden nearly two centuries before him, paints London, and by extension, England, as a mercantile culture but also a culture that inspires itinerancy. Fully aware of the possibilities of the world, London is constantly ready to embark on its many journeys. Such representations of course encode English ambitions. But they also capture the powerful sense of the culture of *focused* itinerancy that unravels the world, makes itinerancy and the engagement (military, mercantile, evangelical) with the world a marker of English identity. In other words, what we see in these fictional accounts of travel is the fantasy of an *English identity around the twin themes of itinerancy and the Other*.

R.M. Ballantyne, opening his *The Young Fur Traders* (1856) with an account of Northern America in the Lake Winnipeg region, offers us a Crusoe-like island paradise: 'Although far removed from the civilised world, and containing within its precincts much that is savage and very little that is refined, Red River [settlement] is quite a populous paradise' (unpaginated, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/21712/21712-h/21712-h.htm>).