

### Representations of Global Civility: English Travellers in the Ottoman Empire and the South Pacific, 1636-1863

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Sascha R. Klement

# REPRESENTATIONS OF GLOBAL CIVILITY

English Travellers in the Ottoman Empire  
and the South Pacific, 1636–1863



[transcript] Global and Colonial History

Sascha R. Klement  
Representations of Global Civility

*To the Palestinian people and their struggle for freedom and self-determination*

**Sascha R. Klement** studied English and comparative Literature at the Universities of Kent at Canterbury and Exeter, eventually writing a thesis on eighteenth-century travel writing, for which he did research in the UK, Germany and Turkey. His research interests include eighteenth-century literature and philosophy, travel writing, the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, as well as political activism and social change. He lives in Cairo, Egypt.

Sascha R. Klement

## **Representations of Global Civility**

English Travellers in the Ottoman Empire and the South Pacific, 1636-1863

**[transcript]**

Thesis: University of Exeter, College of Humanities  
Supervisors: Gerald MacLean and Paul Young  
Examiners: Nigel Leask and Regenia Gagnier

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Sascha R Klement

Cairo, Egypt

# **Beginnings**



# 1. Prologue: From Local to Global, From Courtesy to Civility

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This study explores the development of a discourse of global civility in selected writings by British travellers from the early seventeenth through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Broadly defined, this discursive formation comprises cultural cross-fertilisation, respect for the organisational structures and social differences of foreign polities, and the representation of mutually improving encounters in intercultural contact zones. The present study argues that global civility appears even as the Renaissance and Reformation give way to the Enlightenment, and that its historical development can best be traced by comparing works by travellers to the old and familiar lands of the Ottoman Empire with writings by those who ventured into the unknown waters and islands of the South Pacific. In examining these writings, I explore how their literary, cultural, political, and historical contexts were informed by Enlightenment philosophy and globality. In doing so, I demonstrate that cross-cultural encounters, and by implication European representations of cultural difference, in the era of expansion were much more complex and multi-layered than dichotomously structured colonial discourses and post-colonial theories often suggest.<sup>1</sup>

Global civility, as it emerged from differential but complementary encounters, not only restores complexity to cross-cultural interaction in the Ottoman and Pacific realms, it also emphasises the improvisational intricacies

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1 Compare: Allison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). According to Games, concepts such as cosmopolitanism gained currency in international spheres of trade, exploration and exchange. Reducing them to Eurocentric contexts thus commits a disservice to the intertwined histories behind what we might call Euro-American modernity.

that governed contact zones from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> Far from being merely peripheral, extra-European territories were crucial to British policy-making and cultural production in the period 1636-1863, since the commercial traffic vital to Europe's prosperity and development was only sustainable in conditions of relative peace. Accordingly, the readiness, willingness and desire to cooperate fruitfully with radically different peoples, which resulted from successful transactions in contact zones, is an integral, but unfortunately often neglected, constituent in literary and historical scholarship.<sup>3</sup> By challenging the still dominant cultural layers of the age of high imperialism and their epistemological grids, this thesis addresses the as yet unwritten chapter of mutually beneficial and complex, though initially often tentative, cross-cultural interaction in English literary history.

The first case study analyses an early instance of global civility in Henry Blount's *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636). It demonstrates how the presence of a powerful Islamic empire, whose military capabilities threatened Europe at the same time as its splendour fascinated Western travellers, provided an imperial model that lent itself to emulation for Britain's emerging global reach. Blount's comparative and rational approach recognises his host culture as a highly advanced, if not superior, state, in the realms of which Europeans had to be civil. The next chapter takes us to the previously unknown world of the Palau archipelago in the South Pacific, where the shipwrecked seamen of the East India vessel *Antelope* establish friendly and even-handed relations with the Palauan natives. The literary gentleman George Keate framed his *Account of the Pelew Islands* (1788) in contemporary idioms of sentiment and sensibility, a narrative strategy that not only familiarises English readers with the unknown vastness of the Pacific but also ensures that the natives' support of Captain Wilson and his crew becomes readable as a sign of hospitality, mutuality and receptivity to outside influences. In both instances, situational exigencies –

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2 Compare Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), 7: Pratt uses the term 'contact zone' to describe spaces of cross-cultural interaction. However, her explanation of it as a sphere in which 'disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination' is reductive and simplistic. I use 'contact zone' throughout this study in order to describe spaces, locations and landscapes where representatives of different cultures meet and interact with one another in a plethora of ways.

3 A notable exception is Karen Barkey's book *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

respect for the overwhelming power of a well-established empire on the one hand, and the vital necessity to gain access to local resources by cooperating with the natives, on the other – compel the travelling Englishmen to be civil. Despite their pronounced historical and cultural differences, these productive encounters show that neither mutual misunderstandings nor intractable conflicts were necessary outcomes of contact situations. Instead the tentative beginnings are extended and intensified from both sides of the contact zone, suggesting how the complexities of interactional situations across the globe call for regionally specific and historically nuanced analyses. Such a reading is also at the heart of the next chapter on Henry Abbott's *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (1789), in which a multi-lingual and seemingly well-educated Englishman repeatedly praises the hospitality of the desert Arabs. Abbott emphatically describes himself practicing global civility and, as we shall see, openly challenges both preconceived ideas and 'erroneous conclusions' drawn 'from the perusal of *erroneous* narratives'<sup>4</sup> about those who inhabit the desert sands of Arabia.

However, when we return to the South Pacific to visit the newly-founded penal settlements in Australia, global civility starts to crack under the pressures of trafficking in human lives. George Barrington's *An Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative* (c. 1793-4) and Mary Ann Parker's *A Voyage round the World* (1795) take us to New South Wales where the Pitt government dumped British convicts after the Botany Bay decision of 1786. The distressing conditions of transportation aboard the convict ships, as well as the continual shortages suffered by the colonists after their arrival in the Antipodes, render the representation of social, cultural and racial differences increasingly ambivalent. The fifth chapter examines these ambivalences, situating them in contemporary political, aesthetic and reformist discourses in order to explore the extent to which the problem of excess convicts presents a new turn on previous practices of global civility. The subsequent case study traces comparable developments in the Ottoman Empire by examining Charles Coville Frankland's *Travels to and from Constantinople* (1829). Whilst Barrington and Parker were confronted with both the horrors of transportation and the trials of a colony in its infancy, the naval officer Frankland witnesses first-hand the crumbling vigour of a once powerful empire caught up between gridlocked reforms, the Greek uprising and a renegade governor in Egypt. But most importantly, his

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4 Henry Abbott, *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1789), 3 [emphasis in original].

extensive account allows us carefully to historicise the emergence of the fully articulated Orientalist discourse, famously described by Edward W. Said in 1978. Frankland's adventures represent a transitional stage between incipient penetrations of European powers into Oriental territories, such as Napoleon's mission in Egypt, and the unvarnished domination – symbolic as well as material – of the East by Western powers that gained momentum in the course of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The final chapter in this study takes us back to the Pacific realm and New Zealand's transformation from a liminal space with little regulation to a settled colony under gubernatorial rule. F. E. Maning's *Old New Zealand* (1863) is a Shandean account of a man's life between cultures, an 'autobiographical-cum-fictive text'<sup>6</sup> that maps discursive transformations from cross-cultural curiosity over representational ambivalence to colonialism. In so doing, it tells us a story about the changing fortunes of the Maori and their country under Europe's tightening imperial grip and at the same time bears witness to global civility's evaporation in what Eric Hobsbawm has called 'the age of empire.'<sup>7</sup>

By stretching the limits of the 'long and wide eighteenth century'<sup>8</sup> to include large parts of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the case studies making up *Representations of Global Civility* hope to challenge both implicit and explicit assumptions about Europe's, and especially Britain's, relationships with extra-European peoples and their cultures in the imperial era. The civilizing mission and military power at the heart of the British Empire in its heyday have too often been uncritically accepted as historical constants by literary and cultural critics. A dire consequence of such de-historicised scholarship is that 'European mechanisms of mastery over alien civilizations' have become 'the ruling theme of cross-cultural studies.'<sup>9</sup> For example, to 'project [Said's] findings backward, to read precolonial ethnography as if its rhetoric

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5 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995), 3, 7, 31-49 & 87.

6 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 233.

7 Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1987). I stretch Hobsbawm's periodization to include the period beginning with Queen Victoria's accession to the throne in 1837.

8 Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10 [my emphasis].

9 Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576 – 1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.



bespoke European dominance of the world, or its defensive tropes necessarily foretold aggressive expansion, is anachronistic.<sup>10</sup> Richmond Barbour's *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576 – 1626* (2003), from which these words are taken, is among a growing number of thought-provoking studies aimed at presenting a more nuanced picture of cultural and commercial traffic in the early modern or Renaissance periods. From the late 1990s onwards, a number of scholars have started to re-examine what has often been contextualised as an exclusively European phenomenon so that the Renaissance can now be characterised as embedded in, and inextricably intertwined with, international commerce, discoveries and cultural cross-fertilisation. Lisa Jardine's *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (1996), as well as Jardine and Brotton's *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (2000), challenge received ideas about Europe's rich cultural production in the centuries following Francesco Petrarca's revival of ancient intellectuals, such as Cicero and Seneca.<sup>11</sup> Petrarch's letters – among which we find some addressed to his contemporaries, and others written to those he believed to be his Roman predecessors – helped to reinvigorate interest in classical philosophy, aesthetics and art across Europe.<sup>12</sup> Coupled with scientific innovations, discoveries and goods imported from rising empires in the east, such innovations resulted in a rich cultural texture containing a plethora of ideas, influences and skills, which were retrospectively reinterpreted by Western intellectuals in order to cement Europe's centrality at a time when the Ottomans had ceased to be a military threat. But Jardine and Brotton's studies not only question reductive notions about 'the regeneration of European civilisation nourished entirely by taproots in classical Greece and imperial Rome,'<sup>13</sup> they also depart from more traditional cross-cultural research in a number of ways: Fernand

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10 Ibid., 3.

11 Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (London: MacMillan, 1996); Lisa Jardine & Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West* (London: Reaktion, 2000).

12 Compare: Francesco Petrarca, *Petrarch: The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters*. A Selection from his Correspondence with Boccaccio and other Friends, Designed to Illustrate the Beginnings of the Renaissance. Translated from the Original Latin; together with Historical Introductions and Notes, ed. by James Harvey Robinson & Henry Winchester Rolfe (1898; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1970)

13 Gerald MacLean, 'Introduction: Re-Orienting the Renaissance,' in MacLean, ed., *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), 1.

Braudel's work on the multi-cultural Mediterranean, for instance, focuses primarily on commerce and commodity exchanges, but 'had little impact on the more cultural and philosophical understanding of the development of the Renaissance.'<sup>14</sup> In this regard, then, scholarship of this era has shifted quite substantially in recent years and paved the way to more specialised studies on selected aspects of early modern literature and culture.

In line with Richmond Barbour's concerns, Europe's relations with the Islamic world in the pre-Orientalist moment have received much critical attention. Especially Nabil Matar and Gerald MacLean have broken new ground and thoroughly redefined English imperial ambitions and identities by showing how they took shape in the dynamic field of tension between East and West. Whilst Matar's work examines the tremendous influences of Islam on cultural life in the British Isles more generally, Maclean's work concentrates on the specifics of Anglo-Ottoman interaction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>15</sup> Their studies carefully trace Anglo-Islamic contacts in 'the North African, the Ottoman and the Persian-Indian regions'<sup>16</sup> and demonstrate their lasting literary and cultural impacts.

In addition to the predominantly Anglo-American scholarship on the cross-cultural texture of the Renaissance, Turkish scholars, too, have been interested in English representations of the rich and diverse traditions of Islam. Early examples are some works by the University of Ankara Professor Orhan Burian: in 1951 he published a short piece on 'Shakespeare in Turkey'

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14 Jerry Brotton, 'St George between East and West,' in MacLean, ed., *Re-Orienting the Renaissance*, 50-65, here 51.

15 The story of Joseph Pitts, a captive of Algerian pirates from Exeter, Devon, captured in 1678, shows that Eurocentric notions of power are historically relative. For some Muslims in North Africa, he was the first Christian they had ever seen. He thus attracted considerable attention and could testify to 'the Muslim sense of superiority at the first encounter with the fair-skinned northern peoples, the antipathy toward the infidel and finally the acceptance of the Christian as a fellow human.' Compare: Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1. Islam in Britain is an early result in this emerging field and was followed by Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery (1999) and Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689 (2005). MacLean's books *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (2004) and *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (2007) form the centrepiece of the following analyses of Anglo-Ottoman interaction.

16 Gerald MacLean & Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic world, 1558-1713* (Oxford & New York, Oxford University Press, 2011), 12.

and in the following year appeared his article 'Interest of the English in Turkey as Reflected in English Literature of the Renaissance' as well as an edited version of *The Report of Lello, Third English Ambassador to the Sublime Porte*.<sup>17</sup> Most importantly, however, in his 'Interest of the English' he mentions the only two studies on Anglo-Islamic interaction that had been written up until the 1950s. One is the unpublished dissertation of Warner G. Rice, entitled *Turks, Moors, and Persians in Elizabethan Drama* (Harvard University, 1925); the other is Samuel C. Chew's monumental *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (1937), which not only covers a wide range of topics, but also visits Ottoman, Persian and Spanish lands under Islamic rule. Despite the limitations of its 'single archive analysis',<sup>18</sup> Chew's comprehensive study remains an invaluable source for all attempts to explore English representations of, and interaction with, the Islamic world.

The present study is based on these influences and builds on them at the same time as it widens their geographical outlook in order to write a global history of English travels in the long eighteenth century. For this purpose, it treats the Ottoman Empire as already familiar – but often misunderstood – territory for the English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and contrasts representations of it with reports of those who returned from the South Pacific. This vast ocean became a key area of English exploration in the second half of the eighteenth century and was criss-crossed by James Cook, the most famous maritime traveller of his age. The voluminous journals of his three extensive voyages (1768-71, 1772-75 and 1776-80) have been edited and published by J. C. Beaglehole between 1955 and 1967. Subsequently, they spawned both an enormous body of scholarship and veritable controversies over Western representations of Pacific Islanders, culminating in the debate between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere. Whilst Sahlins has interpreted Cook's arrival on Hawai'i as coinciding with an important local festival in which the Captain took on the role of the fertility god Lono, Obeyesekere has responded in the early 1990s by blowing 'a post-colonial whistle,'

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17 Orhan Burian, 'Shakespeare in Turkey,' *Shakespeare Quarterly* 2: 2 (1951), 127-128; 'Interest of the English in Turkey as Reflected in English Literature of the Renaissance,' *Oriens* 5 (1952), 209-29. Unfortunately, I had no access to the *Report* whilst doing doctoral research in Turkey. However, Yaprak Eran kindly introduced me to his work and discussed the two shorter pieces with me.

18 Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 6.

contending that such an interpretation 'was just a further stage in the western mytho-biography of Cook and part of a long European tradition that native populations saw white men as gods.'<sup>19</sup> The dichotomously structured logic underlying such debates reproduces the rhetorical inventory of colonialism and its sharp distinctions,<sup>20</sup> which is why *Representations of Global Civility* seeks to challenge them by foregrounding the improvisational dimensions of cross-cultural encounters in the pre-imperial period.

This study thus concentrates on some lesser known works in order to shift attention away from canonical figures such as Cook to seemingly marginal perspectives, thereby illuminating, as well as complementing, what was often thought about those well-known travellers and the places they visited. Its analyses of the accounts by Keate, Barrington, Parker and Maning frequently resort to two studies published by Rod Edmond and Jonathan Lamb, respectively. Edmond's *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (1997) examines a plethora of texts, topics and lives connected to Western conceptions and experiences of Oceania's multi-faceted world of islands and archipelagos. It, too, insists on historically grounded readings of specific colonial and post-colonial constellations by emphasising that 'Pacific societies were colonized slowly and unevenly, and never entirely succumbed to western goods and practices which inevitably were modified when they crossed the beach.'<sup>21</sup> Of course, the beach figures crucially in representations of encounters at or by the sea. Following Greg Denning's description of it as an in-between space,<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Lamb characterises its landward and seaward sides as 'physically proximate' but finds them 'utterly different in their historical profiles and cultural valences.'<sup>23</sup> Whilst his book *Preserving the Self in the South Pacific, 1680-1840* (2001) reads travel accounts in the contexts of both instinctual self-preservation and political theories of the self, its focus is on texts in the tradition of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, in which a single castaway finds himself vis-à-vis the intricacies of a world whose symbolic and

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19 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 52.

20 *Ibid.*, 21

21 *Ibid.*, 14.

22 Compare: Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 189-213.

23 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 133.

material orders he cannot comprehend. By contrast, the challenge of collective self-preservation is an important aspect of extreme maritime travel unexamined in Lamb's study. But Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands* allows us to explore the multi-layered complexities involved in encounters of representatives of two radically different cultures in the Pacific context. The present study thus adapts the framework of *Preserving the Self* to the shipwreck of the *Antelope* and the ensuing exchanges on the Palauan beach. But what about Barrington, Parker and Maning? The protagonists of the two remaining case studies in the Pacific arena also start their adventures on the beach. On the one hand, they arrive as haggard convict or well-travelled English housewife; on the other, they model themselves on Sterne's idiosyncratic protagonist of *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767) and need two whole chapters of grandiloquent self-presentation to disembark. But in either case, they have to cross the beach before they can start their adventures in the largely unknown Antipodean worlds of New Zealand and Australia.

When Britons set out to these archipelagos and continents, they hardly ever knew what their journeys had in store for them because months at sea were disorientating. The South Pacific thus promised the discovery of exotic island communities, alien customs and unknown rituals; however, maritime long distance travel to this part of the globe was as much about the exploration of new worlds as it challenged the perseverance of explorers. Unlike Oriental travel, which was caught up in 'perpetual re-enactment' by virtue of countless precedents since ancient times, Pacific exploration was 'from the start unaccountable and ungovernable.'<sup>24</sup> Their seemingly fundamental differences notwithstanding, both kinds of travel are 'extreme' in that they subject travellers to various hardships and rare pleasures whilst tying together the old world of the Ottoman Empire and the novelties of the South Pacific. This perspective opens up gateways not only into the dynamics of contact zones in both regions, but also to the changes, transformations and developments within European discursive formations. More importantly, however, it enables us to shift the centre of gravity away from what is deeply ingrained, institutionally normalised and culturally inoculated. A cursory glance at literary scholarship on cross-cultural encounters reveals how urgent such analyses are: though historically acute, Peter Sloterdijk's philosophical analysis of

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24 Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here 447.

globalisation, for instance, remains steeped in traditional approaches to contact phenomena. He characterises the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods as ‘the time of unilateral action,’ a chapter of world history dominated by ‘asymmetrical appropriation originating in the harbours, courts and ambitions of Europe.’<sup>25</sup> The present study sets out to complicate such one-sided histories by insisting on agency and subjectivity on both sides of the cultural divide. Such an approach makes possible a long eighteenth century that is not merely global, but also governed by a bond of enlightened civility rather than narrowly defined notions of aristocratic European courtesy.<sup>26</sup>

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25 Peter Sloterdijk, *Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals: Fuer eine philosophische Theorie der Globalisierung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2005), 23.

26 Compare; Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

## 2. The Inception of Global Civility

### Henry Blount's *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636)

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Islam was a constant presence in the political, cultural and religious life of early modern Christian Europe. A complex amalgam of fear and fascination governed western perceptions of the Muslim world, whose frontiers, unlike today, cut across the continent's centre.<sup>1</sup> Especially the Ottoman Empire, which rose to global prominence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries from its humble origins in central Anatolia, preoccupied the minds of Western observers. The conquest of Constantinople in 1453, as well as the first and second siege of Vienna in 1529 and 1683, respectively, brought home to Europeans the military capabilities of the Ottomans and sparked widespread fears of '[t]he glorious Empire of the Turkes, the present terrour of the world.'<sup>2</sup>

There was, however, a contrasting representational strand, particularly in English writings. '[C]ultural interest in the Ottoman Empire was becoming firmly rooted in English soil'<sup>3</sup> when commercial and political exchanges between both nations intensified from the late sixteenth century onwards. Englishmen going east witnessed a powerful empire straddling three continents, in which an Islamic meritocracy held important posts and capable converts could rise to the highest echelons of power. In this regard, the Ottoman realm differed decisively from European countries and their hereditary aristocracies, and provided foreign visitors with an ethno-religiously diverse imperial

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1 Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 2.

2 Knolles, Richard, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes, from The first beginning of that Nation to the rising of the Othoman Familie*, 5th ed., (London: Adam Islip, 1638), 1.

3 MacLean, *Looking East*, 56.

model that lent itself to emulation at the same time as it threatened Christianity with its military capabilities.

Indeed, English diplomats, merchants and travellers returning from Ottoman lands frequently expressed ‘imperial envy,’<sup>4</sup> a complex structure of feeling denoting the lack of and desire for an imperial identity. Whilst the Ottomans had already established such an identity, the global imaginary of the English still lacked a ‘real world referent [...] – a British Empire.’<sup>5</sup> One traveller in particular, Henry Blount, made substantial contributions to British knowledge of the Ottomans by setting aside received wisdom in order to explore the reasons behind the Ottoman Empire’s long-standing and continued success. He set out in 1634, at a time when the religious rivalries sparked by the Reformation and the Thirty Years’ War made travel tremendously difficult. In such a troubled climate, Englishmen could not hope to tap new markets or establish mutually improving relations with continental European countries, many of which were

predominantly Catholic and as such opposed to English Protestantism. Looking and going east thus seemed a natural solution for curious and expansive minds in the British Isles.

The present chapter addresses Anglo-Ottoman relations in the first half of the seventeenth century by situating Henry Blount’s *Voyage into the Levant* (1636) in an emergent discourse of global civility. The *Voyage* is a pivotal moment in the emergence of this formation, since its representation of the Ottomans is based on a strictly humanistic and ‘secular logic’<sup>6</sup> rather than deeply entrenched stereotypes or religious propaganda. This scientific approach anticipates the rational patterns of thought central to the age of reason at the same time as it allows for the historically specific study of imperialisms, their expansive aspirations and power structures.

Frequently overwhelmed by the empire’s military power and splendour, European travellers in Ottoman lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had to be civil. In this realm, they recognised their guides, interlocutors

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4 Gerald MacLean, ‘Ottomanism Before Orientalism? Bishop Henry King praises Henry Blount, Passenger in the Levant,’ in Ivo Kamps & Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge: European Discoveries in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Macmillan, 2001), 85–96, here 86.

5 Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London’s Theatre of the East, 1576 – 1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 70.

6 MacLean, *Looking East*, 180.



and hosts as members of a highly advanced, if not superior, culture with both a global reach and a long history. Civility was thus not an end in itself but a crucial survival mechanism and a means to find out more about Europe's significant Islamic other. Blount's account, too, conforms to this pattern. His survey of the Ottoman Empire's military, religion, justice system and morality bespeaks admiration for these institutions and simultaneously judges them according to their relevance for the empire's success. The first part of this chapter discusses Blount's representation of these four cornerstones and contextualises them within his own imperial preoccupations. However, insider knowledge of Ottoman institutions and morals as Blount saw them are not the only things that return to Britain with him. The circulation of goods, institutions and skills in Anglo-Ottoman interaction was crucial to the emergence of western modernity. The second section will plumb the depth of these cultural flows and establish the extent to which the *Voyage* contributed to them, especially with regard to coffee and coffee-houses. Interestingly, this beverage is at the heart of Blount's first encounter with an Ottoman official in the Balkans and many comparable adventures follow when Blount is snooping around military or naval premises. He thus has to employ a good deal of cross-cultural showmanship in various situations and the third section explores these performative improvisations in the contact zone. The final part of this chapter examines the limits of Blount's receptivity to Ottoman culture. Although the empire's ethno-religious diversity is an intriguing constituent of his investigation, Jews have no place in his framework of imperial rationality. He resorts to denigratory and widely circulated stereotypes in order to show their contemptibility. However, as we shall see, this attempt at limiting his own receptivity brings into focus even more forcefully that which initially prompted him to go, namely an imperial vision on a global scale.

## 1. An imperial vision 300 years after Osman

In 1634, Henry Blount sets out to survey 'the only moderne people great in action, [...] whose Empire hath so suddenly invaded the world, and fixt it selfe such firme foundations as no other ever did.'<sup>7</sup> These words portray the

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7 Blount, Henry, *A Voyage into the Levant* (London: John Legatt, 1636), 2. (All further references are to this edition).

Ottomans as modern and global people with an imperial history that Europeans both envied and feared. Throughout the opening pages of his book, Blount enthusiastically represents 'Turkey' (2) as dynamic locus of advancement and repeatedly expresses imperial envy. In this respect, his depiction of the East differs decisively from accounts of the post-Napoleonic era, in which the empire's crumbling vigour, backwardness and decay are predominant. However, since 'England threw itself into the competition for overseas trade and colonies'<sup>8</sup> from the early seventeenth century onwards, rhetorical structures and tropes such as imperial envy figure crucially in the (travel) literature of the period.

Blount's account in particular represents a sea change in travel and travel-writing, since it expresses both scientific cross-cultural curiosity and the desire to know how an empire is created, run and sustained. But the calamities caused by the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War rendered impossible the satisfaction of his intellectual endeavours in Europe.<sup>9</sup> Blount's desire for 'knowledge' (1), which 'advances best, in observing of people, whose *institutions* much differ from ours' (1), thus lead him to the East where the Ottomans had established magnificence and stability under an imperial umbrella. Explaining his approach, Blount writes that

customes conformable to our owne, or to such wherewith we are already acquainted, doe but repeat our old observations, with little acquist of new. So my former time spent in viewing *Italy, France,* and some little of *Spaine,* being countries of Christian institution, did but represent in a severall dresse, the effect of what I knew before. (1)

He suggests a comparative approach that replaces Christian supernaturalism, as well as images of the 'terrible Turk',<sup>10</sup> with experiences of cultural difference. Blount wants to find out whether 'the *Turkish* way appeare absolutely barbarous, as we are given to understand, or rather an other kinde of civillitie, different from ours [...] (2). Aiming at the defamiliarisation of naturalised

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8 Jonathan Haynes, 'Two Seventeenth Century Perspectives on the Middle East: George Sandys and Sir Henry Blount,' *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 3, The Self and the Other (Spring, 1983), 4-22, here 5.

9 Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004) 136.

10 Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 115; see also: MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 129.

perceptual patterns, our Oxford graduate was aware that '[c]ultural difference is crucial to knowledge:<sup>11</sup>

The logic of Blount's argument is clear enough: the human intellect desires knowledge, and since experience of difference increases knowledge in proportion to increase in difference, the desiring intellect craves experience of radical difference.<sup>12</sup>

Blount's eagerness to leave behind tradition and received wisdom is a landmark in the development of global civility. He is ready to be favourably impressed by the Ottomans and willingly shares the fruits of his labour accumulated in the East with his contemporaries.

One of them, Bishop Henry King, even wrote a panegyric on his friend's achievements. Offering a comprehensive body of knowledge of the Levant and its rulers, the *Voyage* has 'at once informed' him of the Ottomans 'and cur'd' his desire to travel.<sup>13</sup> Most importantly, however, Blount's 'piercing judgement does relate/The policy and manage of each state'<sup>14</sup> by transforming 'travel writing from the collecting of interesting anecdotes about other cultures into a systematic programme of knowledge.'<sup>15</sup> As a Baconian man of science interested in empirical observation, Blount made available this system to the general interest in empire at the time and the learned Bishop praises him for doing so. Imperial and global management may, then, be characterised as Blount's preoccupation on his journey, and we may conclude from King's poem that he captured the political mood of his time. But what is more, Blount's personal thoughts on what he saw retreat into the background in his book. He ignores social relations and everyday matters except when they are immediately relevant to his imperial concerns.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike William Biddulph, who 'was the first English chaplain to publish an account of life in the Ottoman Empire'<sup>17</sup> in 1609, Blount did not 'set out

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11 MacLean, *Looking East*, 180-1.

12 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, p. 135

13 Henry King, 'To my Noble and Judicious Friend Sir Henry Blount upon his Voyage,' in George Saintsbury, ed., *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*. 3 vols. (1905; repr. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), Vol III., 223 – 226, here 225 (line 98).

14 *Ibid.*, 226, (line 118)

15 MacLean, *Looking East*, 179.

16 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 149.

17 *Ibid.*, 51.

to prove the correctness of his religious beliefs.<sup>18</sup> However, given his strictly secular, rational and scientific framework, Blount does not merely accumulate facts and figures. He looks at the Ottoman world ‘through a lens of pragmatic curiosity’ and ‘is always ready to be favourably impressed.’<sup>19</sup> For example, in the opening paragraph of the *Voyage*, Blount argues that ‘[i]ntellectual Complexions have no desire so strong, as that of *knowledge*’ (1). But only a few lines later this sober and rational take on ‘humaine affaires’ (1) is blended with his admiration for the Ottomans and their empire: ‘I was of opinion, that he who would behold these times in their greatest glory, could not finde a better *Scene* then *Turky*’ (2). Anxious to see for himself the glorious eastern empire, Blount is concerned with ‘four particular cares’ (2) that I would like to elaborate on in some detail, since they determine both the structure and content of his account:

‘to observe the Religion, Manners, and Policie of the Turkes’ (2)  
 ‘to acquaint [himself] with those other sects which live under the Turkes, as Greekes, Armenians, Freinks, and Zinganaes, but especially the lewes (2)  
 ‘to see the Turkish Army, then going against Poland, and therein to note, whether their discipline Military encline to ours, or else be of a new mould, though not without some touch, from the countries they have subdued’ (2)  
 ‘to view Gran Cairo, and that for two causes; first, it being clearly the greatest concourse of Mankinde in these times, and perhaps that ever was; there must needs be some proportionable spirit in the Government: for such vaste multitudes, and those of wits so deeply malicious, would soone breed confusion, famine, and utter desolation, if in the Turkish domination there were nothing but sottish sensualitie, as most Christians conceive: Lastly, because Egypt is held to have beene the fountain of all Science, and Arts civill, therefore I did hope to finde some sparks of those cinders not yet put out.’ (2-3)

After Blount has related all his adventures, the *Voyage* passes from travel narrative to anthropological reflection. Here he reiterates both his interest in comparative cultural enquiries and the centrality of the four imperial cornerstones:

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18 Ibid., 126.

19 Ann Rosalind Jones, ‘Cesare Vecellio, Venetian Writer and Art-book Cosmopolitan,’ in Jyotsna G. Singh, ed., *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009), 305-322, here 319-20.

The most important parts of all States are foure, Armes, Religion, Iustice, and Morall Cuftomes: in treating of these, most men set downe what they should be, and use to regulate that by their owne filly education, and received opinions guided by sublilities, and moralities imaginary; this I leave to Vtopians who doating on their phantastique suppfals, shew their owne capacitie, or hypocrifie, and no more: I in remembering the Turkish institutions, will only Register what I found them, nor censure them by any rule, but that of more, or lesse sufficiency to their ayme, which I suppose the Empires advancement: (61-2)

Blount's primary interest in matters of statecraft is based on factual sobriety and pragmatic judgments. His account neither diminishes the global achievements of the Ottomans by resorting to Eurocentric 'hegemonic reflex[es]'<sup>20</sup> nor perpetuates contemporary phantasmagorias of unvarnished cruelty, essential difference and divine chastisement. Since he is not content with received opinions and 'would not sit downe with a book knowledge' (4) of the Ottomans, he boldly criss-crosses their lands and witnesses first-hand what other contemporary commentators only knew through representations. Occasionally, however, he loses his critical distance and his descriptions tip over into imperial envy. Accordingly, as opposed to a 'sedentary' or armchair traveller, who is content with perusing book pages, Blount is a 'nomadic' traveller, who actually travels.<sup>21</sup> As such, we should give him some leeway whenever impressions of Ottoman splendour override the rationality he so insistently preaches.

Bishop Henry King, on the other hand, seems to have preferred armchair adventures instead of putting himself through the hazards of Levantine travel:

[...] By your eyes  
I here have made my full discoveries;  
And all your countries so exactly seen,  
As in the voyage I had sharer been.<sup>22</sup>

Judging from his full-bodied praise, the *Voyage* is a fountain of knowledge and Blount was successful in surveying the Ottoman dominions, having seen what

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20 Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), 15.

21 Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, 106.

22 King, 'To my Noble and Judicious Friend,' 25, (lines 105 – 108).

only few people had seen before him – ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in a pragmatically organised empire. This achievement notwithstanding, both travel and travel-writing remained bones of contention, and were often seen as ‘somehow unnecessary in the acquisition of true learning that comes from books.’<sup>23</sup> The number of British travellers, and by implication the number of published accounts, was consequently limited because only a few left their homes for foreign worlds in pre-imperial times. The swashbuckling and courageous ones, however, had to cope with what Donna Landry has called ‘extreme travel’ – ‘travel in which extreme conditions, bodily deprivations, and various forms of painful perseverance and rare pleasures were at issue.’<sup>24</sup>

Decade after decade, travelers speak of their journeys across steppes, deserts, and mountain landscapes, lodging in filthy khans, flea-infested camps, or drafty tents, where in the bitter cold of morning the scorpion might be lurking in one’s boots [...].<sup>25</sup>

Emphasising ‘all the hazard and endurance of travell’ (4), Blount joins this tradition, in which ‘being incommoded was somehow integral to the experience.’<sup>26</sup> This prospect did not put him off, however, and the Ottoman Empire proved more attractive than the journey’s dangers repulsive:

The Ottoman Empire linked three continents, Asia, Europe, and Africa, encompassing an array of cultures, languages, peoples, climates, and various social and political structures. Ottomans negotiated between the contradictory, yet also complementary, visions and organizational forms of urban and rural; nomad and settled; Islamic and non-Muslim; Sunni Muslims, Shiites, and Sufi sects; scribes and poets; artisans and merchants; peasants and peddlers; and bandits and bureaucrats. They forged political institutions, combined military talent with territorial good fortune, and remained flexible and cognizant of the vastness of the imperial reach.<sup>27</sup>

There seems to have been hardly anything that the Ottomans did not have to cope with, organize or negotiate in the more than six centuries of their rule.

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23 Jyotsna G. Singh, ‘Introduction: The Global Renaissance,’ in Singh, ed., 1-27, here 12.

24 Donna Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here 447.

25 *Ibid.*, 445.

26 *Ibid.*

27 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 7.

And it is, indeed, this vastness and plurality, sometimes achieved by the law of the iron fist, at other times established through dexterous negotiations, which is both intriguing and attractive to Blount. The dean of Renaissance political philosophy, Niccolo Machiavelli, had already formulated the pivotal point of empire building long before Blount set out: '[D]ifficulties arise when you acquire states in a land with different languages, customs, and laws. To keep these states, you need good fortune and much diligence.'<sup>28</sup> But how did the Ottomans implement this diligence in their empire? We can find the answer in those institutions that Blount set out to survey: '*Armes, Religion, Iustice, and Morall Cuftomes*.'

The interconnectedness of imperial envy, the readiness to endure the hazards of travel and his comparative approach manifests itself in Blount's description of Ottoman institutions in both the narrative passages and the anthropological reflections at the end of the *Voyage*. Drawing on his experience in Europe, probably with the disastrous outcomes of the Thirty Years' War in mind, he states that 'we cannot raise two, or three *Companies* of Souldiers, but they pilfer, and rifle wheresoever they passe' (12/13). Although his first clash with soldiers in the Balkans seems to mirror his experiences,<sup>29</sup> he is nevertheless fascinated by Ottoman military practices in the ensuing encounters. In Belgrade he observes 'such brave horses, and men so dexterous in the use of the Launce I had not seen' (11) and goes on to admire 'the Ottoman system of military supply'<sup>30</sup> once this army is on the march:

I wondred to see such a multitude so cleare of confusion, violence, want, sicknesse, or any other disorder; and though we were almost threescore thousand, and sometimes found not a towne in 7. or 8. dayes; yet there was such plentie of good Bisket, Rice, and Mutton, as wheresoever I passed up, and downe to view the Spahyes, and others in their tents, they would often make me sit, and eate with them very plentifull, and well. (13)

Similar pieces of information regarding size, supply and infrastructure as well as admiration of military skillfulness in this passage resurface in the anthro-

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28 Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, transl. by Peter Constantine (London: Vintage Books, 2007), 6-7.

29 Maclean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 143 & 145.

30 *Ibid.*, 147.

pological reflection in the last part of his account. Not only are Ottoman soldiers 'admirable with their Bow and Arrowes' (70), they also

[m]arch in Ranke and File with wonderfull silence, which makes commands received readily: they are always provided of Bisket, dried flesh, and store of Rice, with a kinde of course Butter, so as in the greatest desarts, they are in plentie: thus their Armies passe the sandy barren Countreyes towards Persia, with lesse endurance then did the Romans in small numbers of old. (70-1)

That these two passages from different parts of his book contain comparable information is telling with regard to the author's imperial preoccupations. The Ottoman forces, which 'Western Europeans could not hope to overcome',<sup>31</sup> differ considerably from 'the disorderly horde of prejudiced legend.'<sup>32</sup> Additionally, while the former passage centres on the Balkans and the troops there raised, the latter reiterates the given information and transposes the local focus onto a global scale, with Persia and the imperial Romans being points of geographical and historical comparison. Equally important are Blount's descriptions in terms of choice of words and style: 'wondred,' 'plentifull, and well,' 'wonderfull' and 'plentie' transgress the strictly factual framework of the Baconian man of science and hint at something deeper. Surrounded by a disciplined army, military splendour and an efficient infrastructure, Blount's descriptions are again expressive of imperial envy arising in a well-managed environment that seems to have made a deep impression on him.

In other parts of his account, Blount is more sober than envious in his description of military organization, but even here the Ottomans' managerial qualities are clearly exhibited. While staying in Belgrade, he observes that 'there is kept great part of the *Gran Signior* his treasure, to be ready when he warres on that side the *Empire*' (11).<sup>33</sup> A short time later, in 'Philippopolis' Blount 'saw the *Gran Signior* his stable of *Camels*, [...] which carry his provision when he Warres on this side his *Empire*' (20).<sup>34</sup> These sentences bear witness to the remarkable infrastructure – in terms of supply, money and

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31 Daniel J. Vitkus, 'Trafficking with the Turk: English Travelers in the Ottoman Empire during the Early Seventeenth Century,' in Ivo Kamps & Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge: European Discoveries in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Macmillan, 2001), 35–52, here 35.

32 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 147.

33 *Ibid.*, 144.

34 *Ibid.*, 155.



transport – that the Ottoman soldiers could rely on in their multinational, if not global, military enterprises and Blount, whether in transit or in place, records all the evidence thereof. Hence, his readiness to be favourably impressed has ubiquitous incentives. However, we have to ask some questions at this point: if one is interested in ‘the organisation and longevity of empire’<sup>35</sup> and its literary representations, why should imperial envy be confined to the Ottoman case? Were other Empires – the Roman, Byzantine or Habsburg ones – not equally ‘dominant and durable for a long period of time,’<sup>36</sup> with others gazing enviously at their institutions and consolidated power? ‘Perhaps specific to the Ottomans,’ according to Karen Barkey, ‘was continued flexibility and adaptability’<sup>37</sup> in the interests of maintaining imperial power. The crucial point, then, is that ‘[m]anaging diversity [emerged as] the *sine qua no* of imperial persistence, requiring mechanisms that were flexible enough to endure.’<sup>38</sup> Consequently, one can describe empires as

structurally resembling [a] hub-and-spoke network pattern, where each spoke was attached to the center but was less directly related to others. The fact that imperial relations were vertically integrated, and that peripheral entities communicated mainly with the center and with one another only through the center, provided centers with added control over the various peripheral entities. Divide and rule, “brokerage,” segmentation and integration become the basic structural components of empire.<sup>39</sup>

The strong imperial centre thus operates a complex political entity that is unified and consolidated as well as polyvalent, adaptable and able to learn. If one follows Blount on his journey through Ottoman lands, it is exactly this seemingly paradox duality that comes to the fore.

On the one hand, there is, for example, the Ottoman army as a manifest sign of imperial strength and on the other, there is the need for it to adapt to different and changing demands. Probably with the picture of a strong, raiding and vast force before his mind’s eye, Blount at one point

enquired, why the Turkish Armies were not so numerous as in former times: among the many answers, the wisest hit upon three points, first that the

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35 Barkey, 5.

36 *Ibid.*, 15.

37 *Ibid.*, 7.

38 *Ibid.*, 132.

39 *Ibid.*, 10.

enemies now (excepting the Persian) were not so Potent as heretofore; Secondly, experience had taught them, that multitudes over-vast are neither capable of order, nor provision; wherefore to avoyde confusion, and famine, they bring no more into the field than necessary: the third was, before their Dominions were enlarged, they thought it better to employ their multitudes in new Conquests, then to leave them idle, necessitous, and dangerous at home; but since their enlarged territories, they are distributed into Colonyes to people, and manage them, which thereby will in time, become more populous, and potent, then ever. (69)

In this situation, he implements his comparative method by asking questions and gathering information. The Ottoman military apparatus emerges as an adaptable entity open to changes and past campaigns provide the experiential basis for future strategies. But what is more, by learning how to manage their troops in particular situations, the Ottomans have at their disposal the means to manage the entire empire and its diversity at the same time. Blount's questions and descriptions move from 'Turkish Armies' over 'enlarged territories' to 'Colonyes' and finally arrive at the conclusion that they 'will in time, become more *populous*, and *potent*, then ever.' It is again the idea of successful and flexible power that makes empire in general and the Ottomans in particular both attractive and modern in Blount's eyes.

We can find another pertinent example of how much Blount admired Ottoman managerial skills in those passages of the *Voyage* in which he writes about 'the greatest concourse of Mankind in these time' (3) – Cairo. Here military power and the management of an ethnically and religiously diverse multitude converge in his survey of this metropolis, its inhabitants and the concomitant problems. One of the largest cities on the Mediterranean Sea, Cairo is 'the fountaine of all *Science*, and *Arts civill*' (3). This is not only a must for a learned and well-read traveller like Blount, but also a challenge:

Notwithstanding the excessive compasse of this Citie, it is populous beyond all proportion; for as we rid up, and downe, the principall Streets were so throng'g with people, as the Masters of our Asses, went always before, shoving, and crying Bdaharack, that is, make roome; such infinite swarmes of Arabs, and Indians flocke to the plentie, and pleasures of Gran Cairo. (43-4)

While staying in Cairo, he 'expresses admiration at the Ottoman ability to rule a city and people that had been brutalized by centuries of invading armies and

repressive regimes' and provides his readers with concrete examples of that very ability:

[The number of] the noted streets [is], foure, and twentie thousand, besides petty turnings, and divisions; some of those streets I have found two miles in length, some not a quarter so long; every one of them is lockt up in the night, with a doore at each end, and guarded by a Musketier, whereby fire, robberies, tumults, and other disorders are prevented. Without the Citie, toward the wildernesse, to stop sudden incursions of the Arabs from abroad, there watch on Horse-back foure Saniacks, with each of them a thousand Horsemen: Thus is this Citie every night in the yeare, guarded with eight, and twentie thousand men. (38)

Blount's account of Cairo illustrates the city's vastness and diversity and indicates, moreover, the expenditure – monetary and military – that is necessary to sustain it. Cairo is, accordingly, already a modern metropolis in the 1630s, demanding the Ottoman authorities' attention and skills in order to function. If sudden and fierce action is needed in Egypt, it will readily be applied, just like other means of imperial rule might have been appropriate elsewhere.

During his 11-month journey, Blount observed different strategies based on particular conditions on the ground: 'It is the custome of the Ottoman Crowne, to preserve the old Liberties, to all Countryes who come in voluntary [...] but those whom they take by conquest, they use as booty, without pretending any humanitie, more then what is for the profit of the Conqueror; which most Conquerors doe in effect [...]' (53). This example illustrates that it is 'the diversity of peoples, communities, and territories, as well as the diversity of rule, that made empires.'<sup>40</sup> Blount could see a particularly successful example at work and what he observed, especially in terms of military power, size and ethno-religious diversity, must have confirmed that he was *vis-à-vis* the 'only moderne people great in action.'

After Blount has admirably, if not enviously, described the Ottoman army, he goes on to delineate the essential features of Islam as he sees and interprets it – through a military and pragmatic lens, that is. Comparing 'those daintie *Pictures*, and *Musicke* in *Churches* (77) with Islam, Blount is sure that 'Mahomet [...] rather chose to build it upon the *Sword*, which with more assurance commands *Mankinde*' (77). He thus centres this part of his survey on

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40 Ibid., 12.

the ways in which Islam helps to promote, extend and consolidate Ottoman power by closely interweaving state and religion. Describing how 'the *Turkish Theology*' is framed 'excellently to correspond with the *State*' (79), he frames his argument in Machiavellian terms and treats 'the Prophet like a Renaissance prince skilled in the ways of imperial statecraft'.<sup>41</sup> For Blount, 'the *Turkish Empire* is originally compos'd to amplifie by warre' (95) and when the Prophet was asked what Miracles he had to approve his Doctrine, he drawing forth his Scymitar, told, that God having had his Miracles so long slighted by the incredulitie of men, would now plant his Lawes with a strong hand, and no more leave them to the discretion of Ignorant, and vaine man; and that hee had therefore sent him in the power of the Sword, rather then of Miracles. (77-8)

In Blount's version of Islam's historical trajectory, it is conducive to territorial expansion at the same time as it defies existing religious principles. As such, it serves the House of Osman well in its imperial ambitions and both converge in a 'supranational ideology'<sup>42</sup> at the heart of the empire's continued success. The primacy of the *raison d'état* is obvious in Blount's assessment of Islam, for he views religion through a Machiavellian lens.<sup>43</sup> When he characterises 'the *Sword*' as 'the foundation of *Empires*' (78) and interreligious struggles as 'serving right to the purpose of the *State*' (82), he echoes the pragmatic and flexible attitudes of statecraft first laid down by the famous Italian humanist. In Machiavelli's conceptualisation of the state all its constituent institutions and individuals have to bend to its interests. Especially religion is of paramount importance in this respect:

The rulers of a republic or of a kingdom [...] should uphold the basic principles of the religion which sustains them in being, and, if this be done, it will be easy for them to keep their commonwealth religious, and, in consequence, good and united. They should also foster and encourage everything likely to be of help to this end, even though they be convinced that it is quite fallacious. And the more should they do this the greater their prudence and the more they know of natural laws.<sup>44</sup>

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41 Ibid., 168.

42 Ibid., 13.

43 For Blount's attitude to Religion see: MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 168-9.

44 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses of Niccolò Machiavelli*, Vol. I, transl. by Leslie J. Walker (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 244.

According to this passage from Machiavelli's *Discorsi*, rulers should uphold and promote any doctrine that serves their and the state's interests, even if they do not agree with it: 'Relying on this functionalist concept of Religion, Machiavelli transforms it from the previous norm of politics into a mere means to an end.'<sup>45</sup> Instead of providing moral guidance, religious beliefs become part of a ruler's political toolbox, and in the event of territorial expansion, of imperial ideology, too.

Whilst Blount does not explicitly mention Machiavelli, his depiction of Islam and its role in the Ottoman state were probably inspired by the above and related thoughts. And he is, it will be recalled, a citizen of a nation with imperial ambitions and could observe the consequences of quarrelling religious factions in continental Europe, which probably also influenced the ways in which he framed Islam as a unifying and cohesive force. Commenting on the five daily prayers in the Islamic world, Blount asserts that 'the *opinions of Nations*, in point of *reverence* and *decency*' are 'so different' but at the same time emphasises 'that *Religion* runs no greater danger then of *Oblivion*, and therefore should bee often called to minde.' (88). His comparative method acknowledges culturally specific habits of worship in their own right, but his imperial preoccupations nonetheless determine the representation of these practices, namely that frequent prayers reinforce, albeit indirectly, the empire's 'supra-national ideology.'

If, according to Blount, religion is one of the means through which the Ottomans socially and institutionally normalised imperial culture, how did early modern Britons envision, and popularise, their emerging global ambitions? In Elizabethan and Jacobean Britain, 'regularly, with rich trappings and strong rhetoric, playhouses projected fictions of geographic mastery, making actions in distant lands present to the imagination of islanded spectators.'<sup>46</sup> The various degrees of cultural difference, as well as the imagined worlds and empires, in *Tamburlaine the Great*, *The Jew of Malta*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest* and *Othello* 'satisfied ethnographic curiosity and provided readers [and viewers] with the pleasures of the strange and foreign.'<sup>47</sup> Hence, theatrical

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45 Thomas, Paulsen, 'Machiavelli und die Idee der Staatsraison,' *IfS-Nachrichten* 2 (1996), 6-28, here 21 [my translation, S.K.].

46 Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, 40.

47 Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theatre and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), 21.

entertainment and dramatic literature were crucial in the fabrication of imperial visions and concomitant exigencies, such as the negotiation of alterity and management of acquired territories.

The rise of the Ottomans, albeit some 300 years earlier, began in the often vague realm of the imaginary, too. A dream promised Osman, the eponymous first Sultan of his dynasty, the rule over a vast empire.<sup>48</sup> Caroline Finkel has called this dream a 'founding myt[h]' of the Ottoman Empire and described its function as 'conjuring up a sense of temporal and divine authority and justifying the visible success of Osman and his descendants.'<sup>49</sup> In both cases, 'founding myths' are key events in the imperial imaginary, no matter whether they precede the empire (the British case) or start to circulate 'a century and a half'<sup>50</sup> after the first ruler's death (the Ottoman case). They are thus related to the inception of empire by either providing an ideal to which the nation aspires or by retrospectively justifying and consolidating expansive endeavours. Travelling in 'a period of intensive intelligence-gathering',<sup>51</sup> and often trying to make himself understood to the locals, Blount may very well have picked up some version or other of these fancy old stories, especially since they feed into his imperial concerns by emphasising conquest, expansion and *gaza* (holy war):

[...] Ottoman chroniclers, writing in a period of prolonged warfare with the Christian states of the Balkans and beyond, emphasized a religious inspiration for the early conquests of the dynasty, representing the Turcoman frontiersmen as motivated solely by a desire to spread Islam. Writing at a time when the political environment was quite different, an imperial and theocratic state of which Sunni Islam was the official religion, they attributed militant piety to these frontiersmen: it seemed appropriate to assert that it had always been thus, that the state had been created by the tireless efforts of Muslim warriors struggling against their supposed antithesis, the Christian kingdoms of Byzantium and Europe.<sup>52</sup>

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48 Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (London: Murray, 2005), 2.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 21.

52 Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 11.

When the Ottomans started writing histories of their early period the beginnings had already become ‘a distant memory.’<sup>53</sup> However, both the English and the Ottomans used projections or narratives of greatness to endow their imperial efforts with sense, historical veracity being only a secondary concern. Similarly, Blount represents religion as being conducive to the national interest, and in so doing intertwines political philosophy, the cultural memory of the Ottomans and his own concerns into a dialectically productive relationship of religion and state.

Key to imperial success, such relationships were to be found in other fields, too. Whilst Blount represents both the Ottoman military and Islam as primarily geared towards the state’s expansion, he shifts his focus to domestic affairs in his survey of the justice system. In keeping with his comparative perspective, he describes the ‘maine points, wherein *Turkish Iustice* differs from that of other nations [...]: it is more *Severe, Speedy, and Arbitrary*’ (89). And like Ottoman religious practices, it is closely knitted together with imperial interests: ‘Every *State* is then best fitted, when its *Lawes, and Governours* suit with the end whereto it is framed’ (94). Since expansion and conquered territories necessitate the maintenance of public order throughout the empire, Blount both describes and rationalises the severity of Ottoman justice:

They hold the foundation of all Empire to consist in exact obedience, and that in exemplary severitie; which is undeaniable in all the World, but more notable in their State, made up of severall People different in Bloud, Sect, and Interesse, one from another, nor linkt in affection, or any common engagement toward the publique good, other then what mere terror puts upon them; a sweet hand were uneffectuall upon such a subject. (89-90)

Imperial interests and social management on the one hand, and professional admiration and imperial envy on the other, converge in Blount’s description of Ottoman justice. Although it is strict and built on deterrence, it seems to have been crucial to imperial success and the ethno-religious diversity that comes with conquered territories. Yet, managing this diversity was not an end in itself, but rather served Ottoman power: ‘Tolerance, assimilation, and intolerance were on the menu of strategies designed to squeeze resources out of minorities and to enforce allegiance to the imperial state.’<sup>54</sup> The justice

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53 Ibid.

54 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 21.

system, it seems, is another brick in the imperial wall of highly flexible institutions that contributed to the consolidation, and maintenance, of Ottoman power. Of course, a *'sweet hand'* cannot achieve stability and Blount's favourable representation of Ottoman justice indicates that he 'assess[es] a regulation by its efficiency'<sup>55</sup> regardless of the immediate human cost involved.

In one of the most well-known passages from *The Prince*, Machiavelli makes a similar point by asserting that 'it is far safer to be feared than loved.'<sup>56</sup>

A ruler, he writes,

must not fear being reproached for cruelty when it is a matter of keeping his subjects united and loyal, because with a few exemplary executions he will be more merciful than those who, through too much mercy, allow the kind of disorder to spread that gives rise to plunder and murder. This harms the whole community, while an execution ordered by a prince harms only a single individual.<sup>57</sup>

Blount repeatedly endorses such strategic decision-making and emphasises that 'terror can be an effective way to drive a militarized empire forward while keeping the people in check.'<sup>58</sup> Comparing the Roman and Ottoman Empires, the *'Turke'* emerges as the more potent organiser of pacification in conquered territories:

[T]he Turkish Iustice curbes, and executes, without either remorse or respect; which succeeds better, then ever did the Romans, with all their milder arts of Civilttie; compare their conquests, with those made by the Turke; you shall finde his to continue quiet, and firme, theirs not secure for many ages; witenesse first Italy, then Greece, and France, alwayes full of Rebellions, Conspiracies, and new troubles. (90)

Describing the nexus between a justice system 'quicke [in] dispatch' (91) and its successful outcome, Blount gravitates towards Ottoman legal culture and its execution. Here, as well as elsewhere in the *Voyage*, his strictly rational framework breaks down and is replaced by imperial envy. Losing his critical

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55 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 146.

56 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 61.

57 *Ibid.*, 60.

58 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 170.



distance, his choice of words indicates that empirical observation is insufficient in capturing the greatness of the Ottomans who 'bin[d] with the tye of *feare*, whereto humane nature is ever enthralled' (90-1).

Moving from the general to the specific features of Ottoman justice, Blount is particularly impressed by its procedural speed. In this regard, it differs decisively from English common law: 'the cause is ever in lesse then two houres dispatched, *execution* instantly performed,' there are 'no old deeds, or any other reckonings beyond the memory of man' and no 'suspence, delay, and charge of suit' (91) can harm the citizen in question. Thus, being quick 'avoyds *confusion*, and cleares the *Court*' (91). Blount repeatedly emphasises these qualities in his account, since the Ottoman system prevents both the tedium of studying precedents and the complicated codification of rules by having 'little fixt law' (92). But not only does he represent eastern justice as efficient, he also corroborates his favourable survey through personal encounters with it, citing two misunderstandings that got him into the dock. However, both were quickly dispelled and he was freed: 'I must eternally remember the *Turkish* justice for honourable to *Strangers*, whereof I have twice had experience' (92).

This favourable survey notwithstanding, Blount re-establishes comparative rationality by specifying the problems of Ottoman justice. For example, 'their unsatiabie *covetousnesse*' is 'a thing of dangerous effect, many times disappointing commands of greatest consequence' (95). According to him, there cannot be 'any greater defeat of *publique* *designes*, then when the commands whereon they relye, are by the *avarice* of the inferior Magistrate made frustrate' (95). In the Balkans he had seen this for himself:

[I]t is a pernicious piece of Government, that after the Bashaes had at Sophya made publique Proclamation to hang all Ianizaries who should be found behind them; yet did I see many very confidently stay behind, and make their peace for money with the Gouvernours of Provinces: some told mee that if it should come to the Emperours notice, hee would put those Governors to cruell deaths; and certainly such errors can have no lesse remedies. (96)

In this passage, Blount relates a local event to the empire's political framework at large. Both the 'inferior Magistrate' and the '*Gouvernours*' do not simply figure as officials, but as wheels in the complex governmental machinery which needs to run smoothly. Their misconduct has potential ramifications for '*publique* *designes*' and the '*Emperour*,' both of which originate in the imperial centre. Hence, Blount's analysis indicates that he was aware of the intri-

ciencies of the 'hub-and-spoke network pattern [of empires], where each spoke was attached to the center,'<sup>59</sup> as well as the justice system's crucial role in maintaining order within that structure. Of course, this representation of Ottoman legal practices tells us more about his focus of interest than the system itself. But it nonetheless illuminates the ways in which our Oxford graduate tries to rationalise culturally specific habits within their own realm. In so doing, he contributes to the emergence of a discourse of global civility, whose epistemological grid allows for comparative cross-cultural enquiries at the same time as it safeguards the integrity of its objects of scrutiny.

For Blount's contemporaries, however, such receptivity reached its limits when it came to describing the 'morall parts' (96) of the Ottomans. Steeped in 'traditional Christian moralizing,'<sup>60</sup> European verdicts frequently centred on the sexual corruption said to be both prevalent and pervasive in Ottoman society, emphasising the 'sottish sensualitie' (3) Blount sets out to dispel. Travellers in particular were prone to judging sensitive matters by their own standards, thus relying on, and consolidating, dichotomously structured patterns of representation:

To translate the difference, the traveller has at his disposal the handy figure of inversion, whereby otherness is transcribed as anti-sameness. It is not hard to see why travelers' tales and utopias frequently resort to this method, since it constructs an otherness that is transparent for the listener or reader; it is no longer a matter of a and b, simply of a and the converse of a.<sup>61</sup>

Of course, the *Voyage*, too, belongs to the body of texts claiming comprehensively to represent and translate cultural difference as it found it. In other words, 'there is one world in which one recounts, another that is recounted.'<sup>62</sup> Blount's innovative thrust, however, lies in initiating and advancing global civility's inclusiveness that bends to cross-cultural exigencies instead of replicating traditional judgments.

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59 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 55.

60 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 149.

61 Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, transl. by Janet Lloyd (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 212-13.

62 *Ibid.*, 212.

By rejecting received wisdom, Blount connects his comparative method to a larger humanist discourse. Dependent on commercial and cultural traffic, this discourse had a decidedly transnational, if not global, dimension which prompted Europeans to look beyond the narrow confines of their continent from the inception of the Renaissance onwards.<sup>63</sup> Various degrees of cultural difference bred by a great variety of geo-physical determinants were among the challenges that explorers, travellers and merchants had to confront both abroad and after they had returned home. Blount was aware of the potential ramifications of intensified travel and trade, but he does not draw rash conclusions when it comes to compartmentalising fellow human beings encountered in foreign lands:

It hath been maintained, that men are naturally borne, some for slavery, others to command: divers complexions make men timid, dextrous, patient, industrious, and of other qualities right for service; others are naturally magnanimous, considerate, rapacious, daring, and peremptory; No man can say, Nature intends the one sort to obey; the other to rule; for if Nature have intentions, yet is it vanitie to argue them by our modell. (96)

Such a powerful methodological reiteration at the beginning of his section on 'their *morall* parts' (96) indicates his determination to judge foreign cultures within their particular frameworks and abstain from contortive attempts at transposing them to a realm that is not their own. This particular endeavour anticipates the Enlightenment project of completing the Great Map of Mankind, aimed at integrating unknown social practices into a coherent survey of human interactional patterns.

Within these patterns, sexuality and its representation figure as especially delicate configurations, since they touch on the fundamental question of what societies either conceptualise as permissible or sanction within their religious traditions. The Ottomans as Islamic society presented a peculiar challenge, and even Blount's boldness has its limits in this respect. Hence, he chooses to robe some delicate marital frictions he encountered in an Ottoman court in insinuating rather than descriptive language:

I saw at Andrinople a woman with many of her friends went weeping to a ludge; where in his presence, she tooke of her Shoe, and held it the sole up-

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63 Compare: Lisa Jardine & Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (London: Reaktion, 2000)

ward, but spake nothing; I enquired what it meant, one told me, it was the ceremony used when a married woman complains that her husband would abuse her against nature, which is the only cause, for which she may sue a dicvorce as shee then did; that delivery by way of Embleme, seemed neate, where the fact was too uncleane for language. (106/107)

By soberly narrating what he saw Blount both circumvents 'traditional moral judgements about the Ottomans'<sup>64</sup> and grants different customs their culturally and historically specific spaces. In this situation, he represents the woman's fate in understanding, almost compassionate, terms and extends global civility's reach to the female sphere of his host culture. But what is more, he does not exploit this incident in order to repeat charges of sexual licentiousness in Ottoman dominions, thus refraining from Eurocentric verdicts and strictly following his own rationalist agenda.

However, some of the incidents recounted in the *Voyage* may indeed have been disconcerting for his Protestant English audience. But Blount being blunt, he does not side with his cultural or religious roots; instead, he goes further and stretches the limits of what some of his countrymen, especially pious ones, may have wanted to read:

I remember when their Prophet in the Alcoran asks the Angell concerning venery, and some other delicacies of life, that God did not give man such appetites, to have them frustrate, but enjoy'd, as made for the gust of man, not his torment, wherein his Creator delights not. (82)

Adding that a 'politick ac[t] of the *Alcoran* [...] permits *Poligamie*, to make a numerous People, which is the foundation of all great *Empires*' (82), Blount fuses religion, moral customs and politics in his account of sexual mores among the Ottomans. Far from moral degeneracy, they have established a system catering to both man's 'appetites' and the empire's needs. As such, Ottoman imperial organisation lends itself to emulation and Blount's Christian heritage, as well as its judgmental attitudes to the Islamic world, emerges as both culturally relative and disadvantageous to imperial endeavours. Blount is thus actively involved in a process of unlearning received wisdom, and favourably represents a political entity many of his contemporaries looked down upon as barbarous.

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64 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 149.

Barbarity, however, is hard to detect in the *Voyage*, and the morality of the Ottomans points to pragmatic attitudes when it comes to sexuality and social life. Managing this life consistently is a challenge that comes with empire, and Ottoman authorities obviously had a clearly-delineated agenda as to how they would synchronise locally specific customs with their grander imperial scheme. According to Blount, baths are ‘the first thing they erect’ after ‘the taking of any Towne’ and ‘*hee* or *shee* who *bathe* not twice, or thrice a weeke, are held *nasty*’ (100). Hence, not only are regular baths a Turkish custom, they are an indispensable measure of social management in Ottoman-held territories: ‘so necessary a thing to prevent diseases, is cleanliness in hot *Countrys*’ (101). One of the most famous oriental travellers, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, reiterates Blount’s depiction of the bath more than a century later: ‘[T]is the women’s coffee house, where all the news of the town is told, scandal invented etc. They generally take this diversion once a week, and stay there at least four or five hours.’<sup>65</sup> She, too, represents the Turkish bath, or hamam, as a social institution that keeps the population entertained as well as free from diseases. The Turks, it seems, may have appeared terrible on occasion but they were certainly not dirty.

## 2. Intertwined Histories, Global Circulation: Coffee and Cultural Indebtedness

Referring to the bath and the coffee-house, Lady Mary delineates separate spheres of male and female conviviality, respectively. In so doing, she touches upon an instance of cultural cross-fertilisation pivotal to the European Enlightenment project and its struggle for political emancipation. By the time her *Turkish Embassy Letters* were posthumously published (1763), both coffee and coffee-houses had already found their way to the British Isles from the Islamic East and were ‘a characteristic feature of Dr. Johnson’s London.’<sup>66</sup> Transplanted to the western metropolis, they gave rise to what Juergen Habermas has famously called the public sphere, ‘a place where incipient democratic institutions took shape, and where the people became a political force for

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65 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters* (London: Virago, 1993), 59.

66 Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 186.

change.<sup>67</sup> German social thought has frequently attributed the emergence of this space to the liberalising tendencies of the English and French middle classes, outstripping their German contemporaries in both power and influence:

In German social history one looks in vain for the social institutions which in England and France contributed powerfully to the formation of public opinion, the coffee-house and the salon, respectively. Germany's middle-classes lacked the commercial strength that made the coffee-house so important in England. In Europe, coffee-houses date back to the middle of the seventeenth century; they became popular as centers of news-gathering and news dissemination, political debate, and literary criticism. In the early part of the eighteenth century, London is said to have had no fewer than two thousand coffee-houses. Addison wanted to have it said of him that he had brought philosophy out of closets and libraries "to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea tables and in coffee-houses." The English middle classes began to accomplish their own education in the coffee-houses.<sup>68</sup>

This perspective regards the public sphere, and by implication the emancipatory changes it engendered, as genuine English and French innovation, without taking into account its cultural origins or social roots in the Muslim world.<sup>69</sup> However, the coffee-house was a foreigner that had to be naturalised and the societies that appropriated it quickly forgot where it had come from.<sup>70</sup> Hence, sitting down to have a coffee with Blount and a high-ranking Ottoman official on the shores of the Danube will help us to provide the historical and geographical nuances of the public sphere's trajectory.

Inextricably intertwined with a 'widening of horizons'<sup>71</sup> from the beginning of the Renaissance onwards, the arrival of the coffee-house in Europe belongs to the same cultural current which prompted Blount to go east. Foreign customs, exotic goods and new knowledge seeped into Europe at the same time as Europeans set out to explore worlds formerly unknown to them.

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67 MacLean, *Looking East*, 58.

68 Hans Speier, 'The Historical Development of Public Opinion,' in Speier, ed., *Social Order and the Risks of War* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: M.I.T. Press, 1952), 323–338, here 329–30.

69 MacLean, *Looking East*, 58 and Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 185.

70 Donna Landry, *Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture* (Baltimore, Md. & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 72.

71 Singh, 'Introduction,' 4.

Conceptualising cultural and commercial exchanges within the strictly-defined and consolidated boundaries – geographical, historical and psychological – stemming from the imperial nineteenth century thus both occludes the porous frontiers of earlier periods and reduces the complex interplay of languages, things and objects in contact zones to 'the assumption that Europe was the political and intellectual superior in such transactions.'<sup>72</sup>

Blount's *Voyage*, for example, illustrates on various levels the challenges of personal meetings, carefully choreographed attempts to get access to foreign dignitaries and the circulation of symbolic as well as material artefacts. Whilst travelling with the Ottoman army, he deliberately exposes himself to this uncertain terrain in order to experience the radical difference he seeks. By accident, it seems, he also comes to taste a new beverage:

[T]he Campe being pitch'd on the Shoare of Danubius, I went, (but timorously) to view the Service about Murath Bashaes Court, where one of his favourite Boyes espying mee to be a Stranger, gave mee a Cup of Sherbet; I in thanks, and to make friends in Court, presented him with a Pocket Looking Glasse, in a little Ivory Case, with a Combe; such as are sold at Westminster hall for foure or five shillings a piece: The youth much taken therewith, ran, and shewed it to the Bashaw, who presently sent for me, and making me sit, and drink Cauphe in his presence, called for one that spake Italian; then demanding of my condition, purpose, cuntry, and many other particulars [...]. (14-5)<sup>73</sup>

Though unable to start a conversation, Blount exchanges drinks and trinkets with the boy, which is his ticket into the tent of the Basha. He adroitly shifts the basis of this exchange from the symbolic to the material level, and in so doing demonstrates his skill in improvisation as well as the situationally contingent character of such encounters. This remarkable episode demonstrates the multi-layered complexity of European-Ottoman encounters at a time when travellers had to be civil to representatives of their powerful host culture. Most importantly, however, it proves how such encounters could result in amicable exchanges, even if linguistic barriers were involved. In pre-imperial

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72 Jerry Brotton, 'Afterword,' in Matthew Dimmock & Andrew Hadfield, eds., *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660* (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave, 2008), 195-202, here 197.

73 For a detailed discussion of this encounter see also: MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 148-154.

times, then, 'conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict'<sup>74</sup> were not prefigured outcomes of contact situations. Simply projecting the clear-cut power differentials of the age of high imperialism backward in time is thus both anachronistic and tampers with historical evidence.

By contrast, when Blount enjoys Ottoman hospitality and sips '*Cauphe*' with the Basha we become witnesses of a process of cultural circulation based on understanding and respect. And the consequences of this meeting reach far beyond the confines of Blount's text, since the former hard-drinking London lawyer starts promoting coffee after his return from the Levant.<sup>75</sup> Other travellers preceding him had already mentioned the Turkish black broth in their accounts – for example, Sir Anthony Shirley (1601), George Sandys (1615) or William Lithgow (1632) – but 'it did not become a staple article of import till the second half of the seventeenth century.'<sup>76</sup> However, Blount's emphatic promotion of the drink is an important step in transplanting this specimen of Ottoman culture and its sociality into Britain. Indeed, his detailed description of coffee and coffee-house culture suggests the novelty of both for himself and his countrymen:

They have [a] drink not good at meat, called Cauphe made of a Berry, as bigge as a small Beane, dried in a Furnace, and beat to powder, of a soote colour, in taste a little Bitterish that they seeth, and drinke hote as may be endured: it is good all hours of the day, but especially morning and evening, when to that purpose, they entertaine themselves 2 or 3 houres in Cauphe-houses, which in all Turky abound more then Innes and Ale-houses with us: it is thought to be the old black broth used so much by the Lacedemonians, and dryeth ill humors in the stomacke, comforteth the braine, never causeth drunkenesse, or any other furfeit, and is a harmless entertainment of good fellowship; for there upon scaffolds, half a yard high, and covered with Mats, they sit crosse-legg'd after the Turkish manner, many times two or three hundred together, talking, and likely some poore Musicke passing up and downe. (105/106)

Although he hardly ever pauses to relate personal impressions, the coffee-house seems to have captured his fascination. Comparing it to '*Innes and Ale-houses*,' Blount seems to favour Turkish drinking habits over English ones, since they come without the social problems attached to the consumption of

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74 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.

75 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 152.

76 Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 183.



alcohol. And several hours spent in coffee-houses provide ample opportunity for political discussion, enabling ambitious men of the middling sort to propel social change and to advance their interests. This particular space, then, figures as the material precondition to Kant's famous dictum defining Enlightenment as man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity.<sup>77</sup>

Articulated in 1784, Kant's nutshell definition of the intellectual efforts of his age occupies a central position in Europe's intellectual history, demanding 'resolve and courage' of docile contemporaries in order to throw off the shackles of 'alien guidance.'<sup>78</sup> However, what evades Kant and other leading philosophical, political and literary figures of the Enlightenment is the interactional origin of the spaces that first and foremost helped shape a reading public interested in their thoughts and artistic creations: 'When Addison and Steele launched their periodicals, the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, they expected them to be read aloud in coffee houses and to be debated publicly.'<sup>79</sup> If this development is a vital, and vibrant, moment in the inception of democratic structures in Europe, their roots are an Ottoman import, borrowed, transplanted and cultivated from a realm that both fascinated and terrified Westerners. Yet unlike the orientalist separate spheres ideology prevalent in later centuries, both sides – East and West, Christian and Muslim, traveller and resident – were involved in lively exchanges, skirmishes, wars, diplomatic missions and commercial ventures determined by changing fortunes and, as Blount's sojourn into the Basha's tent demonstrates, situational contingencies. Travellers in early modern times were aware of both these complex dynamics and the potential dangers lurking in the realm of the '*Gran Signior*' (20). They nonetheless set out to survey the great Eastern empire and returned with a plethora of novelties, often admiring the Ottoman dynasty while simultaneously contributing to the flow of goods, skills and even institutions into a Europe divided by petty religious conflicts. Blount's *Voyage* is a particularly pertinent example in this respect and demonstrates that we have to add cultural indebtedness to imperial envy.

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77 Immanuel Kant, 'An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, transl., with introduction, by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 41-46, here 41.

78 Ibid.

79 MacLean, *Looking East*, 59.

### 3. Fluid Identities in Ottoman Lands: Blount's Oriental Performances

Travellers going East had to deal with complex, multi-layered and even ambiguous experiences bred by in-between spaces, which demanded their improvisational talents, increased their receptivity and stretched their stamina to, and sometimes beyond, their individual breaking-points. Back at home, travellers' tales either aroused suspicion or met with praise, but definitely enriched the modalities of European knowledge production in symbolic and material ways. In this perspective, both imperial envy and cultural indebtedness are European responses to the enticing, and threatening, exexternality that the Ottoman Empire, its culture and institutions represented in early modern times. European travellers exposing themselves to the indeterminacies of extreme travel in this empire required a great deal of personal preparation and knowledge gathering before they were ready to set out. Blount's adventures are no exception in this respect, the only difference to contemporaries such as Biddulph being the light-hearted and joyful way in which he shakes off his English identity.

Unfortunately, Blount does not tell us very much about his preparations before he embarks on his journey. Venice is both the point of departure and destination for his Oriental rambles. In May 1634, he leaves Italy after he had agreed 'with a *Ianizary at Venice*, to find me Dyet, Horse, Coach, Passage, and all other usuall charges, as farre as *Constantinople*' (5). Upon his return, he briefly summarises his journey and what he had seen:

I arrived [in Venice] the eleventh moneth after my departure from thence: having in that time, according to the most received divisions of Turkey, beene in nine Kingdomes thereof, and passed five thousand miles, and upward, most part by land. (61)

But how did a seventeenth century traveller, who was most likely a spy, prepare for a global journey through an empire straddling Europe, Asia and Africa?<sup>80</sup> Using the entire opening section of the *Voyage* (1-5) for a personal reinvention, Blount gives himself a strictly rationalist framework for his enquiries and presents himself as a well-educated gentleman, whose education 'owes rather more to neo-Platonism, to the Florentine humanists, to Jean Bodin and

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80 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 158-61.

to Francis Bacon'<sup>81</sup> than to English Protestantism. And given Bishop Henry King's poetic praise of his achievements, he must have been a voracious reader with connections to literary and learned circles. But ploughing through available writings on the Ottomans and contemporary statecraft was only a first step for Blount.

Challenging 'those who catechize the world by their owne home' (4), he invents a new role for himself in order completely to suspend his English identity as well as the social and cultural baggage it carries. From now on, he is neither simply a traveller nor 'an inhabitant,' but refashions himself into 'a passenger' (4). His eagerness to test bequeathed wisdom necessitates this thoroughgoing makeover and is expressive of his inquisitive mind, not content with accepting popular stereotypes of terrible Turks whose 'barbarous nation [...] now so triumpheth over the best part of the world.'<sup>82</sup>

Blount's means of shedding his old self is a tripartite plan aimed at seeing how much truth contemporary representations of the Ottomans actually carried:

[H]ee who passes through the severall educations of men, must not try them by his owne, but weyning his mind from all former habite of opinion, should as it were, putting off the old man, come fresh and sincere to consider them.  
(4)

I embarq'd on a Venetian Gally with a Caravan of Turkes, and lewes bound for the Levant, not having any Christian with them besides my selfe. (5)

I became all things to all men, which let me into the breasts of many. (5)

Given the secular momentum of Blount's account, putting off the old man is 'not so much a figure of spiritual rebirth, more a proposal to unlearn received prejudice.'<sup>83</sup> Such prejudice was part and parcel of European mediations of Islam ever since it appeared on the world's stage, gaining new momentum during the first siege of Vienna in 1529, and inoculated into western minds primarily by Christian circles. Being the only Christian in this party is thus conducive to carrying out Blount's intellectual designs, since it enables him

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81 MacLean, *Looking East*, 180.

82 Knolles, *Generall Historie*, 1.

83 MacLean, *Looking East*, 184.

to exploit articles of faith for his own ends, without any fellow Christian disputing his privilege of interpretation. More importantly, however, 'no other mans errors could draw either hatred, or engagement upon' (5) him, which is tantamount to ruling out collective punishment at the hands of foreign authorities. And becoming 'all things to all men', a phrase gleaned from Fynes Moryson's *Itinerary* (1617) indicating how widely Blount had read before setting out, is a chameleonic survival strategy for territories where one might be forced to act 'in ways unimaginable, unavailable and unnecessary at home.'<sup>84</sup>

This remarkable reinvention of the self opens 'a legitimate *theatre* for [...] dangerous and contingent social actions'<sup>85</sup> on Blount's journey through the Ottoman Empire. Redefining existing representations of the Ottomans, as well as making substantial contributions to European knowledge of them, is an ambitious endeavour that required his innovative, and receptive, frame of mind. In his day and age, travel accounts and eye-witness reports had a monopoly of information on foreign countries, especially when they were far-flung and exotic empires. Accordingly, their structure, organisation and content had direct and immediate consequences for one culture's attitudes towards another. In other words, the *Voyage*, just as every other story or travel account, is 'a spatial practice' which '[organises] more or less extensive social cultural areas.'<sup>86</sup> For example, a 'prodigious cultural repertoire' governs Europe's organisation of the Islamic world and conjures up a clearly delineated theatrical stage 'on which the whole East is confined. On this stage will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate.'<sup>87</sup> These tropes were transplanted into Western realms by travellers' tales and epitomise what we might call 'Orientalism's epistemological grid,'<sup>88</sup> loosely, and often unknowingly, lumped together in pre-imperial times, but rigidly organised, as well as institutionally enforced, in the age of high imperialism.

The opening section of the *Voyage*, then, questions received ideas of the Islamic world at the same time as it sets the stage for Blount's journey. Com-

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84 Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell* (1617; Repr. 4 vols. Glasgow: MacLehose, 1907), 397; MacLean, *Rise of Oriental Travel*, 98.

85 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, transl. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 124-25.

86 *Ibid.*, 115 & 123.

87 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995), 63.

88 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 451.

parable to ritualistic and operatic invocations before the act proper begins, its function 'is to authorize, or more exactly, to *found*.'<sup>89</sup>

The ritual action was carried out before every civil or military action because it is designed to create the field necessary for political or military activities. It is thus also a *repetitio rerum*: both a renewal and a repetition of the originary founding acts, a recitation and a citation of the genealogies that could legitimate the new enterprise, and a prediction and a promise of success at the beginning of battles, contracts, or conquests. As a general repetition before the actual representation, the rite, a narration in acts, precedes the historical realization. [...] It "provides space" for the actions that will be undertaken; it "creates a field" which serves as their "base" and their "theatre." This founding is precisely the primary role of the story. It opens a legitimate theatre for practical actions.<sup>90</sup>

In this perspective, performativity is an integral constituent in both social interaction and cross-cultural encounters, in which agents perform rituals in accordance with pre-existing scripts. Such performances actualise a culture's sedimented elements and determine individual and collective action. For Judith Butler, too, interactional patterns and social norms are 'not one's act alone:' 'The act that one does, the act that one performs,' she writes 'is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene.'<sup>91</sup> Although she concedes that 'a script may be enacted in various ways,'<sup>92</sup> Butler emphasises the 'punitive and regulatory social conventions'<sup>93</sup> if agents fail to comply with culturally codified roles and expectations. Questioning subject-centred notions of agency, Butler's concept of performativity prioritises trans-individual structures over situationally contingent re-enactments of social scripts and emerges as comparatively rigid, leaving little room for improvisation.

Improvisation, however, is an essential skill for mastering encounters in *terra incognita*, social, cross-cultural or otherwise. Blount's case, for exam-

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89 De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 123.

90 *Ibid.*, 124-25.

91 Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution,' in Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan, eds., *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Malden, Mass. & Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 900 - 911, here 906. For Butler on performativity see also: MacLean, *Looking East*, 97 - 101.

92 *Ibid.*, 906.

93 *Ibid.*, 907.

ple, demonstrates the mutability of dominant narratives, since the terrible Turks were only one side of the representation of the Ottoman presence in Europe. Its other, inviting and enticing, side was the imperial model that lent itself to emulation, which both questioned and challenged unverified hearsay. Blount's mark of distinction is thus his avoidance of received opinion although he must have exposed himself to it during the preparatory stage of his journey. Once on the road, he became involved in encounters that were largely unscripted, undetermined and sometimes even potentially lethal. An episode of Blount's time on Rhodes demonstrates that the *Voyage* defies simplistic notions of performativity, emphasising creative and lively interaction with available models rather than slavish re-enactments of pre-existing scripts:<sup>94</sup>

Vpon my first landing I had espyed among divers very honourable Sepulchures, one more brave then the rest, and new; I enquired whose it was; a Turke not knowing whence I was, told me it was the Captaine Basha, slaine the yeare before by two English Ships; and therewith gave such a Language of our Nation, and threatning to all whom they should light upon, as made me upon all demands professe my selfe a Scotchman, which being a name unknown to them, saved mee, nor did I suppose it quitting of my Country, but rather a retreat from one corner to the other. (32-3)

In this situation, we can witness Blount's quick-witted and flexible actualisation of Moryson's advice to become 'all things to all men.' The danger is imminent, not only because Blount's presence in foreign territory might naturally arouse suspicion, but because recent events have soured the relationship between Ottomans and Englishmen. Self-preservation is paramount under these circumstances and only achievable through quickness of mind, improvisation and persuasive acting. But Blount does not completely shed his Englishness here, he rather re-interprets it in creative and innovative ways. In other words, he is performing East by 'forging a national identity, but doing it somewhere else.'<sup>95</sup> When asked about his country of origin, Blount cannot

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94 Uwe C. Steiner, 'Der geschlagene Interpret: Nachahmung, Interpretation und Opfer bei Platon, Mozart und Ortheil,' in Otto Kolleritsch, ed., *Musikalische Produktion und Interpretation: Zur historischen Unaufhebbarkeit einer ästhetischen Konstellation* (Graz & Wien: Universaledition, 2003), 144-162, here 156-57 [my translation].

95 MacLean, *Looking East*, 98.

not perform and the 'the practices of *acting*, those forms of *being other* that are entailed in any performance, take over from simply being.'<sup>96</sup>

Confronted with a wide variety of encounters, dangers, invitations, landscapes and their produce, in short with 'a combinative system of spaces,'<sup>97</sup> Blount shows remarkable performing skills during his journey and the *Voyage* emerges as the yardstick for extreme travel. Full of bodily deprivations, uncertainties and the need to preserve the self in adverse conditions, Levantine travel was a spatial practice that required stamina, determination and improvisational skills. However, these hardships did not prevent Blount from crossing and mapping the eastern Mediterranean seaboard and parts of the Egyptian desert. But in his day, these territories ruled by the Ottomans were not imperial frontiers or playgrounds for adventurous Europeans, nor were encounters in them 'grounded within a European expansionist perspective.'<sup>98</sup> Europeans in these realms had to be civil and were far from asserting territorial, commercial or cultural claims. Blount's particular take on civility towards his host culture consists in ridding himself of prejudices, thoroughly preparing his journey and repeatedly expressing regard for Ottoman culture whilst taking care of his English self in dangerous situations. But what is more, he seems to have rejoiced in temporarily delimiting himself from the familiar in order both to experience cultural difference and to accumulate knowledge: 'I set downe what I noted in the *Turkish Customes*; all instruct, either as errors, or by imitation: Nor is the minde of man a perfect Paradise, unlesse there be planted in it the Tree of *Knowledge* both of *Good*, and *Evill*!' (126). Europe's 'disquieting familiarity' with the Ottomans, he seems to say, is instructive for all intents and purposes and it 'is as though delimitation itself were the bridge that opens the inside to its other.'<sup>99</sup> His voluntary and chosen delimitation in particular opened gateways for cultural exchanges with a powerful other that proved attractive in many ways.

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96 Ibid.

97 De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 126.

98 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.

99 De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 128-29 [emphasis in original].

#### 4. Textual Silences: The Limits of Global Civility

Among the many things that fascinated European visitors to Ottoman lands in the first half of the seventeenth century were the conditions of relative peace among and between various religious and ethnic groups. Exposed to religious struggles and political upheavals at home, travellers in the East experienced a society in which 'Islam was pervasive' at the same time as the loosely organised *millet*-system ensured separate jurisdictions for minorities, especially the Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Jewish ones.<sup>100</sup> Of course, such legal and organisational concessions to minorities served Ottoman strategies 'of empire building' and were aimed at establishing order, securing the flow of taxes to the imperial centre and enabling 'the administration to run smoothly.'<sup>101</sup> As such, these strategies were inseparable from the Porte's power politics and ethno-religious diversity under the Ottoman umbrella was their effect rather than their cause. Blount nonetheless expressed his interest in surveying 'those other sects which live under the *Turkes*, as *Greekes*, *Armenians*, *Freinks*, and *Zinganaes*, but especially the *Iewes* (2).'

In this respect, he joins a tradition of British travellers who expressed fascination with '[t]his seemingly peaceful coexistence of so many distinct and potentially antagonistic communities within Ottoman society.'<sup>102</sup> As epiphenomenon of empire building, ethno-religious diversity, too, is a managerial and organisational challenge of which Blount seems to have been aware. As usual, he begins his elaborations matter-of-factly:

The chiefe Sect whereof I desired to be enformed was the Iewes; whose moderne condition is more condemned, then understood by Christian Writers, and therefore by them delivered with such a zealous ignorance, as never gave me satisfaction. (113)

Again, he represents himself as a well-educated gentleman, questioning the veracity of Christian verdicts on the basis of secular and scientific logic. Naturally curious and eager to learn, he wants to see for himself what kind of people the Jews under the Ottomans are and presents his readers with an extensive survey of Jewish life in the East (113-23).

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100 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 115 & 130.

101 *Ibid.*, 12 & 130.

102 MacLean, *Rise of Oriental Travel*, 137.



However, instead of extending his comparative framework to include both their history and life in the Levant, Blount jettisons his rationality in favour of denigratory and hostile stock representations of the Jews. Not only does he ‘repea[t] the theory of racial decay,’ but also assembles all the arguments which would become part of a fully-fledged anti-Semitism in later centuries:

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[I]t befell them in their frequent Capitivities, wherein the malice of their estate, and corruptions of the Gentiles, did extreemely debauch their old innocence, and from Shepheards, or Tillers of land, turned them to what they now are, Merchants, Brokers, and Cheaters; hereto is added no small necessitie from their Religion, which as of old, so at this day, renders them more generally odious, then any one sort of men, whereby they are driven to helpe themselves by shifts of wit, more then others are; and so as it were bandying their faction, against the rest of Mankinde, they become better studied, and practiced in malice, and knavery, then other men. (114)

According to Blount, the Jews have degenerated from a rural, if not bucolic, state of innocence to become a conspiratorial bunch of ‘Merchants, Brokers, and Cheaters.’ Allegedly aiming for mankind’s ruin, they harnessed their monetary expertise and faith in order to implement their designs, becoming universally practiced in malice in doing so. Most importantly, however, Blount precludes developmental improvement by representing them as ahistorically static (‘as of old, so at this day’). However, from this position they are nonetheless able to wield their power and potentially bring about Europe’s defeat:

[E]very Vizier, and Bashae of State uses to keepe a lew of his private Counsell, whose malice, wit, and experience of Christendome, with their continuall intelligence, is thought to advise most of that mischief, which the Turke puts in execution against us. (114/115)

When he characterises the ‘Jew’ Blount’s rational framework disintegrates completely and he sides with his Christian heritage, of which he has remained critical throughout his account. This tremendous representational shift does not allow for Jewish culture to exist in its own right and limits global civility’s inclusiveness to the non-Jewish elements of Ottoman society. Relying on a clearly-defined dichotomous logic, the representation of cultural alterity in

this regard 'is no longer a matter of *a* and *b*, [but] simply of *a* and the converse of *a*.'<sup>104</sup>

Contrary to his curiosity, civility and readiness to be favourably impressed, Blount launches a wholesale attack on Jewish life and becomes more and more disparaging in his description. Unable to establish a state of their own, the effeminate and 'cursed Iew[s]' (117) are 'light, ayeriall, and fanaticall braines' (119):

If they were all united, I beleeve there would scarce be found any one race of men more numerous; yet that they can never ciment into a temporall Government of their owne, I reckon two causes, beside the many disadvantages in their Religion: First the lewish complexion is so prodigiously timide, as cannot be capable of Armes; for this reason they are no where made Souldiers [...] The other impediment is their extreme corrupt love to private interesse; which is notorious in the continuall cheating, and malice among themselves; so as there would want that justice, and respect to common benefit, without which no civill society can stand. (123)

In addition to Blount's reiteration of the monetary argument, we can find the Jews' supposed governmental, civilisational and cultural incapacities in this passage. Despite his 'special interest in seeing the Jews under Ottoman rule'<sup>105</sup> expressed at the outset, he cannot find any favourable elements in their culture. Clearly, then, this damning report 'indicates the limitations of his empirical and experiential method'<sup>106</sup> and demonstrates that receptivity, awareness and openness are situational, perspectival and relational. Blount's fascination with the Ottomans, in other words, is not tantamount to universal cross-cultural curiosity. Ottoman splendour and military power were omnipresent in Europe and contemporary authorities, travellers and intellectuals had to come to grips with the empire's insurmountable power and its putatively superior cultural unity. The coping mechanism which emerged was the structure of feeling described as imperial envy, expressing 'often contradictory'<sup>107</sup> sentiments towards the powerful Ottoman other. Situated in a field of tension between admiration and contempt, attraction and repulsion, fascination and fear, European attitudes towards the Ottomans were complex and

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104 Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 213.

105 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 175.

106 *Ibid.*

107 MacLean, *Looking East*, 20.

either bred hostility or strategic identification and curiosity. As a curious man of science, Blount was of course on the learned wing of this complex relationship. By contrast to the Ottomans, the timid, effeminate and malicious Jews did not pose an immediate threat and invited the scorn even of '[i]ntellectual Complexions' (1) such as Blount.

We can thus characterise his representation of Jewish life in the *Voyage* as textual silence. This silence is not synonymous with avoiding a given topic, but rather of excluding it, even expressly, from certain contexts. The production of knowledge, for example, is inherently positional and inextricably intertwined with philosophical, cultural and political investments. As such, it is nevertheless a creative process and means 'to show and to reveal'<sup>108</sup> facts, figures and findings in line, or not in line, with the observer's agenda. Hence, every 'work has its *margins*, an area of incompleteness from which we can observe its birth and its production.'<sup>109</sup> These margins are integral constituents of every cultural artefact and can either be (almost) excluded from it or surface as something unwanted, undesired or undesirable within its representational range.

Reading these margins alongside the admiring survey of the Ottomans sheds light on the representation of global interconnections in the *Voyage*. Not only does Blount's text represent a non-Eurocentric conceptualisation of cultural gravity, whose centre is the Islamic world, it also debunks dyadic patterns of thought as insufficient to account for the complexities of cross-cultural encounters in pre-imperial times. The Anglo-Ottoman relationship is complicated by the presence in the text of the Jews, demonstrating the multipolar interplay of religious and ethnic communities that prompted Blount to go east. His ensuing representation of this interplay is integral in the inception of global civility at the same time as it draws attention to the blind spots, implicit assumptions and ideological ascriptions inherent in his frame of reference. In this respect, then, civility can bend to cross-cultural exigencies by favourably representing foreign cultures, facilitating even-handed exchanges across spatio-temporal disjunctures and opening channels for commercial circulation. Its receptivity, however, is not limitless and comes with the discursive and material exclusion of particular communities. Blount's ori-

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108 Pierre, Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, transl. by Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 88.

109 *Ibid.*, 90.

ental rambles have thus set the stage for successive generations of English travellers in both the Islamic world and the South Pacific.

**Enlightened Cosmopolitanism  
and the Practice of Global Civility**



### 3. Global Civility and Shipwreck

#### George Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands* (1788)

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The last chapter has traced both the inception and representation of global civility in Henry Blount's *Voyage into the Levant* (1636) and explored the complex relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century. The present chapter will broaden the representational and geographical range of global civility by contextualising George Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands* (1788) in eighteenth century discourses of travel, sensibility and commerce.<sup>1</sup> The readiness to be favourably impressed, to cooperate across cultural divides and to study foreign civilisations comparatively was not confined to Oriental travellers. Despite their geo-physical and cultural differences both the Ottoman Empire and the South Pacific gave rise to beneficial exchanges, whose history complicates the relationship between civil self and barbarous other considerably. In contrast to oriental travellers, however, explorers criss-crossing the vastness of the Pacific hardly ever knew what they were about to find or endure. Their journeys to exotic island communities were, though enticing, frequently tantamount to encounters with the unknown. Maritime long distance travel confined them for months, or even years, to the socially strictly regulated space of the ship and often subjected them to bodily deprivations or diseases (scurvy, for example). Once on shore, Europeans did not have to be civil, since they encountered peoples who were technologically less advanced than themselves. But the exigencies of extreme travel, such as appealing to the natives' knowledge of local resources, helped to bridge the divide between European sailors and Pacific natives on the beach. As Carl Thompson has shown, these shipwrecked sailors 'were perfectly capable, once they had

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1 George Keate, *An Account of the Pelew Islands*, ed. by Karen L. Nero & Nicholas Thomas (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2001). (All references are to this edition).

discarded the hierarchies of rank and class that pertained on board ship, of establishing peaceful, egalitarian communities, either amongst themselves or in conjunction with the natives amongst which they found themselves.<sup>2</sup>

George Keate's *Account*, in particular, opens new gateways for reflecting on European representations of the South Pacific along these lines. It differs decisively from Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, the eighteenth century's most iconic text of shipwreck on a desert island. A solitary castaway, Defoe's hero is forced back upon himself and his ties with European society seem irreversibly severed. Yet Crusoe unexpectedly finds company by rescuing a native from a tribe of cannibals. But the rescued native becomes a subject and companion only through Crusoe's interpellation, by being endowed with the European word Friday as his name. This relationship has received much critical attention at the same time as Defoe's novel seems to have established the master narrative for the literary representation of shipwreck by concentrating on the fate of a single individual.<sup>3</sup> According to Jonathan Lamb, this individual is free to experience 'the excitements and pleasures arising from the dissolution of contracts and social ties'<sup>4</sup> in the largely unexplored waters of the Pacific Ocean.

By contrast, Keate's *Account* tells a very different story and brings into focus both the renewal of the social contract and a collectively organised self-preservation in the face of adversity. Commanded by Captain Wilson, the East India ship *Antelope* ran on a reef off the Palau archipelago east of the Philippines in 1783.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, the English seamen established friendly relations with the natives and were given the permission to build a new vessel, but the Palauans required them to lend armed support to a number of expeditions against hostile tribes and rival communities. This mutually beneficial exchange was based on cross-cultural cooperation rather than competition and illustrates how complicated transactions across cultural divides need not result in inimical relations, open hostilities or the rapid disintegration of native societies. In this regard, the Palauan shore seems to have been a notable

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2 Carl Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 120.

3 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 178.

4 *Ibid.*, 195-6.

5 Karen L. Nero & Nicholas Thomas, 'Introduction: Bridging Worlds,' in George Keate, *An Account of the Pelew Islands*, ed. by Karen L. Nero & Nicholas Thomas (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2001), 1-5, here 1.



exception: 'This beach is a very different one to that described by Cook, George Forster, and others in Queen Charlotte Sound, where novel appetites for European goods prompt Maori men to coercively prostitute their women.'<sup>6</sup> On Tahiti, too, native traditions started to disappear under European influence as 'trinkets, baubles and venereal disease seemed in free circulation.'<sup>7</sup>

The Anglo-Palauan exchange, on the other hand, neither represents the natives as corruptible nor as noble savages. They are rather 'highly deserving recipients of British gratitude'<sup>8</sup> and act as reliable partners with whom the English crew could establish mutually improving relations. Framed in eighteenth century idioms of sensibility, the *Account* extends sentimentalism's inclusiveness to a hitherto unknown island community and thus transposes it to a global level. In so doing, Keate, 'a literary gentleman, not a participant in the adventure, [who] prepared the book on the basis of information provided by Wilson and other members of his crew,'<sup>9</sup> familiarises English readers with the hardships experienced by seamen in far-flung and little known territory. Following them into the unknown, this chapter explores their remarkable story of shipwreck, salvage and return by first situating their collectively organised survival under the auspices of Captain Wilson in eighteenth century theories of the civil self and its preservation in extreme situations. Given their fate, the seamen evince a remarkable degree of social cohesion, illustrating the impossibility of shaking off one's civil self in the face of paradise. The second section examines the unscripted adventures of the *Antelope's* crew and demonstrates how the book's sentimental register facilitates the cultural and commercial traffic between the landward and seaward sides of the beach. Despite the language barrier between these two sides, the encounter does not go awry and both favours and exchanges are grounded in reciprocation. The third section will plumb the depths of the material as well symbolic flows across cultural divides and question received and one-sided conceptualisations of cross-cultural encounters in the Pacific Ocean. The final section in this chapter scrutinises modes of discursive exclusion in Keate's travelogue. Supported by six-

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6 Nicholas Thomas, 'George Keate: Benevolence on the Beach,' in Jonathan Lamb, Vanessa Smith & Nicholas Thomas, eds., *Exploration & Exchange: A South Seas Anthology, 1680–1900* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 112–13, here 113.

7 Nicholas Thomas, "'The Pelew Islands" in British Culture,' in Nero & Thomas, eds., 27–39, here 34.

8 Thomas, 'Benevolence on the Beach,' 113.

9 *Ibid.*, 112

teen Chinese seamen, the English crew take their manpower for granted but do not admit them to the actively lived cosmopolitan vision on the Palauan beach. Just as Blount represents the Jews as a malicious and despicable people, the *Account* silences the Chinese in similar and comparable ways. There are thus limits to the Pacific version of global civility, which demand critical attention at the same time as they invite a historically specific analysis of the relationship between self and other in potentially life-threatening situations.

## 1. Self-Preservation and the Rhetoric of Sensibility

Unlike Middle Eastern travel, journeys to the Pacific 'were, from the start, unaccountable and ungovernable.'<sup>10</sup> Travellers in the old and familiar lands of the Ottoman Empire had a plethora of published sources at their disposal whilst explorers setting out to the South Pacific had little idea of what its archipelagos and peoples had in store for them. Their perilous, and often disturbing, adventures in unexplored waters revealed 'the uncertainty of the bond between the self and society',<sup>11</sup> causing an experiential split between the seamen's time aboard ship and their audiences at home. Indeed, maritime eyewitnesses were frequently met with scepticism when they tried to share their stories with a reading public reluctant to believe in either the truth claims of travellers' tales or wondrously different peoples at the other end of the world. Divergent in interest, experience and first-hand knowledge, the seamen and their potential audiences lacked a basis for negotiating what one side had seen and what the other expected to hear:

[Narratives of voyages] tell of paradises, monsters, outrageous sufferings, and miracles. They handle the scarcely expressible intensity of sensations experienced by the single voyager alone in the presence of things utterly new and unparalleled. [...] Often these narratives emphasize the unbridgeable gulf between the experience of the single self and the history of civil society, not simply by describing remarkable and incomparable things, but also by including accounts of castaways and mutineers, people whose links with the

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10 Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here 447.

11 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 19.

social world were decisively severed, and who had chosen (or been forced) to subsist in a precontractual state of nature.<sup>12</sup>

This split of, and conflict between, the private and public side of the self is inextricably intertwined with the emergence of the public sphere, in which the European middle classes accomplished their political emancipation. The sense of a single undivided self is thus called into question by increased social differentiation as well as the resultant spaces dedicated to the articulation of specific thematic concerns. Transposed to the global level of maritime long distance travel, this development challenged both the unity of the traveller's civil self and the possibility of credibly sharing his experiences.

However, the discussion surrounding the non-identity of the private and public selves is not confined to travel and travel-writing. In what was a major philosophical debate of the eighteenth century, the positions established by Bernard Mandeville and Lord Shaftesbury 'remained alive and influential, not only in Britain but on the Continent and in the American colonies as well.'<sup>13</sup> Egoism, moral flexibility and a split self stood vis-à-vis altruism, benevolence and an undivided self, representing the two seemingly irreconcilable points of departure for any discussion of human nature and civil society:

Lord Shaftesbury identified the unity of the self as the continuity of its natural and civil sides, while Mandeville, following Hobbes, understood the civil self as an equilibrium of two selves. According to the one, the self is lost when it ceases to act like itself; according to the other, this occurs only when the self assumes that it is undivided from itself.<sup>14</sup>

The inexpressibility of wondrous episodes experienced on long sea voyages seems to favour the Mandevillian position of a split self. In this perspective, the seamen's adventures are inherently private and need not match the public's expectations of objective results and scientific findings. James Cook, the eighteenth century's most famous Pacific explorer, for example, was acutely 'aware of the appalling risks he had to take to test [the scientific community's] ideas'<sup>15</sup> and the difficulties involved in adequately conveying his ordeals. He

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12 Ibid., 23.

13 Irwin Primer, 'Mandeville and Shaftesbury: Some Facts and Problems,' in Primer, ed., *Mandeville Studies: New Explorations in the Art and Thought of Dr. Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733)* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975), 126-141, here 127.

14 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 30.

15 Ibid., 92.

and his contemporaries obviously lacked a suitable means for sharing singular adventures with their contemporaries at home, a dilemma exacerbated by the opacity of the *je ne sais quoi*.<sup>16</sup> “This riddling phrase denoting the value of an incommunicable feeling covered the most painful as well as the most pleasurable interludes of navigation, as indeed it did of all travel.”<sup>17</sup> It seems, then, that the contested intellectual terrain surrounding the two sides of the split self is mirrored on the global level by a larger, and putatively unbridgeable, gulf between the familiar terrains of the Euro-Islamic worlds on the one hand and the unknown, and apparently unknowable, Pacific Ocean on the other.

Written ‘in resolutely optimistic and sentimental terms,’<sup>18</sup> Keate’s *Account of the Pelew Islands* provides an alternative perspective by both reconciling the two sides of the self and bridging the great distance between European civil society and Pacific exploration. In so doing, it allows for the crew’s collective self-preservation and challenges the Robinsonade’s literary pre-eminence in the realm of survival and adventure stories. The lonely protagonists of these stories may or may not have experienced the pleasures of roaming paradisiacal islands and establishing themselves, even if only temporarily, in the state of nature; but their time as castaways is not a ‘purgation of the social self, a refitting and careening of its fundamental values prior to its return to civic duty.’<sup>19</sup> This view underestimates the hardships experienced at the same time as it reductively objectifies the Pacific as site for a mere redefinition of the European civil self. Already difficult to represent, native voices, traditions and cultural practices have no place in such a perspective, except through their relationality to European patterns of thought. Keate’s sentimental rhetoric, by contrast, makes possible the incorporation of cultural difference and favourably represents the mutually improving relations between the Palauans and the English seamen. But what is more, by extending sentimentalism’s representational range to include the sandy contact zone of the beach, it defies the *je ne sais quoi* of extreme maritime travel and replaces medial opacity with legibility, silence with vocal multiplicity, and domestication of the native with representational inclusiveness.

Keate’s text is, of course, still a European representation of Pacific islanders and as such intrinsically tied to European perceptions, assumptions

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16 *Ibid.*, 22.

17 *Ibid.*, 12.

18 Thomas, ‘Benevolence on the Beach,’ 112.

19 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 179.

and values. But 'the attempt to describe another culture is never simply an act of appropriation, nor are images of the other merely versions of the self-image of the observer.'<sup>20</sup> These dichotomously structured and clear-cut power differentials inherited from the age of high imperialism tend to obscure the improvisational early phases of European exploration, especially in the Pacific arena where encounters were largely unscripted in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>21</sup> Most importantly, however, whilst Crusoe's fate tells a story of severed bonds in peripheral territories, Keate's account establishes and re-establishes connections by representing the Palauan beach as enlightened and cosmopolitan locus of cooperation and successful cross-fertilisation. As such, it is a key text in complicating simplistic histories of colonialism, in which symbolic and material power emanate in unilateral fashion from metropolitan centres. Far from depicting the Palauan case as a lucky accident, the *Account* is pivotal to the history of global civility, and opens gateways for geographically and historically specific analyses of cross-cultural encounters at odds with the sweeping generalisations of much literary and historical scholarship.<sup>22</sup>

If we follow the *Antelope's* route, we can see that immediately after hitting the reef, an event causing a 'distressed situation' accompanied by 'horror and dismay' (70), both the maritime esprit de corps and the civil selves of the seamen aim at collective self-preservation. Instead of anticipating the pleasures derived from the dissolution of social bonds, the crew appeal to the authority of Captain Wilson when 'the rocks made their appearance' and the ship 'filled with water as high as the lower deck hatchways' (71). In this life-threatening situation, naval procedure and standard sequences of operation quickly take effect:

During this tremendous interval, the people thronged round the Captain, and earnestly requested to be directed what to do, beseeching him to give orders, and they would immediately execute them.

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20 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 21.

21 Jonathan Lamb, Vanessa Smith & Nicholas Thomas, 'Introduction,' in Lamb, Smith, & Thomas, eds., xiii-xxv, here xx.

22 Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), 8.

Every thing that could be thought expedient in so distressful and trying an occasion, was executed with a readiness and obedience hardly ever exceeded. (70)

These two passages describe collective efforts aimed at survival rather than visions of self-indulgence in paradise. And Captain Wilson emerges as the crew's centrepiece by taking responsibility, giving orders and caring 'for the general good' right from the beginning:

The people all now assembled aft, the quarter-deck laying highest out of the water, the quarter-boards afforded some little shelter from the sea and rain; here, after contemplating a few moments their wretched situation, the Captain endeavoured to revive their drooping spirits, which began to sink through anxiety and fatigue, by reminding them that shipwreck was a misfortune to which those who navigate the ocean were always liable; that their situation indeed was more difficult, from happening in an unknown and unfrequented sea, but that this consideration should rouse their most active attention, as much must depend on themselves to be extricated from their distress; that when these misfortunes happened, they were often rendered more dreadful than they otherwise would be by the despair and disagreement of the crew; to avoid which, it was strongly recommended to every individual not to drink any spirituous liquor. A ready consent was given to this advice. (70-1)

The Captain is both a father figure and commanding authority, whose orders and experience rationalise the dangers of seafaring as unpleasant, but unavoidable, part of a seaman's profession. Confronted with adverse conditions outside the domestic, structured and regulated space of the ship, Wilson tries to curb the dissociative social consequences of the storm by comparing the crew's fate to that of other seamen. The *Antelope's* case is, however, somewhat special as it is set in an 'in-between space of transformation and change where nothing is ever fixed but everything always in flux,'<sup>23</sup> an impression amplified by Wilson's reference to 'an unknown and unfrequented sea.' But his quick response to both the crew and the situation's demands adjusts the 'remarkably *landed* quality' of Western 'knowledge and reason'<sup>24</sup> to a new and

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23 Bernhard Klein & Gesa Mackenthun, 'Introduction: The Sea is History,' in Klein & Mackenthun, eds., *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 1-12, here 3.

24 *Ibid.*, 2.

unknown maritime setting, which is going a long way towards bridging the gulf between home and abroad, known and unknown, metropolitan centre and Pacific periphery.

Yet Wilson's nimble reaction aboard the sinking vessel is not merely indicative of his aptitude in seamanship. It reflects the rationalist tenets of Enlightenment and coincides with a sea change in the representation of oceans, extending the drive towards secularisation and demystification to natural entities:

The negative image of the evil sea and its many associated dangers is traditionally seen to be replaced in the 18th century with an emerging conception of the ocean – in the contexts of colonization, economic modernization and global trade – as a technically manageable but socially sensitive space.<sup>25</sup>

Wilson's clear and pragmatic directions, as well as his efforts to bolster the crew's spirits, leave no space for elements of the supernatural, 'traditionally supposed to congregate at the ends of the earth.'<sup>26</sup> This representation of 'realistic elements of life and work at sea'<sup>27</sup> in Keate's text not only suspends the maritime *je ne sais quoi*, it also adds to the change of literary and cultural perspectives on the sea by familiarising English readers with their countrymen's plight in remote waters. Their emotions, in turn, become comprehensible, and reproducible, for metropolitan audiences otherwise separated and cut off from the oceanic deprivations of their travelling contemporaries. The men aboard the sinking *Antelope*, then, are not 'collectors of singular things and connoisseurs of solitude'<sup>28</sup> by virtue of their *esprit de corps* both encouraged and maintained by their captain. But what is more, this episode explodes narrowly defined notions of the age of Enlightenment as a specifically European intellectual practice by allowing rationality and pragmatism to prevail over panic and distress. In this perspective, the period in question redefines itself

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25 Bernhard Klein, 'Introduction: Britain and the Sea,' in Klein, ed., *Fictions of the Sea: Critical Perspectives on the Ocean in British Literature and Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 1-12, here: 4.

26 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 81.

27 Klein, 'Britain and the Sea,' 4.

28 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 12.

as 'long *and* wide eighteenth century,'<sup>29</sup> opening vistas for critical reflections on unscripted encounters, unexpected convergences and global connections.

But many of the philosophical figureheads of the eighteenth century were quite impatient with the ramifications of England's increasing global reach and the bi-directional traffic concomitant with it. When the explorer's public self tried to divulge remarkable stories experienced by his private self, he aroused suspicion by returning with material perceived as incommensurate with the cultural fabric of European societies. Preoccupied with novelty, reading and taste, Lord Shaftesbury, for example, was convinced that '[m]onsters and monster-lands were never more in request' than 'at this present time.'<sup>30</sup> For him, travel and travel-writing posed a threat to the world he was conversant with: 'Our relish or taste must of necessity grow barbarous, whilst barbarian customs, savage manners, Indian wars, and wonders of the terra incognita, employ our leisure and are the chief material to furnish out a library.' In a similarly conjectural vein, Adam Smith draws a sharp distinction between polite society and the barbarians outside it: 'Hardiness is the character most suitable to the circumstances of a savage; sensibility to those of one who lives in a very civilized society.'<sup>31</sup> Ironically, however, it is Smith himself who theorised the sensory means that can be brought to bridge this essentialised gap. Describing the relationship between the sufferer and an 'attentive spectator,' he chooses 'sympathy' as the appropriate term 'to denote our fellow-feeling with any passion whatever.'<sup>32</sup>

By the imagination we place ourselves in this situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them.<sup>33</sup>

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29 Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10 [my emphasis].

30 Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 2 Vols. (Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), Vol. I, 225.

31 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 245.

32 *Ibid.*, 13

33 *Ibid.*, 12



This sufferer-spectator constellation in Smith's moral philosophy is aesthetically replicated by literary representations of distress in the sentimental novel where it establishes a connection between character and reader. As part of the private self's pleasures, this relationship is frequently played out in scenes depicting charity, reformed prostitutes or family reunions, eliciting emotional and bodily responses in the reader. Most importantly, however, both relationships conjoin an outsider with an insider, or alternatively an observer with an affected person, and engender social, cultural and aesthetic bonds between strangers at the same time as they bridge spatio-temporal disjunctures. In so doing, the private act of reading acquires public significance, since the 'sentimental novel, although entertainment, was a recognised agent for the dissemination of argument and advice.'<sup>34</sup> Sentimental fiction thus stands at the confluence of the private self's pleasures on the one hand and the public self's social responsibilities and political investments on the other.

Keate adroitly transposes this relationship to the South Pacific and uses it to make comprehensible the incomprehensible of extreme maritime travel. The seriousness of the seamen's situation after hitting the reef, as well as the uncharted territory in which they find themselves, becomes reproducible for English readers in a literary medium they are intimately acquainted with. Of course, aestheticising adverse conditions through the language of feeling does not lessen the seriousness of the seamen's ordeal, but it brings home, and makes accessible, for English readers the life-threatening circumstances under which they laboured to secure their survival.

Earlier in the century, Shaftesbury had already been aware of the popular appeal of such stories: '[S]o enchanted we are with the travelling memoirs of any casual adventurer, that be his character or genius what it will, we have no sooner turned over a page or two, than we begin to interest ourselves highly in his affairs.'<sup>35</sup> But Locke's pupil was weary of travel literature, since the sky seemed to be the limit in this genre: 'From monstrous brutes he [the author] proceeds to yet more monstrous men. For in this race of authors he is ever completest and of the first rank who is able to speak of things the most unnatural and monstrous.'<sup>36</sup> Such stories neither advanced knowledge nor contributed to a reconciliation of the conflictual relationship between the private

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34 Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 16.

35 Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, Vol. I, 223.

36 *Ibid.*

and public sides of the self. In other words, they did not fit in with the secular and rationalist drive inherent in Enlightenment thought because they 'are useless for a history of the world or a biography of the self.'<sup>37</sup>

In Keate's *Account*, however, readers do not find monsters, cannibals or other such wondrous things. His book instead textualises the Pacific terra incognita for English readers and demonstrates that self-preservation and the history of civil society need not be antithetical. Couched in sentimental language, the adventures of the *Antelope's* crew transform the 'extended and uncontrolled je ne sais quoi'<sup>38</sup> of long distance voyaging into an adventure story, which paradoxically borrows from Shaftesbury's philosophy of benevolence and moral sense whilst practising its key points in uncharted territory far removed from the 'lives of the wisest and most polished people.'<sup>39</sup> On the Palauan beach, then, we become witnesses of an act of collective self-preservation expressly confirming the fabric of English society rather than threatening or undoing it:

Circumstanced as these poor fellows were, nothing but a long and well-trained discipline, and the real affection they bore their commander, could have produced the fortitude and steady firmness which they testified on this occasion; and certainly nothing could more exhilarate the spirits of their officers, or more endear the men to them, than this conquest they shewed over themselves – What indeed was there not to be hoped from such a band of brave fellows, whom unanimity, affections, and mutual confidence, had united in one unremitting plan of exertion, for the preservation of the whole! (85)

Even though Captain Wilson ordered to 'stave every vessel of liquor' (85) in order to avoid disarray, the emphasis in this passage is clearly on emotional manifestations of social cohesion and the confirmation of a naval order pre-dating the shipwreck. Keate here draws on the rhetoric of sensibility and applies the sufferer-spectator constellation to an unscripted situation in a transcultural context. Appealing to the sympathy of his readers, he opens a window into hitherto unknown territory for them at the same time as he stages an all-encompassing, if not familial, unity. In so doing, he demonstrates how

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37 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 39.

38 *Ibid.*, 23

39 Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, Vol. 1, 222.

even in situations rife with danger and distress 'human behaviour may be motivated primarily by impulses of benevolence or sympathy rather than by those of acquisitiveness or mere self-preservation.'<sup>40</sup> The convergence of sentimental rhetoric, shipwreck and survival thus breeds global civility in a setting where it is least expected.

Like Robinson Crusoe, Captain Wilson's men are shipwrecked in unknown territory. But unlike Defoe's hero, they are not forced back upon themselves, nor do they regress into a pre-contractual state of nature. In lieu of abandoning their social ties, they renew them and dedicate their energies to 'the preservation of the whole,' demonstrating that 'no conflict existed between the propensity for self-preservation and the principles of civil society.'<sup>41</sup> Though practiced in the Pacific realm, however, civility in this context is only global insofar as geographical parameters are concerned; in terms of its representational range, it remains *intra*-cultural until the Palauan natives appear for the first time. Yet as soon as they turn up, Keate's account represents them as both benevolent and sentimental subjects, extending global civility to the *inter*-cultural setting on the Palauan beach. Captain Wilson and the crew's linguist Tom Rose are the first seamen to meet representatives of their host culture. And after the tentative exchange of a few words 'in the Malay tongue,' the natives

stepped out of the canoes into the water, and came towards the shore, on which Captain WILSON waded into the water to meet them, and embracing them in a friendly manner, conducted them to the shore, and introduced them to his officers and unfortunate companions. (76)

Both sides find themselves 'suddenly in a space in which all action is provisional.'<sup>42</sup> This challenge notwithstanding, the Anglo-Palauan encounter does not go awry and demonstrates how meetings of strangers in liminal spaces can lead to mutually improving and egalitarian exchanges. In this regard, it differs decisively from nineteenth century representations of Pacific life, since 'two social orders intersect and neither is sovereign.'<sup>43</sup> If anything, the traffic transacted on the Palauan beach is even-handed and governed by mutual

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40 Stephen Bending & Stephen Bygrave, 'Introduction,' in Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), vii-xxiv, here xi.

41 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 30.

42 Lamb et al, 'Introduction,' xix.

43 Ibid.

interest: 'But if the uncommon appearance of the natives of Pelew excited surprise in the English, their appearance, in return, awakened in their visitors a far greater degree of astonishment' (79).

Such reciprocity informs all levels of exchange – symbolic, material and personal – in Keate's text. Both sides offer insights into their cultural practices, return favours and negotiate peacefully in the event of either unexpected occurrences or misunderstandings. In order to deepen the tentative contacts initially established on the beach, for example, they decide to exchange embassies: 'They [the natives] wished that one of our people might be sent in their canoes to the Rupack, or king, that he might see what sort of people they were; which was agreed to by Captain WILSON' (77). The Captain's brother, Matthias Wilson, is sent to the native chief, who resides elsewhere in the archipelago. His task is to secure 'the means of alleviating their forlorn situation' and ask the king's 'permission to build a vessel to carry them back to their own country' (81), a proposition indicating the crew's determination to achieve collective self-preservation. In return, 'three men remained with our people, as did one of the king's brothers, called Raa Kook, commander in chief of the king's forces' (81). There were no apprehensions and the Palauans 'passed the night with our people, and appeared to be perfectly easy and contented with their reception' (81). The only thing that did not meet their approval that night was the salty, and for them unknown, taste of English ham.

When Matthias Wilson returns from the main island three days later with one of the king's brothers, Arra Kooker, he brings some good news for the English crew. The king informs them that

they had his full leave and permission to build a vessel on the island on which they then were, or that they might remove to, and build it on the island where he lived himself, and be under his own more immediate protection. (86)

This message provides the English with existential security in adverse conditions and endows their efforts at return with both meaning and a common cause. Their story leads from shipwreck, survival and salvage over insecurity to the establishment of friendly relations with the Palauans, contractually codified, as it were, by the local sovereign's leave to remain. Of course, their decision to decline the king's offer to move to the main island aims at securing a maximum degree of liberty and action. However, the obvious self-interest behind this decision does not void the reciprocal and open dialogue between both parties. It is rather the result of the complex negotiations aimed

at reconciling the demands of self-preservation with the sovereign rights of the locals. And what is more, after the loss of their ship the English know that their resources are limited and cooperation with, and respect towards, representatives of their host culture emerge as crucial survival strategies. But these exigencies of extreme travel do *not* shift the emphasis to the Mandevillian end of the spectrum in the debate surrounding the self and its preservation; instead they illustrate the unprecedented complexities and negotiations necessitated by the crew's fate, as well as the ways in which a civil, benevolent and undivided (collective) self is best equipped to deal with this challenge.

Appealing to his audience's fellow-feeling, Keate invites his readers to follow Captain Wilson and his men as they forge such a self. He presents the crew's concerted effort at survival as a fully-fledged avowal of familial sentimentality under the paternal guidance of their captain, in which the South Pacific serves as the stage on which English selves jovially merge into a collective, almost egalitarian, entity. As such, the English seamen do not redefine themselves in the face of paradise but work incredibly hard to achieve their goal. In so doing, they corroborate the social fabric of their nation at the same time as they improvisingly transpose it to the Palauan beach, where it becomes the vehicle for the actively lived ideal of global civility:

The plan [of building a ship] was shown to every body, and approved by all. The petty officers and common men considering, that to pursue this interesting business, every individual must do his part, and all concur in becoming obedient to the command of one superior, who should conduct and regulate the whole operation, the affection each had borne to their Captain, and still bore him, though misfortune had severed the tie between them, made them unanimously request Captain WILSON to be that one superior, and that he would take the command upon him, faithfully promising that they would, in all things, implicitly obey his orders, equally as when the ANTELOPE was on float; that she now being a wreck, they would consider Captain WILSON (whose former conduct they said they should ever remember with the warmest affection) as the master or manager of the yard, and submit to such laws and regulations as usually govern places of that kind. Nothing could more affect the sensibility of such a character as Captain WILSON's, than to see all those who had served under him voluntarily again seek him as their commander, to share still far severer toil. With a degree of joy, only exceeded by his gratitude, he accepted the flattering distinction their generosity offered him, expressing at the same time an earnest wish, that in

case any censure or punishment should hereafter be found necessary to be passed on any individual, that this unpleasant office might not rest with him, but be decided by the majority of voices. (105-6)

Electing Captain Wilson leader on the beach, the seamen transcend individual pursuits and idiosyncracies for the sake of collective self-preservation. This process is reminiscent of a family reunion, a theme central to the concerns of sentimental fiction, and re-evaluates paternalistic traditions in a cross-cultural setting. Though inherently conservative, the ideal of the nuclear family organised around the authority of a father-figure is crucial to reinforcing the crew's esprit de corps in this particular case. Whilst this seems to be at odds with the emancipatory drives of Sentimentalism and Enlightenment thought, Keate's orchestration of family-like bonds and sentiments provides the social cement on which the seamen organise both their relationship with the Palauans and their return to England. In the crew's situation, 'reason' alone is, of course, limited, but it can enter into a productive relationship with 'sentiment,'<sup>44</sup> in which the plan to build a vessel is emotionally buttressed by even-handed gestures of sociality across cultural divides.

If Mandevillian conceptualisations had governed the self's relationship to itself, adventurers and soldiers of fortune among the crew would have enjoyed their new-found liberty on the beach without participating in collective efforts at self-preservation. But instead of anarchic or egoistic indulgence in paradise, Keate presents his readers with a transcultural variation on Shaftesbury's altruism, in which the reinforcement of social bonds overrides their potential dissolution. Elaborating on contemporary 'maritime proceedings,' (106) Keate addresses his audience's landed frame of reference and clarifies the situation of the seamen in order to emphasise the exceptional quality of the *Antelope's* case. '[I]t will not be improper to remark,' he continues, 'that when a merchant-ship is wrecked, all authority immediately ceases, and every individual is at full liberty to shift for himself' (106). Whilst the single cast-away may have been tempted to relinquish his civil self, the determination and perseverance of Captain Wilson's men offer alternative perspectives on the literary Robisonade by opening gateways for collective action and benevolent impulses. The captain's re-election, then, was by no means a given but could be secured by the crew's affection for their paternal superior, demonstrating the benefit of benevolence and fellow-feeling in adverse conditions.

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44 Bending & Bygrave, 'Introduction,' xi.

This scene of contractual renewal on the Palauan beach is indeed the pivotal point in Keate's *Account*. It leaves hierarchies existing prior to the shipwreck intact for its readers and creates a point of departure from which the English could approach their native hosts safely and even-handedly. Socially re-established on the Palauan beach, and existentially safeguarded by the king's authority, the seamen commence building their vessel as community bonded by sentimental benevolence, extending civility to hitherto unknown and unexplored territory. As the exchanges between both sides intensify, the Palauans become part of global civility's discursive universe, since Keate neither resorts to exoticisation nor applies Eurocentric benchmarks in his description of them. Instead the *Account's* register remains unchanged when the Palauans are the focus of attention:

From the general character of these people, the reader, I should conceive, will be disposed to allow, that their lives do credit to human nature; and that, however untutored, however uninformed, their manners present an interesting picture to mankind. – We see a despotic government without one shade of tyranny, and power only exercised for general happiness, the subjects looking up with filial reverence to their king. – And, whilst a mild government, and an affectionate confidence, linked their little state in bonds of harmony, gentleness of manners was the natural result, and fixed a brotherly and disinterested intercourse among one another.<sup>45</sup> (252-3)

Describing social organisation and codes of conduct among the Palauans, Keate's emphasis here is on civility, a behavioural feature expressly not confined to the English. His representation of life in the archipelago thus embraces the natives without accentuating discriminative qualities between Europeans and Pacific islanders. Whilst he alludes to differences that undoubtedly exist by characterising the natives as both 'untutored' and 'uninformed,' they nonetheless do 'credit to human nature' and present themselves as an interesting case worthy to be included in an enlightened map of mankind. But most importantly, they somewhat resemble the seamen and their affection for Captain Wilson, since the Palauans seem to have had similar feelings for their sovereign. In Keate's text, we might say, the English as well as the natives

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45 This excerpt is taken from chapter xxvi and the corresponding note no. 13 reads: 'It appears that the meaning of "despotic" has shifted in the past two hundred years; here it is used in the sense apparently that there is a king or, more properly, paramount chief, in a position of power, rather than reflecting the way this power is wielded.'

are represented as communities in their own right as (a) and (b) rather than (a) and the converse of (a).<sup>46</sup>

But Keate not merely represents the Palauans collectively as a polite people, he individualises them as sentimental subjects. As such, they possess a moral compass overlapping with the social norms of his readers, a feature that potentially levels the distinctions between benevolent, but 'untutored,' Pacific islanders and the moral high ground of enlightened Europeans. When, for example, one of the seamen 'endeavour[ed] to make himself agreeable to a lady belonging to one of the rupacks [chiefs]' Arra Kooker told him 'with the greatest civility' that 'it was not right to do so' (245). Moral integrity is a Palauan characteristic in this situation but does not result in European anxieties of authority, nor do the English seamen conceive of themselves 'as civilized men in an uncivilized world.'<sup>47</sup> Even though they are stranded in unknown territory, they move 'in a roughly equivalent kind of world'<sup>48</sup> in which civility is global rather than exclusively European.

It is, of course, the language of sentiment and sensibility, aided by the demands of self-preservation, which establishes such connections across cultural divides. Yet Keate's representation of them is not confined to transactions on the beach or cross-cultural negotiations of morality. After the crew have completed the vessel, for example, he employs the literary aesthetics of sensibility for his description of the farewell scene. The 'General' Raa Kook, a Palauan who 'had great expression of sensibility in his countenance' (212), emerges as a man of feeling in the South Pacific. Whilst the English feel 'the pain of quitting these friendly people,' too, Keate places the emphasis on the native general who 'was so affected that he was at first unable to speak' (212). But he takes the seamen 'cordially by the hand, and pointing with the other to his heart, said, *it was there he felt the pain* of bidding them farewell; nor were there any on board who saw his departure without sharing nearly the same distress' (212). Keate's depiction of Raa Kook in this situation is similar to a scene in Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), in which Mr. Atkins's feelings on being reunited with his daughter are not simply narrated but rather commemorated: 'He turned [his eyes] up to heaven – then on his daughter.

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46 Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, transl. by Janet Lloyd (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 212-13.

47 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 155.

48 Ibid.



– He laid his left hand on his heart – the sword dropped from his right – he burst into tears.<sup>49</sup> Such scenes are part and parcel of sentimentalism and pointing to one's heart or shedding tears are legible signs of being emotionally moved at something overwhelmingly touching that evades expression. Although he does not cry, Raa Kook 'gave our people a last affectionate look – then dropped astern' (212). This scene emerges as the yardstick for culturally unifying, and mutually improving, relations between 'peoples [hitherto] geographically and historically separated'<sup>50</sup> by demonstrating that Pacific islanders, who did not share social, cultural or geographical bonds with England, could embrace – and be embraced by – a potentially philanthropic European export that treated them as equals rather than as 'Savages in the Tropical Seas.'<sup>51</sup> The *Account's* representational inclusiveness may thus serve as point of departure for a literary history of the eighteenth century, which is both long and wide.

## 2. From Sentimental Content to Fragmentary Form

Despite their cultural differences and the language barrier between them, the English and the Palauans established mutually improving relations on the beach and beyond. As we have seen, Keate represents the cultural traffic between both communities in sentimental terms, reconciling the seemingly incommensurate impulses of self-preservation on the one hand and polite sociability on the other. He uses the reformist and inclusive impulses of sentimental fiction and marries them to the travel writing genre in order to achieve culturally interlacing effects. In this respect, both content and form are vital to understanding Keate's hybridising transposition of the sentimental novel to the South Pacific. Since sentimental novels often consist of only loosely connected chapters – Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, for example, is a collection of elaborate sentimental scenes, whereas Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* is tied together by Yorick's trip to France-, they leave behind an impression of

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49 Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 50.

50 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.

51 Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, ed. by Harvey Peter Sucksmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 201.

fragmentariness, calling for the active coproduction of the reader. However, these discursive fractures may very well be gateways to political reflection:

Absence is one of the major tropes of sentimental fiction. A text such as *The Man of Feeling* repeatedly offers us gaps, silences, and inaction or inadequate action in the face of suffering, injustice, and large-scale social ills. [...] The form allows for the inclusion of politically controversial material.<sup>52</sup>

By way of such discursive fractures, the sentimental novel is opened up and offers an aesthetically created space for political reflection, with the possibility of connecting 'the most domestic-seeming texts to broader transcultural and global elements.'<sup>53</sup> Indeed, sentimentalism's 'themes are plastic, bending to the particular exigencies of the narrative pressures of individual novels.'<sup>54</sup> This thematic flexibility turned sentimental novels into agents of reform, commenting on a wide range of socially and culturally pressing issues, such as prostitution, virtue or inequality. Slavery and the slave trade were the most radical form of inequality in the eighteenth century and frequently represented in the period's fiction.<sup>55</sup> But by virtue of its emphasis on emotions and the language of feeling, sensibility hardly ever moved beyond the representation, albeit an elaborate one, of suffering to the social and economic foundations of 'slavery proper.'<sup>56</sup> Doing so would have endangered the very fabric of the nation and shattered both the symbolic and material orders at the heart of Britain's emerging global reach.

Keate, by contrast, goes further than most of his contemporaries by fully incorporating the Palauans into his vision of sentimental inclusiveness. He uses sentimentalism's discursive fractures in order to present a coherent story of collective self-preservation and cultural cross-fertilisation without taking the entire formation beyond its potential breaking point. By meticulously interweaving cultural difference, travelling hazards and the language of feeling, he adapts sentimentalism's flexibility to respond to multiple thematic concerns and manages to leave the socio-cultural fabric of the metropolis intact.

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52 Bending & Bygrave, 'Introduction,' xvi.

53 Jyotsna G. Singh, 'Introduction,' in Singh, ed., *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009), 1-27, here 9.

54 Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility*, 49.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., 86.

Though bold, his move is a skilful one, perfectly consistent with a 'principle which was central to the ideology of the Enlightenment: man's natural goodness.'<sup>57</sup> In this perspective, both the English and the Palauans emerge as enlightened and fully-fledged sentimental subjects, capable of improving themselves and distinguishing moral right from wrong.

The resolutely optimistic Shaftesbury, too, was preoccupied with questions of morality and goes to great lengths to demonstrate that human beings are naturally good and just. According to him, 'we call any creature worthy or virtuous' when it can distinguish 'what is morally good or ill, admirable or blamable, right or wrong.'<sup>58</sup> And although 'virtue or merit' is 'allowed to man only,' he can never change 'the eternal measures and immutable independent nature of worth and virtue.'<sup>59</sup> Writing primarily for and about polite society, he was rigidly opposed to travellers' tales, but Keate's *Account* demonstrates that his enlightened optimism could equally apply to extra-European peoples:

One of the natives having stolen a small hatchet, that was carried in the boat to the wreck, was getting off with it in his canoe; but a musket being fired, charged only with powder, in order to frighten him, one of the people, whom the King left, went in the jolly-boat, and made him restore it. (108)

The Palauans themselves watch out for potential perpetrators among their countrymen, since iron in all shapes and forms was a much-wanted resource. The authorities among them, especially the King and his two brothers, are anxious not to let the good relationships with the English go awry. They accordingly demonstrate their susceptibility to the cross-cultural dynamics on the Palauan beach by holding members of their community to account. In so doing, they evince their very own moral sense, which is akin to Shaftesbury's characterisation of human virtue. Morality and civility are cross-cultural as well as global in this regard and render the *je ne sais quoi* of maritime long distance voyaging obsolete. The actions of the Palauans are both legible and understandable, familiarising English readers not only with differential social patterns and life on the beach but also illustrating that moral integrity is not

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57 Maurice Cranston, 'Introduction,' in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, transl. with an Introduction by Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin, 1984) 9-53, here 47.

58 Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, Vol. I, 252.

59 *Ibid.*, 251 & 255.

an exclusively European property. Keate thus manages to use sentimentalism's discursive fractures for a representation of island life that complicates the relationship between European self and Pacific other at the same time as it draws attention to the pressures of self-preservation and the complex exchanges in transcultural contact zones.

### 3. Cultural Traffic on the Beach

The contact zone in which Captain Wilson and his men found themselves was, of course, the beach. In the event of shipwreck, its landward and seaward sides harbour peoples whose cultural trajectories accidentally and unexpectedly intersect so that 'regulation is at a minimum, and improvisation and initiative at a premium.'<sup>60</sup> Both sides are governed by differential social codes, belief systems and traditions, which are not necessarily similar to, or compatible with, one another: 'In comparing developments on one side of the beach with those on the other is to blend two events that are, no matter how physically proximate and materially entangled, utterly different in their historical profiles and cultural valences.'<sup>61</sup> Whilst the indeterminacy of such unexpected intersections seems to pose a threat to peaceful interaction, it also comprises the potential for mutually improving cross-fertilisation by virtue of its subversion or levelling of European hierarchies. In Keate's *Account*, for example, the English seamen and the Palauan natives transform tentative beginnings into ongoing consolidated friendships, with exchange, curiosity and improvisation remaining integral constituents throughout the encounter. In this interactional context, the beach explodes restrictive notions of sentimentalism's representational and geographical reach, thus becoming the arena in which European discursive formations acquire global significance.

Journeys to these arenas, especially in the South Pacific, were predicated upon the epistemological claim of discovering 'new worlds – the discovery of cultures and continents formerly unknown to the West, at least.'<sup>62</sup> In the case of the *Antelope's* crew, this novelty became a sudden and radical reality as a result of the shipwreck, but it also added, albeit unintentionally, to Europe's growing archive of knowledge about the diversity of Pacific worlds.

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60 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 54.

61 *Ibid.*, 133.

62 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 447.

Keate himself 'feel[s] some satisfaction in being the instrument of introducing to the world a *new people*,' adding that he takes great pride in 'vindicating their injured characters from the imputation of those savage manners which ignorance alone had ascribed to them' (51; emphasis in original). Knowledge is key in this respect and demonstrates how literary gentlemen such as Keate were crucially involved in both its production and dissemination, two major concerns in Enlightenment's endeavour to dispel myths and question received wisdom. And given the profoundly hierarchical way in which Britain has ordered its maritime history in later centuries, the adventures of Captain Wilson's men on the Palauan beach provide a point of departure from which we can start rereading eighteenth century literature and culture 'not univocally but *contrapuntally*, with a simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts.'<sup>63</sup>

On the Palauan beach, these histories were not antithetical to one another, nor was there an 'ongoing contest between north and south, metropolis and periphery, white and native.'<sup>64</sup> Keate instead represents the sandy interface as giving rise to mutually improving relationships, reciprocity and dialogue, emphasising both the sudden proximity and interconnectedness of social practices caused by an accidental cultural convergence. Pregnant with opportunity, this contact familiarises two entirely different, yet spatially contiguous, peoples and demonstrates how cooperation rather than competition is capable of facilitating self-preservation and beneficial exchanges. When, for instance, the crew need fresh water immediately after the loss of their ship, the natives not only share their knowledge of local resources, but actively assist in procuring the much-needed fluid:

The natives conducted our people to a well of fresh water; the path leading to this well lying across steep and rugged rocks rendered the track hazardous and difficult. RICHARD SHARP, a midshipman, a lad about fifteen, being on this duty, the natives took him in their arms when the path was rugged, and they were very careful in these places to assist the men, who returned with two jars filled. (81)

In this passage, global civility is not merely a discursive formation bending to situational exigencies; it emerges as the material equivalent to, and pro-

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63 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), 59.

64 Ibid.

longation of, the first appearance of the natives. From its inception, then, this 'friendly alliance does not unravel, but is extended'<sup>65</sup> and raises questions about the interactional dynamics and spatial configurations of cross-cultural encounters during pre-imperial times, especially in the eighteenth century.

Washed up on unknown shores, Captain Wilson and his men needed Palauan support for their intended return to England and experienced first-hand the levelling tendencies of encounters on the beach. As in-between space, it encourages 'forms of sociality that might be understood as less hierarchical and more egalitarian than those bred by other localities.'<sup>66</sup> In this respect, the beach is intimately related to both the sea and the desert as transnational contact zones, in which travellers, explorers or shipwrecked sailors find themselves either modifying hierarchies and authorities or reinstating them in the interests of self-preservation. We can conceptualise both strategies as coping mechanisms necessitated by the prevalent insecurity of Europeans in these spaces, in which extreme weather conditions, unknown ecosystems and alien lifeways erode their supposed authority. But what is more, the hospitality of the Palauans creates a 'virtual space of sentimentalism' on the beach, which is 'reformative, morally instructive and virtuous.'<sup>67</sup> As such, it questions Eurocentric assumptions of moral or intellectual superiority at the same time as it qualifies the traveller, often a 'white male subject'<sup>68</sup> on a scientific or commercial mission, and transforms him into 'an object of indigenous knowledge and even appropriation.'<sup>69</sup> This reversal of the native gaze, however, contains the harmonising potential that is so central to global civility in general, and the Anglo-Palauan encounter in particular, since '[h]ere beside the sea, there is harmony amongst humankind, from whichever corner of the globe – north, east, south, west – the subalterns come. The sea, like death, is a great leveller, but a leveller in a desire for the horizonless horizons of life.'<sup>70</sup> Coupled with Enlightenment's emancipatory impetus, the spatial dynamics of the beach seem to make possible an existence without

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65 Thomas, 'The Pelew Islands' in British Culture,' 31.

66 Donna Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore: Equine and Equestrian Perspectives on a New Maritime History,' in Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood & Mohamed-Salah Omri, eds., *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy* (London & New York: Tauris, 2010), 253-277, her 253.

67 Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility*, 42.

68 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 9.

69 Lamb et al, 'Introduction,' xx.

70 Caroline Rooney, 'What is the Oceanic?' *Angelaki* 12:2 (August 2007), 19-32, here 28.

artificially sustained power-relations, peaceful interaction and traffic across cultural divides, epitomising the period's central struggle to liberate man as 'he is everywhere in chains.'<sup>71</sup> In this perspective, the temporary integration of the English seamen into the archipelago's community is not an exception to the rule of European metropolitan superiority but both an enrichment of eighteenth century canonical inventories and a revaluation of reductive notions of agency and subjectivity.

Indeed, the Palauans showcase their agency 'in the face of novel devices and habits' which is 'evidence of a propensity for self-improvement.'<sup>72</sup> This feature places them right at the centre of Enlightenment's intellectual universe, for which improvement, and especially self-improvement, was a central axiom. Among the goods, commodities and tools retrieved from the wreck of the *Antelope* the natives found a plethora of incentives, prompting them to scrutinise the unknown material practices that had so suddenly arrived on their beach. On the King's first visit to the English camp, his brother Raa Kook, who is particularly fond of the seamen's company, is eager to familiarise him with the seamen's tools:

He put [the grindstone] in motion, which (having been shown the method) he had frequently done before; the King remained fixed in astonishment at the rapidity of its motion, and at the explanation of the General, that it would immediately sharpen and polish iron. Captain WILSON ordered a hatchet to be brought, and ground, that they might more readily perceive its operation. Raa Kook eagerly laid hold of the handle of the stone, and began turning it, appearing highly delighted himself to let his brother see how well he understood it; he having the preceding day amused himself for some hours with this novelty, and had sharpened several pieces of iron, which he had picked up about the tents. (96-7)

Iron, though extremely rare in the archipelago, was no unknown commodity, for the King 'bore a hatchet on his shoulder, the head of which was made of iron' (94). The Palauans would naturally attach great importance to the maintenance of these rare and valuable tools, given that 'all the other hatchets [the English] had seen were of shell' (94). Hence, the immediate response of the Palauans to the new cultural technique, as well as their eagerness to emulate

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71 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, transl. and introduced by Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin, 1968), 49.

72 Thomas, "The Pelew Islands" in *British Culture*, 33.

it, not only signifies curiosity but also, and more importantly, openness and exchange in a cross-cultural setting.

Such exchanges were crucial to eighteenth century thought and inextricably intertwined with contemporary notions of improvement. Adam Smith, for example, conceptualised 'the propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another' as lying 'in human nature' and being 'common to all men.'<sup>73</sup> And since 'man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren,' it is 'by treaty, by barter, and by purchase, that we obtain from one another the greater part of those mutual good offices which we stand in need of.'<sup>74</sup> But whereas Smith's economic philosophy relied on a restrictive concept of 'civilized society,'<sup>75</sup> the anonymous *History of Inland Navigations* (1766) had already envisioned the benefits of global commerce, stating that 'navigation joins, as it were, the whole world in a social intercourse of benefits.'<sup>76</sup> This is the case in the Anglo-Palauan encounter, which temporarily conjoins members of 'civilized society' with a native community, initiating cultural traffic in a place 'where little or no commercial circulation existed.'<sup>77</sup> In so doing, it transposes both European cultural practices and their theorisations onto a global level at the same time as it opens new vistas and opportunities for British scientists, merchants and explorers. However, the resultant traffic on the Palauan beach is bi-directional, even-handed and mutually beneficial rather than emanating in unilateral fashion from the shipwrecked representatives of metropolitan culture.

According to the *History of Inland Navigations*, 'every pen has celebrated those great and adventurous men, who by their discoveries in this art [navigation], have spread knowledge, humanity and improvement over every part of the globe.'<sup>78</sup> Yet Keate's pen broadens this Eurocentric perspective by not only celebrating British perseverance in the face of adversity, but also by including the Palauans as sentimental subjects capable of improving themselves. Their responsiveness to incentives and imports from outside the archipelago

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73 Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 Vols., ed. by A. S. Skinner, R. H. Campbell & W.B. Todd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), Vol. I, 25.

74 *Ibid.*, 26 & 27.

75 *Ibid.*, 26.

76 *The History of Inland Navigations* (London: T. Lowndes, 1766), 1; see also: Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility*, 143.

77 Felicity A. Nussbaum, 'Introduction,' in Nussbaum, ed., *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 1-18, here 9.

78 *The History of Inland Navigations*, 1; see also: Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility*, 143.



emerges as critical characteristic within eighteenth century intellectual culture and is by no means confined to material practices, such as sharpening tools and weapons. On a visit to the main island, Mr Devis, the crew's draughtsman, sketches a group of native women and upon seeing the result the King 'readily entered into a true idea of the art' (121):

The King then desired Mr. Devis to lend him a piece of paper, and his pencil, on which he attempted to delineate three or four figures, very rudely, without the least proportion; their heads, instead of an oval, being, in a pointed form, like a sugar-loaf. Nor let any one conclude from this circumstance, that the King was ostentatious to exhibit the little knowledge he possessed of the art; I rather mention it as proof of his openness of temper, to let Mr. Devis see that he was not totally ignorant of what was meant by it; nor was it less a mark of his condescension, in shewing he could very imperfectly trace what the artist was able more happily to delineate. He approved in the stranger those talents he would himself have been ambitious to possess, and in his manner of testifying his approbation, exhibited in captivating colours that which no pencil could display – the urbanity of a noble mind. (122)

We should read this episode 'neither as an instance of primitive ineptitude nor as one of barbaric vanity,'<sup>79</sup> since Keate takes great care to depict the local chief as curious and receptive subject, who is able to learn from example and eager to master this new representational practice. But he is not the only one among the Palauans intrigued by what Mr Devis does; 'two of his women' are ordered to pose for the artist and an attendant 'rupack looking over Mr. DEVIS's shoulder, seemed pleased at the representation, or likeness' (121). Although they are at first the objects of the artist's gaze, the natives quickly reverse this constellation by both attentively watching the entire procedure and their attempts to follow suit. Interestingly, there is no rivalry in this moment of mimetic emulation and the king's intentions are more important than the resultant drawings. This 'openness of temper' among the natives engenders a reformative cosmopolitan space on the beach, and stitches together the Palauan and English communities by differential, but complementary, cultural practices.

Yet unlike these insouciant exchanges of manual and artistic skills, the material transactions on the beach take centre stage in the course of the Anglo-Palauan encounter and acquire vital significance, especially for the English. Whilst Captain Wilson and his officers were given the permission to

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79 Thomas, "The Pelew Islands" in *British Culture*, 33.

build a new vessel by the king, they nevertheless have 'to find enough carbohydrate and protein to keep the crew working.'<sup>80</sup> Without solving this nutritional problem, they cannot hope to return to England, a challenge aggravated by their inability to catch fish. Unfortunately, however, this failure is salient throughout the *Account*:

They saw a great quantity of fish swimming about the ship, but could not catch any, as they would not take the baits. (68)

The morning being fine, the jolly-boat was dispatched to the watering-place to fetch some timbers for futtocks, and to haul the seine [a special kind of fishing net]; but no fish could be caught. (115)

The jolly-boat was sent to fish, but without success. It was singular that this was always the case; whether our countrymen knew not the proper places to go to, or the proper bait, but every attempt of this kind proved fruitless. (147)

The crew's failure to add seafood to the provisions retrieved from the wreck demonstrates how unknown territories can turn out to be intricate ecosystems, in which travellers needed 'specific kinds of knowledge for survival.'<sup>81</sup> These were, of course, only accessible through contact with the locals and Europeans had to cooperate with, and learn from, them when they criss-crossed the sea, the desert or similarly extreme spaces. Calling into question the centrality of European knowledge, as well as challenging simplistic conceptualisations of centre-periphery models, this reversal of epistemological authority paves the way for a comprehensive process of 'self-criticism and unlearning'<sup>82</sup> of privilege. Europeans in the South Pacific were accordingly in for a potentially unsettling experience, bringing home to them in vivid colours Smith's assertion that man 'stands at all times in need of the cooperation and assistance'<sup>83</sup> of his fellow men, European or otherwise.

From their earliest meetings on the beach, both the natives and the seamen put this cooperative principle at the heart of Smith's economic philosophy into practice, albeit probably obliviously and, of course, outside its in-

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80 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 277.

81 Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore,' 251.

82 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 443.

83 Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 26.

tellektual home ground. Clearly, the crew's failed attempts at fishing in the Pacific, as well as the peculiarity of the Palauan 'method of doing it' (180), meant that 'their diet could only be supplied by their hosts, chiefly in the form of yams and fish.'<sup>84</sup> But the unilateral shipments of food do not result in asymmetrical dependency because the natives seek access to European weaponry. Following a demonstration of firearms on one of the king's visits, which prompts his brother Arra Kooker into pondering the benefits of this unknown, but very efficient, technology, he 'wished [that] Captain WILSON would permit four or five of his men to accompany him to war with their muskets' (104). Keate takes great pains to frame this instance in sentimental terms and provides an elaborate explanation both of the encounter's reciprocal fashion and of the king's request:

They conceived that what they wished to ask, as it might prove a temporary inconvenience, would look ungenerous; and that which most checked their speaking was, that, circumstanced as the English were with respect to them, a request would have the appearance of a command; an idea this, which shocked their sensibility. (103)

It seems that even tricky borderline situations such as this one can neither disrupt the cross-cultural bonds on the Palauan beach nor cause Keate's resolutely sentimental rhetoric to disintegrate. Quite the contrary is the case when 'Captain WILSON instantly replied, that the English were as his own people, and that the enemies of the King were their enemies' (104). But the author goes even further and emphasises the global character of the Anglo-Palauan encounter, celebrating 'that extreme delicacy of sentiment which no one would have expected in regions so disjoined from the rest of the world' (104).

As this survey of cultural traffic suggests, Keate's transposition of the rhetoric of sensibility to the South Pacific conjoins the landward and seaward sides of the Palauan beach in a relationship governed by mutual interest, reciprocity and even handed exchange. It facilitates the negotiation of mutually beneficial arrangements, maintains multiple channels of transaction and allows for cross-cultural troubleshooting.<sup>85</sup> The people with whom the English

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84 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 277.

85 Compare the following situations: When one of 'the natives having stolen a small hatchet' tries to escape, 'one of the people, whom the King left, went in the jolly-boat, and made him restore it' (108). In chapter xvi Wilson complains about 'the loss of a

seamen deal in this environment of pragmatic improvisation are neither savages nor barbarians. Although they are only 'tutored in the school of Nature' (204), Keate is 'confident that every Reader, when he has gone through the present account of them with attention, will be convinced that these unknown natives of Pelew, so far from *disgracing*, live an *ornament* to human nature' (51). In keeping with Enlightenment's emancipatory impetus, notions of human nature are inclusive and all-encapsulating in this respect, illustrating the universal claims of the period's knowledge production. And what is more, instead of the sensationalist monster-tales censured by Shaftesbury, Keate presents his readers with a legible, though radically different, community of intelligent men of feeling in the South Pacific. As such, they are able to comprehend the practices of those suddenly washed up on their shores and actively participate in the material exchanges that Smith theorised in *The Wealth of Nations*. In so doing, the natives challenge restrictive notions of 'civilized society'<sup>86</sup> and actively embrace European discursive formations at the same time as these formations embrace them.

Ironically, the Palauans differ decisively from the savages and barbarians conjured up by Smith in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in order to emphasise the moral, intellectual and cultural refinement of both 'polished people' and 'civilized nations.'<sup>87</sup> According to him, extra-European peoples are 'obliged to smother and conceal the appearance of every passion' and 'necessarily acquire the habits of falsehood and dissimulation.'<sup>88</sup> Keate's *Account*, however, leaves no room for such conjectural representations of alterity and instead familiarises his metropolitan audience with the civil and sentimental natives of Palau.

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caulking-iron and an adze' to the king, who promises to look for them. On the next day 'Arra Kooker came to speak about the things that had been purloined. He had recovered the caulking-iron, but the adze had been carried to Pelew' (171). On another occasion, the Captain raises several issues which seem to be important to him and his officers and discusses them with Raa Kook (148 – 150), who listens to what Wilson has to say and affirms that 'he would make him and his people perfectly easy in every particular circumstance' (148).

86 Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 26.

87 Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 244.

88 Ibid.

#### 4. Limited Inclusiveness and the Intricacies of Knowledge Production

There are, however, limits to global civility's representational inclusiveness on the Palauan beach. Just as Henry Blount's *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636) celebrates the brilliantly managed Ottoman Empire at the same time as it pours scorn and contempt over the Jews, Keate refuses to incorporate the sixteen Chinese seamen, who were hired in Macao, into his comprehensive sentimental vision. If we juxtapose these two texts, we discover their many features of cross-cultural receptivity and curiosity but also their refusal to incorporate, or favourably depict, one more or less clearly defined group of outsiders. It seems that both Blount's comparative method and Keate's beneficial reciprocity depend on a textually created, but deliberately excluded, 'other' against which the respective encounters can be measured and defined. Whilst exposing various strategies of textual othering may shed more light on Blount's anti-Semitism or Keate's Sinophobia, such a 'reification of otherness reproduces the sharp "us and them" opposition of colonial discourse itself, and simplifies the complex transactions and migrations of the history of colonialism.'<sup>89</sup> Thus, considering both texts in conjunction with the dynamics of representation, as well as the economics of publication, will do more justice to the multi-layered complexity of cross-cultural encounters.

In eighteenth century Britain, there was a thriving book market and travellers' tales were among the best-selling titles, as we can infer from Shaftesbury's harsh criticism of monsters and monster-tales in his *Charateristicks* (1713). But, of course, it is important 'to ground these representations in the home cultures from which they derived, to read them back into the sponsoring institutions, publishing history and other cultural contexts in which, and for which, they were produced.'<sup>90</sup> In this perspective, they tell us more about sensation-hungry readers or business-minded, but not necessarily truthful, publishers than the animals, peoples and territories they describe. Implicitly and indirectly, however, they also raise questions as to what the English reading public did and could know about far-flung empires or oceans, such as the Ottomans or the Pacific, respectively. Although representations of foreign lands attracted widespread criticism, eyewitness accounts and travel books

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89 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 21.

90 *Ibid.*, 20

had nonetheless a monopoly of information in this respect and were thus crucial to the global circulation of knowledge in general and the Enlightenment project in particular. Some of its most important protagonists must have perused travel accounts in order to season their writings with references to noble or ignoble savages, barbarous peoples and practices, or unknown countries and their cultures. According to Kant, for example, who never left his native Königsberg, '[t]he Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous';<sup>91</sup> and Hegel, in a similarly dismissive vein, famously consigns the very same continent to a place outside history, a position that practically amounts to meaninglessness.

Yet despite these controversies over veracity or the arrogance of philosophical figureheads, the extra-European other seems to have been a *de rigueur* constituent of European intellectual life of the period, albeit mostly in the form of representations. And these representations, biased and positional though they may be, 'do tell us something about indigenous lifeways and points of view.'<sup>92</sup> Unfortunately, however, native points of view were often out of reach for eighteenth century English readers, especially when it comes to societies in which oral modes of story-telling were predominant.<sup>93</sup> But Keate's text nevertheless bridges the gulf not only between the landward and seaward sides of the beach, but also between orality and literacy. When, for instance, the Palauan king sends his son Lee Boo to England with Captain Wilson he wants to provide him with the opportunity 'of improving himself by accompanying the English, and of learning many things, that might at his return greatly benefit his country' (199). Once in England, Lee Boo's eagerness to acquire knowledge resembles that of his father, and, more importantly, his 'temper' seems to have been consistent with contemporary English etiquette:

After he had been awhile settled, and a little habituated to the manners of this country [Lee Boo] was sent every day to an Academy at Rotherhithe, to be instructed in reading and writing, which he was himself eager to attain, and most assiduous in learning; his whole deportment, whilst there, was so engaging, that it not only gained him the esteem of the gentleman under

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91 Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings*, ed. by Patrick Frierson & Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 58.

92 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 21.

93 *Ibid.*, and Keate, *Account*, 257 & 260.

whose tuition he was placed, but also the affection of his young companions [...]. (260)

Lee Boo's temper was very mild and compassionate, discovering, in various instances, that he had brought from his father's territories that spirit of philanthropy, which we have seen reigned there; yet he at all times governed it by discretion and judgment. (262)

Keate here reiterates the Palauans' propensity for self-improvement by incorporating Lee Boo's story into the *Account*, emphasising both his intellectual capabilities and flawless conduct in a radically different environment. The young man's experiences in England accordingly resemble what the crew had to go through in Palau. This feature of the text illustrates the complexity of cross-cultural encounters through its representation of unsettling experiences on both sides of the cultural divide and bears witness to the even-handed reciprocity that governed Anglo-Palauan interaction in the South Pacific as well as in the British Isles.

Although Lee Boo and his fellow Palauans were represented through the cultural grid of an English writer writing for an English target audience, they emerge as enlightened and sentimental subjects in their own right. And since the natives did not possess written records, some aspects of their habits, conventions and traditions would have been lost without Keate's book, which textualises, and thus preserves, them for posterity.<sup>94</sup> This constellation is, however, rife with various problems whose ramifications potentially cancel global civility's inclusiveness. Keate effectively speaks about and for the Palauans, and in so doing occupies a position of discursive authority. European colonial endeavours of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries rested on such dichotomously structured patterns of representation, depriving natives of their voices and fixing them in positions that were meaningful only in relation to the coloniser's culture. But solely concentrating 'on the conventions through which a culture was textualized while ignoring the actuality of what was represented is to risk a second-order repetition of the images, typologies and projections under scrutiny.'<sup>95</sup> Of course, Captain Wilson and his men carried their cultural baggage with them when they moved about the beach and it is

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94 Keate dedicates chapters xxiii to xxvii to a wide range of anthropological and background information on both the archipelago and its inhabitants.

95 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 20-1.

very likely that they misread several aspects of Palauan life. For example, describing the local sovereign as 'king' is a cross-cultural transplantation of the titles and hierarchies the seamen were acquainted with and does not do justice to the intricacies of Palauan social organisation.<sup>96</sup> And given that Keate wrote the *Account* on the basis of interviews with crew-members and journals kept during the voyage, we have to add yet another layer of mediation to the complex history of his text. Scrutinising the power-structures in this history and trying to expose them will accordingly tell us very much about English literature and culture in the eighteenth century, but it will hardly yield any insights into Palauan life because it brushes away the *Account's* value as document of successful contact phenomena. Such a reductive approach to transnational contact zones thus replicates the biases and underlying assumptions of the metropolitan cultures it aims to expose and leads to what Rod Edmond has called second-order repetitions.

However, readers who are 'wary of being stifled by the rituals of language fetishism'<sup>97</sup> will discover a wealth of indispensable knowledge about cross-cultural interaction in Keate's *Account*. The very fact that he set out to write up the journals of the shipwrecked seamen indicates that the parties involved thought their adventures worthy of dissemination. Not only did their story lead from shipwreck over salvage to return, it also involved the crucial cooperation, support and hospitality of the natives, who neither fit in with Rousseauesque idealisations of natural men nor conform to contortive stereotypes of 'Savages in the Tropical Seas.'<sup>98</sup> Keate's depiction of the Palauans as both sentimental and civil is thus his way of assigning them agency and subjectivity. Yet this is not synonymous with comprehensive representational generosity, for the author's inclusiveness has its limits. He elides the Chinese seamen and they figure in much the same ways as the Jews do in Blount's *Voyage*. As such, they represent a blind spot in Keate's text and occupy a marginal position on the Palauan beach. Very early on Mr. Benger, 'the first mate' (95/96), describes the main island and

[a] China-man also added, 'that this have very poor place, and very poor people; no got clothes, no got rice, no got hog, no got nothing, only yam, little

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96 Keate, *Account*, 227.

97 Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press), 3-4.

98 Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, 201.



fish, and cocoa-nut; no got nothing make trade, very little make eat.' (117; emphasis in original)

Whilst the Palauans represent the landward equivalent of the shipwrecked Europeans who came from the seaward side of the beach the Chinese seamen hardly ever surface in the text. And if they do, they appear as clumsy, devious and essentially different. The China-man in this passage struggles with his English and cannot make himself properly understood whereas the language barrier does not pose a problem in the farewell scene, for instance, in which Raa Kook shares his pain through the non-verbal language of feeling by pointing to his heart. Keate accordingly confines the *Account's* representational civility to the English and the Palauans, but it is global nonetheless by virtue of its lively joining together of the British and Pacific worlds. By exploring this triadic structure, and the cultural confluence it gave rise to, we can plumb both the depth and complexity of cross-cultural encounters. We have, of course, inherited them as textual representations, but this is 'not to reduce history to textuality but, rather, to insist on the textuality of history.'<sup>99</sup> With this central axiom in mind, we can explore mutually improving encounters in the South Pacific at the same time as we follow in the footsteps of those who traversed the ethno-religiously diverse worlds of Islam.

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99 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 51.



## 4. Global Civility on the Desert Route to India

Henry Abbott's *A Trip*

*...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (1789)

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The previous chapter has demonstrated how English seamen and Pacific Islanders established mutually beneficial exchanges on the beach and contextualised George Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands* (1788) within eighteenth century discourses of travel, sensibility and commerce. By focussing on the cultural traffic between the landward and seaward sides of the beach, it has shown that radical cultural difference need not give rise to inequality, misunderstandings or armed conflict. The present chapter, too, addresses even-handed interaction between representatives of two entirely different, yet complementary, cultures and traces the ways in which English travellers and their Arab guides on the 'Great Desert Caravan Route' between Aleppo and Basra actively lived and practiced global civility. Whilst it discusses several travellers taking the same route in the course of the eighteenth century, Henry Abbott is the chapter's protagonist. His *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (1789) represents the encounter between himself and his Arab hosts as governed by mutual respect and cooperation, and differs decisively from nineteenth century depictions of the so-called Orient, such as A.W. Kinglake's *Eothen* (1844), which portrayed Europe's others as barbaric and backward. Abbott's text, by contrast, is a prime example of Enlightenment's cosmopolitan spirit and represents the desert Arabs as part of an inclusive and global vision. In so doing, it emerges as the Middle Eastern equivalent to Keate's favourable representation of the Palauans and further extends global civility's reach in both representational and geographical terms.

When they set out to India, English travellers could choose between several routes. The first section in the present chapter will introduce the two most popular ones and discuss their similarities and differences by focussing

on the experiential dimensions and spatial configurations to which travellers were exposed in the desert and the sea, respectively. From the start, Abbott sets himself apart from his travelling contemporaries on the Desert Route and recommends treating the Arabs 'with common civility'.<sup>1</sup> Just as Keate's *Account* frequently emphasises both the sensibility and civility of the Palauans, Abbott's *Trip* insists on the human dignity of the ill-reputed Arabs and rationalises their behaviour within a comprehensive and comparative perspective of human conduct. The second section takes a closer look at breaches of civility and introduces the stories of two boastful characters in order to emphasise Abbott's readiness to approach his interlocutors openly and unconditionally. The following section proceeds from behavioural patterns and comparative frameworks to the reenactive character of Middle Eastern travel, discussing the complex 'dialectic of novelty and repetition'<sup>2</sup> at the heart of European interaction with Islamic lands. During pre-imperial times, this interaction was part of multi-dimensional and complex exchanges 'between what have come to be thought of as separate spheres: East and West'.<sup>3</sup> By challenging the prejudices of some of his contemporaries, Abbott complicates such seemingly straightforward categorisations and their historical rootedness considerably. The fourth section thus discusses his readiness to be favourably impressed in the late eighteenth century, the time identified by Edward Said as the onset of modern Orientalism.<sup>4</sup> The fifth and final section in this chapter transposes the discussion of civility from the human to the animal realm and places the culturally specific interaction between humans and their beasts of burden in a comparative perspective. As we shall see, the rich and diverse nature of both interactional patterns and mutually beneficial arrangements on the Caravan Route represented by Abbott defies simplistic conclusions of life in the putatively empty space of the Syrian Desert. However, those who refused to engage with either its inhabitants or ecological intricacies were bound to find their journey across the sandy contact zone monotonous, strenuous and tedious.

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1 Henry Abbott, *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1789), 7; (All further references are to this edition).

2 Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here 441.

3 Gerald MacLean, 'Introduction: Re-Orienting the Renaissance,' in MacLean, ed., *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), 1-28, here 1.

4 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995), 3

## 1. Kindred Spirits on the Way to India

In a letter to a friend in England written in 1748, Captain Gaylard Roberts, then on his journey back from India by way of the Syrian Desert, recounts the tedium of the overland journey as follows:

Near all that has been wrote by those who have journalized this way, has been that they set out such an hour in the morning, pitched their tents such an hour in the evening, that the ground was stony, or uneven, in some places gravel, sand, or level in others, that they met with pretty good water in some places, bad in others, and often get hares or antelopes, which the Arabs knock down with their sticks. This indeed is the greatest part of what a man can write of with any certainty who keeps a journal.<sup>5</sup>

The desert's charms seem to have been strictly limited for Roberts in terms of both its inhabitants – human as well as animal – and the daily routines on the trip. His letter suggests a lack of interest in, and engagement with, the space he traversed and ‘journalized.’ However, the rich and century-old tradition of writing on desert travel in general, and the Syrian Desert in particular, is much more nuanced than Roberts’s sweeping generalisations might suggest: the ‘Syrian Desert is a great surprise to many travellers’<sup>6</sup> as it was indeed ‘the main channel by which the riches of the East flowed to the West.’<sup>7</sup> Textual or pictorial representations of this crucial channel are ‘apt to conjure up a picture of golden sands blown into dunes, only less mobile than the sea.’<sup>8</sup> But mobility and movement are crucial in this context: not only were the sea and the desert of immense commercial value in the past by virtue of being ‘crisscrossed by trade routes,’<sup>9</sup> they are also environmentally extreme in-between spaces; so

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5 Gaylard Roberts, ‘Account of a Journey from Basra to Aleppo in 1748,’ in Douglas Carruthers, ed., *The Desert Route to India: Being the Journals of Four Travellers by the Great Desert Caravan Route between Aleppo and Basra, 1745-1751* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1928), 41-47, here 44.

6 Christina Phelps Grant, *The Syrian Desert: Caravans, Travel and Exploration* (London: A.&C. Black, 1937), 6.

7 Douglas Carruthers, ‘Introduction,’ in Carruthers, ed., xi-xxxvi, here xi.

8 Grant, *The Syrian Desert*, 6.

9 Donna Landry, ‘Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore: Equine and Equestrian Perspectives on a New Maritime History,’ in Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood & Mohamed-Salah Omri, eds., *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy* (London & New York: Tauris, 2010), 253-277, here 253.

much so that their protean character resisted complete appropriation by imperial powers, since both can serve as 'agent[s] of colonial oppression' on the one hand, and as loci 'of indigenous resistance and native empowerment'<sup>10</sup> on the other. They have accordingly always been represented as 'geopolitically overwritten, strategically important spaces' 'bear[ing] to each other relations of comparability as well as adjacency or contingency.'<sup>11</sup> And what is more, both the sea and the desert 'may at first sight appear empty to those unfamiliar with their intricate ecosystems.'<sup>12</sup> Yet these ecosystems and their historical, cultural and material interconnections are likely to 'provoke experiences of the sublime,'<sup>13</sup> eventually leading to attempts either materially to conquer or artistically to capture their oceanic and overpowering vastness. The rich traditions of literary, operatic and filmic representations of both spaces thus indicate the tremendous efforts of travellers, artists, merchants, soldiers or rulers to come to grips with the fear and awe they inspire.<sup>14</sup>

Contrary to Captain Roberts's reductive summary of desert travel, then, the experiences of Europeans in the Syrian Desert were varied, often telling of hardships, deprivations and harsh weather conditions at the same time as they allude to rare pleasures.<sup>15</sup> Experiences of maritime long distance travel could be equally challenging so that the sea often lurks surreptitiously as the desert's kindred spirit when we follow merchants, soldiers and travellers on their respective journeys to the Indian subcontinent. Bengal had served as colonial foothold from the 1760 onwards,<sup>16</sup> and adventurous Britons primarily used two different, yet intimately linked, routes to get there:

[I]n the latter half of the eighteenth century, quite a number of Englishmen, chiefly East India Company officials going to or returning from India, used the 'Overland' route, known as the 'Great Desert Caravan Route,' as a short cut from the Mediterranean ports to the Indian Seas, preferring the tedious

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10 Bernhard Klein & Gesa Mackenthun, 'Introduction: The Sea is History' in Klein & Mackenthun, *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 1-12, here 3.

11 Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore,' 253.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here 445.

16 Juergen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1998), 22.

desert journey, from Aleppo to Baghdad or Basra, to the long sea passage round the Cape, or the more hazardous way of the Red Sea and Egypt.<sup>17</sup>

Abbott, too, chose the 'Great Desert Caravan Route' on his way to India in 1784 and preserved his experiences in his *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (1789). It offers vivid accounts of his adventures among his Arab guides, their animals and the environmental conditions to which he was exposed. Unlike Captain Roberts's disgruntled summary, Abbott's light-hearted account is an enticing invitation for his readers to rethink their preconceptions of both the desert and its inhabitants. Whilst initially making light of his literary abilities by stating that he does not attempt to write 'a flowery novel – but a friendly letter' (2) and conceding that 'a clearer head and an abler pen might afford entertainment' (1), he quickly switches over to presenting himself as semi-heroic figure. As such, he overcomes various dangers along the road and subtly asserts his discursive authority on the subject of desert travel. In this position, he is not afraid of directly addressing what he perceives as prejudicial knowledge about Europe's others:

You have, to my knowledge, read various authors on this subject, and I have frequently heard you exclaim with astonishment, that any civilized man in his senses could prefer journeying through so inhospitable and barbarous a country, to going quietly in a vessel round the Cape of Good Hope; - These reflections have excited in me an ardent desire, my friend, to undeceive you in many erroneous conclusions you must necessarily draw from the perusal of erroneous narratives. (3; emphasis in original)

Even after 'nine years residence in Arabia' (6), Abbott is still hungry for knowledge and readily chooses 'the tedious desert journey,' its many uncertainties, hardships and potential perils notwithstanding. Just as Henry Blount 'would not sit downe with a booke knowledge' of 'the *Turkish* nation,'<sup>18</sup> Abbott knows that '[m]imetic action is required'<sup>19</sup> in order to do away with widely circulated and deeply entrenched stereotypes.

On their journey through the Syrian Desert, Abbott and his companion Captain Rochfort followed in the footsteps of previous Oriental travellers and

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17 Carruthers, 'Introduction,' xi.

18 Blount, Henry, *A Voyage into the Levant* (London: John Legatt, 1636), 4.

19 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 454.

necessarily encountered what they had seen, orally reported or textually represented. In so doing, the two Englishmen re-enacted the journeys of those who went before them at the same time as they added yet another layer to the palimpsestic texture of Middle Eastern travel.<sup>20</sup> Either consciously or obliviously, Westerners in the Middle East cannot not re-enact their predecessors, since these territories have proved attractive for travellers, adventurers and potential conquerors from Biblical times down to the present day. For example, whereas Captain Wilson and his men found themselves in uncharted territory after the loss of their ship, Abbott and Rochfort could not only rely on already existing knowledge, they were also in a position actively to contribute to its revision. In his attempt to 'undeceive' his friend from 'erroneous conclusions,' Abbott refers to western archives and textual constructions of Oriental routes, even if only to demonstrate that they rest on 'erroneous narratives.' Unfortunately, however, not much is known about this apparently inquisitive traveller or his time in Arabia beyond the information provided by his *Trip*; but judging from what we have, he seems to have been acquainted with the laws of the land and several languages, among them Arabic and Italian. He, too, must have possessed a healthy spirit of adventure, bolstered by a general interest in 'seeing countries, which are worth [the traveller's] curiosity' (100). And by emphasising that 'the inconveniences throughout this journey, to me, have appeared so trifling that I should at any time prefer it to a long sea voyage round the Cape' (17), he not only expresses his enjoyment of the trip, but also reveals that he was familiar with alternative routes, their hazards and, most likely, their textual representations.

Seemingly unimpressed by the experiences of his predecessors, and always keen on appearing 'as intrepid as possible,'<sup>21</sup> Abbott is convinced that he who is prepared to treat his Arabic interlocutors 'with common civility' can make the journey 'almost a party of pleasure' (7). In keeping with the cosmopolitan spirit of his age, Abbott represents his hosts in favourable fashion and incorporates them into an enlightened, inclusive and adaptable vision of global civility whilst simultaneously trying to appear as virtuous and benevolent traveller in foreign lands. The European rhetoric we have already witnessed in Keate's *Account* thus resurfaces in the *Trip* and demonstrates that encounters by the sea or in the desert 'encourag[e] forms of sociality that

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20 *Ibid.*, 448.

21 Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 155.



might be understood as less hierarchical and more egalitarian than those bred by other localities.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, Abbott's suggestion to bring '[t]obacco and pipes to offer to the Sheik in an evening' (110) blends in with the dialogic character of his text but also serves to emphasise his own civility. When at the end of their journey Abbott and his companion express their gratitude to the caravan leader, Abbott implies that he had expected him to treat foreigners well:

Our first care was to call the Sheik, and having treated him with a dish of coffee, to insist on his accepting of our tent, mahaffees, kitchen furniture, and all our remaining provisions, as a reward for his good behaviour; which he did, with a deal of modesty and thankfulness, and generously bestowed many of the articles on the Arabs of his party. (91)

The two Englishmen probably no longer require these items on their onward journey and could have sold them at their destination in Basra. But instead of making a fast buck, they choose to reward the caravan leader and his men for their services with this gesture of gratitude and cooperation, albeit in a slightly condescending fashion by drawing attention to 'his good behaviour.' But the Sheik is nonetheless represented by Abbott as subject in his own right, sharing the gifts with his men and demonstrating that responsible leadership rather than oriental despotism ensures a safe journey for travellers and locals alike. Viewed in this way, civility in this passage emerges as global by emphasising the beneficial outcome of openness, trust and good conduct across cultural divides.

Although the Sheik is the only individualised Arab in his account, Abbott's views of the representatives of his host culture are markedly different from some of his countrymen. On their way to India, he and Captain Rochfort organised their own caravan, a not unusual move for English travellers at the time who often hired 'a complete outfit, including both riding and baggage camels, as well as a small force of armed guards.'<sup>23</sup> Convenient though it may have been for travellers to be independent of the merchant caravans, it also meant that they were at the whim of individual sheiks and their men. John Carmichael, who had been a 'Gunner at Anjengo,'<sup>24</sup> was on his way back to India in 1751 and his journey was a far cry from the pleasures that Abbott was

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22 Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore,' 253.

23 Carruthers, 'Introduction,' xxxiii-xxxiv.

24 John Carmichael, 'Narrative of a Journey from Aleppo to Basra in 1751,' in Carruthers, ed., 129-180, here p. 131.

to experience about three decades later. Whilst Abbott, too, represents the guards and camel drivers collectively, he is always ready either to be favourably impressed or to practice 'common civility' (7) in his transactions with them. Carmichael, by contrast, recommends caution against the same group of people: 'It is not amiss to caution travellers that locks and keys are extremely necessary against the Arab camellers, who have not the greatest regard for the eighth article of the Decalogue.'<sup>25</sup> As we shall see, this comment on the caravan's rank and file is not the only instance in which he expresses disregard for the people of Arabia.

Frequently dwelling on geographical measurements and navigational details, Carmichael writes with an educated European audience in mind. Whereas Abbott unhesitatingly digresses whenever there is an interesting story to relate about the traditional lifeways of the Arabs, Carmichael's comments illustrate how Europeans unaccustomed to the desert's environmental conditions – hot during the day, cold in the night – were surprised by what they encountered en route to Basra. He hardly ever mentions the interactional dimensions of his journey and instead chooses to concentrate on the hardships caused by climatic extremes:

Our bedding and other equipage being frozen, and the ground very slippery and dangerous for the camels, we were obliged to wait till the sun had thawed; were forced to remain here till half an hour after nine.

The night proved extremely cold; most of our bedding was frozen, so that our lodging was very disagreeable.

A hard frost this morning, which detained us till the sun had dried and thawed our bedding, &c.

The country plain; soil hard and stony. A small S.W. breeze, and pleasant weather.<sup>26</sup>

Even though he does not comment any further on the ice, Carmichael's remarks on the cumbersome process of drying his equipment, and the delays it causes, suggest that he did not expect such problems to occur in the desert. The above passages are taken from the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of November,

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25 *Ibid.*, 176

26 *Ibid.*, 168, 169, 170 & 171.

respectively, and indicate extremes on the weather continuum ('frozen' and 'sun') as well as quick shifts as a feature of the region in question ('frost this morning' and 'pleasant weather'). However, towards the end of his trip (10<sup>th</sup> of December) his verdict is a very different one:

I found the weather not to be complained of, and water in plenty, for which reason, as I before observed, winter seems to me the best time for crossing the desert. It certainly must be much worse in summer, both on account of the scarcity of water and the excessive heats, which at that time, and on those dry barren sands, must be intolerable.<sup>27</sup>

Carmichael, it seems, is rather inconsistent in his judgments and limited in his outlook. Solely concentrating on meteorological phenomena, he emphasises the deprivations he was subjected to or the pleasure of finally arriving at his destination. But the desert's ecological intricacies and potential dangers, environmental as well as human, emerge merely as hindrances in his descriptions, illustrating, in Doreen Massey's words, that [t]he chance of space 'entails the unexpected.'<sup>28</sup> Although Abbott, on the other, was impelled by 'private concerns' (18) to leave Aleppo, he was almost enthusiastic about braving the sands of the Syrian Desert and initially 'thought of hazarding [himself] with a single messenger' (19). But the 'execution of this rash design,' he continues, 'would perhaps have been attended with fatal consequences; the heat of the sun being excessive, to which I must inevitably have been exposed' (19). However, Captain Rochfort's arrival from England, and his 'hurry to proceed to India by way of Bussora,' finally lead to the plan of 'forming a private caravan' (19). Both Carmichael and Abbott, then, travelled by caravan and were exposed to the desert and its inhabitants; but where the one was open and receptive to them, the other remained unresponsive at the same time as he emerged as self-centred traveller in the lands of the desert Arabs.

## 2. Some Remarks on Textual Authority: The 'Merchant of Quality' and Mr. Hare

Carmichael, however, is not alone with his lack of receptivity to the human dimensions of extreme travel. In Henry Blount's *Voyage into the Levant* (1636)

27 Ibid., 177 [my emphasis].

28 Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 111.

and Abbott's *Trip* we can find instances of the ignorance of travellers to either the shifting nature of cultural and power relations or the unknown complexity of local customs. At first sight, these situations seem to disrupt the dialogic character of both accounts by virtue of the coarse and self-centred attitudes they represent; however, if we read them within the discursive framework of global civility, they buttress the authors' claims to originality, openness and cross-cultural curiosity. If we briefly return to Blount's time in the Ottoman Balkans, we find 'four *Spahy-Timariots*'<sup>29</sup> [horsemen], who invited him to sit down and eat with them. Shortly after

they met the Caravan, where was the Rhagusean, a Merchant of quality, who came in at Spalatro to goe for Constantinople, he being clothed in the Italian fashion, and spruce, they justled him: He not yet considering, how the place had changed his condition, stood upon his termes, till they with their Axes, and iron Maces (the weapons of that Country,) broke two of his ribs, in which case, we left him behind, halfe dead, either to get backe as he could, or be devoured of beasts.<sup>30</sup>

At first, the horsemen approached Abbott, too, 'with lookes very ugly,' but he finds means other than language to resolve this potentially dangerous situation, enter into a gestural dialogue with them and turn the spot into a space of male conviviality.<sup>31</sup> In so doing, he signals in nonverbal fashion that he both understands the laws of the land and is aware that 'Ottoman horsemen deserved respect, certainly within their own empire.'<sup>32</sup> The 'Merchant of quality', however, seemed to favour confrontation rather than cooperation.

In Abbott's *Trip*, a similar moment occurs when he relates the story of one Mr. Hare, whose 'behaviour to the Arabs was very rude and disagreeable' (9). On his way back from India, Mr. Hare 'joined some gentlemen [in Bussora]

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29 Blount, *Voyage*, 98.

30 Ibid.

31 'I not understanding what they would, stood still, till they menacing their weapons, rose, and came to mee, with lookes very ugly; I smiling met them, and taking him who seemed of most port, by the hand, layed it to my forehead, which with them is the greatest signe of love, and honour, then often calling him *Sultanum*, spoke *English*, which though none of the kindest, yet gave it such a sound, as to them who understood no further, might seeme affectionate, humble, and hearty; which so appeased them, as they made me fit, and eate together, and parted loving' Ibid.

32 Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 171

who were bent on the same route' (8); after their failed attempt 'to form a caravan to carry them to Aleppo' (8), he set out on his own 'by the way of Bagdat' (8-9). Concluding from Abbott's portrayal, we can infer that Mr. Hare must have been a rather boastful and ignorant character:

He hired a boat, and some Arab guards, and leaving his companions, took his departure up the river Tygris. By all accounts, his behaviour to the Arabs was very rude and disagreeable, nor was his ostentation less conspicuous, for he would often gather such of them as he thought deserving of attention, and amuse them with the sight of diamond rings, gold snuff-boxes, chains and such gewgaws, as proofs of the wonderful ingenuity of European artists; and the more he saw their admiration kindled, the more fuel he would add to it, by producing something new. (9)

In this passage, there is no cross-cultural sensitivity. Whilst Blount, for example, set out to survey 'people, whose *institutions* much differ from ours'<sup>33</sup> and George Keate utilises sentimentalism's discursive fractures to incorporate the Palauans in his inclusive vision of global civility, the Middle East simply serves as stage for Mr. Hare's ostentatiousness. Exemplifying what Said has called 'flexible *positional* superiority',<sup>34</sup> Mr Hare takes for granted the Arabs' impressionability and passivity in what is, in effect, both a disregard for his companions' advice and a lack of local knowledge.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, his end is an inglorious one:

By the time they [Mr. Hare and his guards] had been together eight or ten days, he had carried his misbehaviour to such extremities, that neither the dictates of their religion, nor their natural pride, could allow them to let it pass over with impunity. [...] [H]e was saluted by a sharp pointed lance, through the window; he started, but before he could collect his senses, was pierced in many places; he made a desperate spring towards

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33 Blount, *Voyage*, 1; see also MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 135: 'The logic of Blount's argument is clear enough: the human intellect desires knowledge, and since experience of difference increases knowledge in proportion to increase in difference, the desiring intellect craves experience of radical difference.'

34 Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

35 See p. Abbott, *Trip*, 8-9: 'Mr Hare's patience, it seems, was not proof against such disappointments, nor could all the arguments of the resident, and others, withhold him from attempting to brave the dangers that threatened a journey by the way of Bagdat.'

the shore, where they, following him with their sabres, soon put an end to his existence. (10)

We could read this passage as an instance of the very barbarity that Abbott tries to refute; but instead of simply integrating it into his account as an example of the dangers of extreme travel, he both contextualises and rationalises it within a cross-cultural survey of criminal offences. In lieu of condemning the Arabs for killing an Englishman impervious to advice, Abbott transposes his benchmark from an *intracultural* to an *intercultural* level, when he writes 'that (comparatively speaking) much more is to be apprehended, and many more are the instances of murders and robberies committed in some of the most civilized parts of Europe (as we daily read in the papers) than what we find in these barbarous parts' (6-7).<sup>36</sup> Consequently, he neither limits moral rectitude to Europeans nor represents it as concept inapplicable to the Arabs; it is rather a judgment only to be conferred after a detailed enquiry into a particular case.

In addition to the comparative rationalisation of the behaviour of the Arabs, the interior story of Mr. Hare also serves to emphasise Abbott's achievements as both traveller and author. He set out to travel across the desert and actually enjoyed his trip whereas Carmichael frequently complained about the weather and Mr. Hare never arrived at his destination, albeit this failure was self-inflicted. But despite his achievements, Abbott appears to be rather modest about his skills as writer, especially in the preface and the opening pages of his account:

The Reader 'must not expect here to find a regular history of them [the Arabs]; the following sheets containing little more than a simple narration of the daily occurrences, on a Journey across the Grand Desart of Arabia.' (i/ii)

I cannot better apologize for the style of it, than by assuring him [the reader], it was not intended for publication till very lately, when a number

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36 Another example from Abbott's *Trip* can be found on p. 10-1: 'At the same time we lament this untimely fate of a fellow creature, and by all accounts a valuable member of society, can we help blaming his imprudence, after having received the most ample caution against the steps he so inconsiderately took? One the other hand, do we not most frequently meet with actions in Englishmen, far more atrocious than what these Arabs were guilty of, and those perhaps with not half the provocation?'

of gentlemen whom I have the honour of being acquainted with, after having perused the manuscript, expressed their desire of being furnished with copies. (iii)

Should it prove instrumental to the safety or comfort of any future traveller, my end is answered; and the lashes of a few interested critics shall not distress me, if I am fortunate enough to secure the approbation of my steady and indulgent readers. (iv)

[...] a clearer head and an abler pen, might afford entertainment [...] (1)

[...] you will most probably have room to find fault with my diction [...] (2)

Abbott's ubiquitous modesty, however, invites further scrutiny, since his apologies and explicit self-characterisations draw on rhetorical traditions and *topoi*. On the one hand, he emphasises his apparent shortcomings just as Socrates publicly contrasts his personal and philosophical flaws with the volubility of his accusers in Plato's *Apology*. The intended effect in both cases is, of course, to subtly discredit potential and actual antagonists in order to accentuate one's own eloquence and intellectual capabilities. The figure of *meiosis*, which deliberately expresses understatement and evokes the opposite of a given term or concept, comes in handy either situation. On the other, Abbott emphasises the practical, real world use of his *Trip* by denying its literary merits. He writes for travellers in the Orient, either those following in his footsteps or armchair tourists at home, and seems to be keen on asserting his authority on the subject of Middle Eastern travel by writing a factual rather than a literary account. The story of Mr. Hare fits in with this pattern, since Abbott provides a detailed and smooth account of this gentleman's fate, including dates (1783), objects he showed off and psychological introspection (he went to sleep 'with an idea of the most perfect security' [10]). However, he neither mentions any sources nor Mr. Hare's companions, who could have passed on the information to him. In this perspective, then, this story, too, serves to underscore Abbott's accomplishments and he may very well have made it up in order to show that he not only successfully braved the sands of the Syrian Desert, but also managed to textualise the journey as part of his legacy. Whilst Blount, for example, is 'putting off the old man' and refashions

himself into a 'passenger'<sup>37</sup> before setting out, Abbott similarly constructs a travelling self for the journey ahead, albeit in much more subtle ways. The function of Blount's move 'is to authorize, or more exactly, to *found*'<sup>38</sup> a space for his enquiries, whereas the aim of Abbott's subtle contrivances is to raise the admiration of readers for his achievements on the way to India.<sup>39</sup>

### 3. Re-presentation, Re-enactment and the Actuality of History

According to Abbott, one of the rare pleasures of his journey is that of 'visiting those parts so much renowned in ancient history' (6), which is one of the reasons for his choosing this route rather than a passage by sea. His main objectives in doing so are to 'undeceive' and to confront 'erroneous conclusions' (3) about the country and its inhabitants as well as to deliver more than Gaylard Roberts's somewhat sweeping generalisations on the region's emptiness. However, Abbott's allusion to its historical yield inevitably evokes, and thus works with and profits from, the citational history of Middle Eastern travel in which the region 'was always already familiar as the object of representation – written, printed, painted, orally transmitted.'<sup>40</sup> And what is more, he does not buy into the paradigms and degeneration narratives that had begun to govern discourses on 'the orient' during the latter eighteenth century; rather, he quotes them in order to refute them:

[...] I will venture to vouch, as well from personal experience, as from what little knowledge of those parts I have been able to acquire during my nine years residence in Arabia, that (comparatively speaking) much more is to be apprehended, and many more are the instances of murders and robberies committed in some of the most civilized parts of Europe (as we daily read in the papers) than we find in these barbarous parts. (6-7)

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37 Blount, *Voyage*, 4.

38 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, transl. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 123.

39 I am greatly indebted to Mohammad Sakhnini who discussed this part of Abbott's *Trip* with me.

40 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 448.



He calls western superiority – moral, social and cultural – into question by comparatively enquiring into the habits of both Europeans and Arabs. And he continues to establish this cross-cultural perspective:

[I]t would be ungenerous to impute to a whole nation the faults of a few; and if we reflect but a moment, and draw a parallel, between what we call the Arabian savages, and the lower order of the civilized Englishmen, I fear we shall find vast occasion to blush for the latter. (11-12)

If there is one conclusion to draw from these passages, it is the obvious illegitimacy of many western representations of things oriental, since they ‘tel[l] us more about the preconceptions of the author than the objects described’<sup>41</sup> and point to the internal consistency of Orientalist discourses rather than their referential qualities.<sup>42</sup> Challenging such biases, Abbott’s register is comparable to Blount’s rhetoric in its use of the words ‘barbarous’ and ‘civilized.’ Whilst ‘barbarous’ has come to carry connotations of uncouthness, crudity and even truculence, ‘civilized’ is synonymous with socially accepted and refined conduct. Historically, however, barbarous peoples were simply non-Greek (βάρβαροι). For example, when Blount sets out to see whether ‘the *Turkish* way appeare absolutely barbarous, as we are given to understand, or rather an other kinde of civilitie, different from ours [...],’<sup>43</sup> the word has at least two meanings: on the one hand, it denotes cultural alterity, and, on the other, it signifies dissimilar behavioural patterns bred by foreign localities. Accordingly, when both Blount and Abbott are turning east they do not use ‘barbarous’ pejoratively but rather as a vague cultural and geographical marker.

Especially Abbott’s even-handed approach to the Arabs and their culture, as well as the inclusive and dialogic parlance of his *Trip*, demonstrates that ‘the tension between shared space and unshared values’<sup>44</sup> need not give rise to an unbridgeable gulf. His epistolary day-to-day account focuses on local practices and knowledge, specially adapted lifeways and strives to ascertain the dignity of the ill-reputed Arabs: ‘They *are not* treacherous, they are not

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41 Ibid., 455.

42 Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens*, 24.

43 Blount, *Voyage*, 2.

44 Graham Huggan, *Interdisciplinary Measures: Literature and the Future of Postcolonial Studies* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 11.

wantonly cruel, nor unworthy of trust, nor hypocrites, nor are they mercenary' (12). Fluent in Arabic, Abbott becomes immersed in, and reliant on, the customs of the locals and repeatedly emphasises that he who is prepared to treat his Arabic interlocutors 'with common civility' can make the journey 'almost a party of pleasure' (7). Published at a crucial historical juncture,<sup>45</sup> and offering its readers representations of the lived ideal of 'the cosmopolitanism of the age of Enlightenment,'<sup>46</sup> Abbott's *Trip* provides gateways into 'the global reference field of knowledge,' which 'dwindled away in the course of the nineteenth century.'<sup>47</sup> The fragile intellectual equilibrium between Europe and the Middle East was slowly but surely dismantled in the Victorian period and gave way to fully-fledged colonial cruelty, epistomised by Colonel Kurtz's infamous dictum: " 'Exterminate all the brutes!' "<sup>48</sup> The age of high imperialism thus overshadowed and distorted the perception of earlier times when East-West relations differed considerably from Said's dichotomously structured framework and its clear-cut power differential. Hence, cross-cultural curiosity, the readiness to be favourably impressed and 'imperial envy' – the envious gaze to the Ottoman Empire and the implicit desire for an imperial identity<sup>49</sup> in early modern England – was on the wane when Britons extended their increasingly global reach.

By contrast, Abbott's short survey of the Arabs, their history and common social practices (12-17) provides insight into a world that Europeans may have known from a then already century-old tradition of Anglo-Ottoman, or, more generally, Anglo-Islamic, interaction. Indeed, many writers 'felt empowered to write about those they called "Turks."<sup>50</sup> Most of them were, however, what Batholomew Plaisted has called 'chamber geographers' in his *Narrative*

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45 Said, *Orientalism*, 3: 'Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.'

46 Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens*, 21 [my Translation].

47 *Ibid.*, p. 20 [my Translation].

48 Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, (London: Penguin, 1994), 72.

49 MacLean, Gerald, 'Ottomanism Before Orientalism? Bishop Henry King praises Henry Blount, Passenger in the Levant,' in Ivo Kamps & Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge: European Discoveries in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Macmillan, 2001), 85-96, here 91.

50 MacLean, *Looking East*, x.

of a *Journey from Basra to Aleppo in 1750*: they 'describe whole kingdoms, and their different roads, without ever having stepped out of their mother-country.'<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, questions as to what an early modern or Enlightenment reader could know about Europe's oriental others 'are fundamental questions about the social and cultural anchorage of knowledge, about the possibilities of members of one civilisation appropriately to envision the members of another one.'<sup>52</sup> Concentrating on the Arabs, Abbott provides valuable knowledge about their conduct, treatment of foreigners and compliance with agreements at the same time as he openly criticises European representations of them. He does everything to avoid a biased account and is both ready and willing to approach his hosts with a healthy mixture of self-criticism and curiosity. Certain that 'the poor Arabs have been very uncharitably handled by their European guests' (16), Abbott summons up an allegorical comparison: 'Thus, if you place their virtues and vices in opposite scales, you will find it turn much in their favour' (16) – that the forceful image of Lady Justice (*Iustitia*) lurks between the lines here is surely no accident.

But more importantly, Abbott insists on the humanity of the Arabs, showing his readers the diversity of human lifeways and their adaptations to specific environmental challenges. In so doing, he writes an 'Enlightenment history in a way that sees the world as a unity containing many differences' and prefigures the decentredness that empowers so-called peripheral peoples and eventually leads to 'abandoning the view of Europe as the centre of the world.'<sup>53</sup> In this perspective, Middle Eastern ethno-religious diversity, as well as the hospitality of the locals, is neither exotically different for European readers nor extraneous to cosmopolitan knowledge production, but rather warrants the emergence of the Arabs as a dignified, trustworthy people in their own right, *although* a European is speaking for them:

They are hospitable, even to excess; if a party of Arabs are setting at their meal, and a stranger passes by, be he a Christian, a Turk, a Jew, or an infidel, they never fail to invite him to partake of their fare, and will hold it as a mark of disrespect, if the passenger does not honour their invitation, by dipping

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51 Bartholomew Plaisted, 'Narrative of a Journey from Basra to Aleppo in 1750,' in Caruthers, ed., 49–128, here 57.

52 Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens*, 21 [my translation].

53 Dorinda Outram, 'Cross-cultural Encounters in the Enlightenment,' in Martin Fitzpatrick, Peter Jones, Christa Knellwolf & Ian McCalman, eds., *The Enlightenment World* (London & New York: Routledge, 2004), 551–567, here: 565

his fingers in the dish, and taking, though it were only a mouthful. (13-4; emphasis in original)

This representation of local practices is certainly conducive to heightening European attention to the region's particularities and can aid in both unravelling stereotypes and restoring voices and agency to the Arabs. This process is inextricably linked with, and based on, knowledge because Abbott's era 'saw the golden age of travelling for information,' in which '[e]xploration fed global flows'<sup>54</sup> of commercial and cultural traffic. When he accordingly declares that 'now every branch of knowledge is brought to such a height of perfection' (5), Enlightenment discourse takes centre stage and is, in conjunction with the refutation of pejorative clichés, expanded to include Europe's others.

Abbott's decisive recalibration of essentialised depictions and his will to informational innovation notwithstanding, he joins a multi-layered citational system and experiences, whilst contributing to, the complex 'dialectic of novelty and repetition'<sup>55</sup> that governs extreme travel in the Middle East. Palimpsestic and strenuous in nature, it consists of more than simply treading trodden trails in the sand: 'Western travellers were consciously reenacting the journeys about which they knew, but they also followed obliviously in the wake of those of whom they remained ignorant.'<sup>56</sup> Whether one knows it or not, entanglement, which reaches considerably beyond the actual journey, is inevitable in this respect: '[E]ach work on the Orient, *affiliates* itself with other works, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself.'<sup>57</sup> Hence, when Abbott wishes to '[visit] those parts so much renowned in ancient history' (6) and at the same time tries to provide 'useful hints to such as may hereafter travel that way' (ii) he both reenacts previous journeys and contributes to 'ever deepening layers of previousness.'<sup>58</sup> In other words, his journey is subject to 'novelty and repetition,' too.

In such an elaborate configuration, some travellers and their texts are incredibly close without necessarily knowing each other face to face. Creating a network of experiential intertextuality, Abbott and Carmichael's accounts, for example, offer some very different, yet inextricably intertwined, descriptions of the city of 'Meshed Ali' (Najaf), one of the centres of *Shī'ah* Islam. It houses

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54 *Ibid.*, p. 561 & p. 564

55 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 441.

56 *Ibid.*, 447.

57 Said, *Orientalism*, 20.

58 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 448.

the Imam Ali shrine and was immensely popular with travellers on the Great Desert Caravan Route. Though enticed by its reputation, Carmichael, who was near the city in 1751, was less adventurous than Abbott and tells us why he does not enter it:

[I]t is in the tomb of Ali that the eastern magnificence is more particularly manifested; which, according to an account I have seen written by a gentleman who visited it, is of exquisite workmanship, and set with jewels of immense value, altogether making a most dazzling appearance. I would fain have gone for the sake of personally examining the truth of this description, but was dissuaded on account of the great risque I should have run of being murdered, or at least ill-treated, by the guardians of the prophet's tomb, who are reported to be the most abandoned miscreants on earth, and, like their master, declared inveterate enemies to the Christians, and from whom this country was conquered, under the conduct of Ali and his sons.<sup>59</sup>

In these lines, there is an unsettling dissociation between already existing textual constructions of Carmichael's route and Meshed Ali on the one hand, and the actual, practiced space and its inhabitants on the other, since his description is based not on personal experience but on an account he had read. This representational split evinces how discursive arrays, such as Orientalism, are more likely to revolve around internal consistency rather than referential quality, and testifies to the genesis and perpetuation of 'flexible positional superiority'<sup>60</sup> out of both textual and actual re-enactment. This strong judgment is deeply flawed and refuses to take into account geo-physical and ecological differences, which, as facts on the ground, engender differential social practices and cultural identities. In Carmichael's case, then, even pre-colonial Orientalisms run the risk of grossly misinterpreting their discursive objects.

Abbott, by contrast, who visited the city about three decades later, comes to very different conclusions and takes issue with Carmichael's grandiloquent, but unfounded, verdict. Conceding that '[t]he town itself has but a very poor appearance, and stands in great need of repair' (66), Abbott nevertheless differentiates between its architectural shortcomings and the friendly conduct of its inhabitants ('They behaved with great civility [...]'), especially after 'finding that [he] could talk the Turkish language' [69]):

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59 Carmichael, 'Narrative,' 167.

60 Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

After some little conversation upon indifferent subjects, the Governor wished us a good night, desiring we would, on no account, make ourselves uneasy, for that he should answer for every thing that belonged to us, all the time we thought proper to remain within the limits of his jurisdiction; after many kind professions on his part, and thanks on ours, he rode back to town with all his retinue.

I have mentioned this circumstance to shew what erroneous ideas some gentlemen hastily form, who are unacquainted with the disposition of these people. Mr. Carmichael in particular, represents the inhabitants of Mahshed Aly as the most barbarous and inveterate enemies to the name of a Christian, though he owns at the same time that he never was near the town.

Such uncharitable conclusion, drawn only from hearsay, should, I humbly conceive, be carefully avoided by a historian, as they can answer no other end, than wrongly to prejudice and lead into error travellers who know no better. (70-1)

Although Abbott's linguistic proficiency facilitates this encounter, the people's behaviour is nowhere near Carmichael's 'most abandoned miscreants on earth.'

The circulation of denigratory stereotypes notwithstanding, Abbott attempts to undo the solidified 'layers of previousness' and presents a balanced and dialogic account as corrective with the authority of an eyewitness. His openness in this passage underlines how the readiness to be 'favourably impressed'<sup>61</sup> on the traveller's part can prevent cross-cultural encounters from going awry and at the same time serves as successful instance of Enlightenment travel based on contemporary notions of improvement and the accumulation of knowledge. By interacting with the locals, European travellers could test received wisdom and, if necessary, re-evaluate it. Abbott's example thus transposes Kant's pointed definition of the age of reason – '*Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity*'<sup>62</sup> – from the European onto the global stage and enables representatives of radically different cultures to question the discursive regularities that potentially preclude friendly interaction.

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61 Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Cesare Vecellio, Venetian Writer and Art-book Cosmopolitan,' in Jyotsna G. Singh, ed., *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009), 305-322, here 320.

62 Immanuel Kant, 'An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, transl., with introduction, by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 41-46, here 41.

In this respect, reenactive travel is more than mere 'slavish representation' or repetition – it can be a 'lively interaction with the model.'<sup>63</sup>

We have come a long way from Roberts's description of the desert as an all-too homogenous and seemingly empty space over the sea and desert routes to India to the palimpsestic character of Middle Eastern travel. Yet this palimpsest has influenced desert travel down to the present day by connecting the past 'as a historical repository' and 'its lingering persistence into the present.'<sup>64</sup> Indeed, to 'enter the East was, for many Europeans, a journey across time zones that most often felt like a journey into the past, to the way things used to be.'<sup>65</sup> Not only did this impression lead to the chronotopical fixation of the East as backward, it also added more layers to the East's complex historical texture, which, in turn, attracted curious travellers bent on exploring 'those parts so much renowned in ancient history' (6).<sup>66</sup> This seemingly transhistorical feature lead twentieth century writers to reflections comparable to Abbott's: 'One becomes intrigued by the story of desert travel as a whole, and by the experiences of previous desert travellers. There grows a desire to learn something about the ancient and medieval methods of transport.'<sup>67</sup> Whilst Christina Phelps Grant, author of *The Syrian Desert: Caravans, Travel and Exploration* (1937), seems to have been motivated by a historian's interest in the region and Abbott published his account to rectify 'erroneous conclusions' (3), both are nonetheless implicated in the layerings, cross references and entanglements of re-enactive travel in the Middle East. However, as the representations and re-presentations of Meshed Ali have shown, following in someone else's footsteps need not cut short intellectual efforts to discover and carefully contextualise 'layers of previousness'<sup>68</sup> and their historical as well as political valences. Only if we initiate a dialogue between the present and representations of the past – a process H.G. Gadamer has called 'fusion

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63 Steiner, Uwe C., 'Der geschlagene Interpret: Nachahmung, Interpretation und Opfer bei Platon, Mozart und Ortheil,' in Otto Kolleritsch, ed., *Musikalische Produktion und Interpretation: Zur historischen Unaufhebbarkeit einer ästhetischen Konstellation* (Craz & Wien: Universaledition, 2003), 144-162, 157 [my translation].

64 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 448.

65 Gerald MacLean, 'Strolling in Syria with William Biddulph,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 415-439, here 417.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 416

67 Grant, *The Syrian Desert*, 2-3.

68 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 448.

of horizons<sup>69</sup> –, can we hope to unearth and understand the rich material hidden in the sands of the Syrian Desert:

Greece, Rome and Byzantium have left their traces in this desert: temples and caravan cities as well as route-markings. Ruined palaces, castles and the remains of ancient fortifications in mid-desert testify, similarly, to the occupation of early Arab princes, Lakhmid and Ghassanid, and to the rule of medieval Saracens. Primitive Safaitic inscriptions furnish clues to the later Arabic scripts; and modern Arab nomads preserve ancient customs in their age-old surroundings. Thus the Syrian Desert has an inherent interest of its own, apart from the travel to which it has perennially given rise.<sup>70</sup>

Not only was the Syrian Desert one of ‘the main channel[s] by which the riches of the East flowed to the West,’<sup>71</sup> it was also, as we can conclude from Phelps Grant’s description, ‘head-spinning in its temporal layerings’<sup>72</sup> – a fact that Abbott was surely aware of. This convergence of past and present, orality and literacy, imperial strongholds and nomadic lifeways, as well as numerous ruins on the way, provided a rich playground for the inquisitive traveller in an era in which ‘every branch of knowledge is brought to such a height of perfection’ (5).

Abbott, in particular, does not get tired of repeatedly describing his trip as ‘almost a party of pleasure’ (7; 99) and to emphasise how ‘the inconveniences throughout this journey, to [him], have appeared so trifling, that [he] should at any time prefer it to a long sea voyage round the Cape’ (17). But what is more, he was by no means the only one to find the historical dimension fascinating and attractive. Carmichael, with whom he takes issue over his portrayal of ‘Mechad Ali,’ also comments on some ruins along the way and grandiloquently philosophises about their origins: ‘The magnificent appearance of these ruins almost persuaded me they were part of the antient Babylon.’<sup>73</sup> These passages show that eastern ‘backwardness might not be tantamount to barbarism, or even “backward” in any denigratory way,’<sup>74</sup> since we can char-

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69 Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 3rd ed. (London: Sheed and Ward, 2004), 337.

70 Grant, *The Syrian Desert*, 5.

71 Carruthers, ‘Introduction,’ xi.

72 Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ 449.

73 Carmichael, ‘Narrative,’ 161.

74 Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ 448.



acterise the region as a ‘museum’<sup>75</sup> which, if the traveller is willing to begin a dialogue with a rich mixture of human history, can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of civilisations – past and present, eastern and western – as a whole.<sup>76</sup>

#### 4. Knowledge, Self-Preservation and European Contractual Traditions

Many travellers on Middle Eastern routes indeed assumed some knowledge of the civilisations they were about to encounter because [t]here was no “way” that had not been well trodden since ancient, and even prehistoric, times.<sup>77</sup> However, the extreme environmental conditions prevailing in the desert necessitated the support of local residents and their knowledge, exposing Westerners to unknown cultural practices and forcing them to live, even if only temporarily, in close proximity to radically different people. Employing the polite rhetoric of his age, Abbott is sure that his openness to such experiences ensures mutual understanding and, most importantly, a safe journey through what is a potentially dangerous, and in some instances fatal, environment. Bartholomew Plaisted, who travelled from Basra to Aleppo in 1750, is quite sure, too, that ‘if [the traveller] conforms a little to the customs of the country, as he ought in prudence to do, he will meet with great civility.’<sup>78</sup> But whilst Abbott is never tired of emphasising the pleasures of his journey, Plaisted represents his experiences in the Syrian Desert in very different terms. Despite evoking civility at the outset, he soon regards the Arabs in general, and his caravan leader in particular, as untrustworthy creatures rather than as partners and guides. In his diary, the entry for ‘*June the 21st*’ records how

our Sheik, who now shewed himself to be a very dishonest scoundrel, instead of protecting the caravans, as his office should have obliged him to,

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75 Ibid.

76 For contemporary descriptions of journeys back in time to ‘antique lands’ compare: Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840: ‘From an Antique Land’* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 43-53.

77 Ibid., 447.

78 Plaisted, ‘Narrative,’ 63.

attempted to plunder it, especially us who were strangers and some few merchants, whom he designed should pay the whole demand.<sup>79</sup>

Travelling 34 years before Abbott, Plaisted seems to have had some very bad experiences with the desert Arabs and does not refrain from both generalising his subjective, and indeed derogatory, impressions and further lashing out verbally from a usurped position of discursive authority. It may very well have been the case that the 'Sheik' in question was a spineless profiteer, but Plaisted himself neither seeks a rational explanation nor reflects on 'the lower order of the *civilized Englishmen*' (12) in order to draw cross-cultural comparisons. Instead, he goes on at great length:

We encamped [...] near a standing pool of water, which was so muddy it was not fit to drink; for which reason three wells were dug pretty near it, wherein they met with water which was very good. If this method was put in practice oftener, especially where the situation of the ground gave some hopes of success, I am persuaded the scarcity of water so much complained of would be greatly lessened; and perhaps in the most improbable places it would not be wanting if they were to dig deep enough. But it is no wonder that there are no persons have public spirit enough for these performances, since they have no other care but to serve themselves, without endeavouring to render travelling over the desert more commodious to others.

I have before observed that it is owing to the laziness of the Arabs that water is not to be had more frequently, for there is little room to doubt that, where the shrubs were green, this necessary fluid may be found, especially since where they are already dug the soil is much less promising.

[...] I conclude that there can be no want of [water] in the plains and valleys throughout the desert, if the Arabs would be at the pains of opening the ground to a proper depth.<sup>80</sup>

Plaisted begins this passage with the first person plural, which implies that one member of a group describes a common activity. Soon, however, he seamlessly uses the third person plural, which is the standpoint of an extraneous

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79 *Ibid.*, 70/71

80 *Ibid.*, 77, 91 & 92.

observer. Travelling and 'encamping,' though laborious, are shared and conceived of as common lot, whereas work on top of that is presupposed to be the duty of the Arabs. Even though my argument here only rests on two personal pronouns, it is significant how 'the strategies of representation'<sup>81</sup> change as soon as an activity is perceived to be below one's dignity. But what is more, Plaisted here is one of those 'European bourgeois subjects [who] seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony.'<sup>82</sup> It seems self-evident to him that *they* are selfish and that it is *their* duty 'to render travelling over the desert more commodious to others.' However, the explicit characterisation of the Arabs as lazy is inextricably bound up with an implicit self-characterisation: his ostensible discursive authority is usurped, since he travels in someone else's territory and depends on their knowledge, guidance and goodwill. It is, accordingly, not simply the Sheik's fault that no cross-cultural cooperation ensues but also attributable to Plaisted's stubborn refusal to see anything but servants in the Arabs of his caravan.

I choose to call his mindset stubborn refusal because there are some hints in these passages that Plaisted could very well have behaved differently: phrases such as 'especially where the situation of the ground gave some hopes of success' or 'for there is little room to doubt that, where the shrubs were green, this necessary fluid may be found' indicate a basic familiarity with the desert's 'intricate ecosystems.'<sup>83</sup> However, his grandiloquent vilification of the sheik as 'dishonest scoundrel' and the depiction of the Arabs as innately lazy not only register his refusal to interact with this very ecosystem and its inhabitants, they also let him emerge as the 'inheritor of a long tradition of European thought which associated a temperate climate with a liberal society and excessive heat with oriental despotism.'<sup>84</sup> And indeed,

prior to the nineteenth century there was no need for a word to describe the influence of physical conditions on persons and communities because it was self-evident that personal and communal identity were intimately related to

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81 Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), 9.

82 Ibid.

83 Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore,' 253.

84 Jonathan Bate, 'Culture and Environment: From Austen to Hardy,' *New Literary History* 30: 3 (1999), 541-560, here: 545.

physical setting. The influence of, for instance, the climate and the soil was taken for granted.<sup>85</sup>

Unreceptive to the subtleties of his surroundings, Plaisted uncritically subscribes to this school of thought. But had he followed his own recommendation to 'confor[m] a little to the customs of the country,' he might have had a very different, much more enriching, experience on the Great Desert Caravan Route.

However, as Plaisted's remarks on water indicate, both the climate and the desert's ecological idiosyncrasies figure crucially in the accounts of European travellers. In late 1783, Abbott decided to leave Syria because of the 'fluctuating situation of [his] line' (18). But the usual 'spring and autumn' caravans were delayed by 'the disturbances occasioned by a war between two tribes of Arabs called Montificks and Benehaleeds, and the uncommon scarcity of Europe goods at Aleppo' (18). His initial plan was to cross the desert on his own:

My anxiety was such, that I often thought of hazarding myself with a single messenger; which had I done, would perhaps have been attended with fatal consequences; the heat of the sun being excessive, to which I must inevitably have been exposed; but the unexpected arrival of Captain Rochfort from England, put a stop to the execution of this rash design.

Captain Rochfort, in a hurry to proceed to India by the way of Bussora, thought of forming a private caravan, and very politely consulted me on the occasion; hinting at the same time, that as I was also bent on the same route, my company would be perfectly agreeable, in case I chose to engage in his plan. This was an offer not to be rejected, so I readily accepted of his proposal, and our intentions being made public, we shortly had a number of Arab Sheiks, (or commanders of caravans) offering their services. (19-20)

Abbott was clearly aware of the fact that the desert is too extreme an environment to be crossed on one's own, especially if warring factions increase the already high risk of death. Travellers unacquainted with its environmental parameters thus had to gain access to local knowledge either by joining one of the regular merchant caravans or by forming a private one. In this way, they were close to the desert's inhabitants and could experience first-hand the depth 'of the embeddedness of a community's history in its environment.'<sup>86</sup>

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85 *Ibid.*, 551.

86 *Ibid.*, 554.

'This view privileges local experience over the abstract information contained in maps and suggests the necessity of grounding spatial knowledge in the direct acquaintance with regional topography.'<sup>87</sup> Abbott's favourable representation of his hosts, then, stems from both his cross-cultural openness and his proximity to people intimately linked to, and inextricably intertwined with, the environment in which they live. Unlike Plaisted, it seems, Abbott and Rochfort knew what they were in for when they formed their caravan.

Yet their choice to form a private caravan is bound up with a barely noticeable, but nonetheless far-reaching, reconfiguration of both knowledge and power in unknown territory. In order to be able to brave the desert's vast expanses, the two Englishmen initiate a two-tiered process of cooperation and exchange, in the course of which they transpose European contractual traditions to the Middle East. Firstly, in an instance of *intra*-cultural cooperation, Abbott and Rochfort join forces on their way to India. Secondly, as an instance of *inter*-cultural cooperation, they decide on hiring 'Sheik Mohammed el Fehairy,' who was recommended 'by a Jew Merchant, Sig. Raphael Picciotto' (20). The Sheik will receive money for providing his knowledge of the desert, a process which not only renders the two Englishmen entirely reliant upon the caravan leader and his men, but also exposes them to a potentially life-threatening environment. As a result, those who have frequently been described as Europe's 'others' in often denigratory terms, now occupy a strong position on the discursive knowledge-power axis and have the opportunity of demonstrating that 'symptoms of backwardness might also be ecologically sustainable ways of living in a climate and landscape unsuited to the kinds of development dear to those who are enamored of progress.'<sup>88</sup>

But what is more, this exchange challenges the solidified boundaries – ontological, epistemological and geographical – between East and West by demonstrating that interaction between European travellers and Middle Eastern camel drivers could be mutually improving and fruitful. Despite often serving as the onset of modern Orientalism, the late eighteenth century emerges as a global, multi-lingual and cosmopolitan time from Abbott's *Trip* and demonstrates how complex and varied cross-cultural relationships in pre-colonial times defy reductive notions of European agency. Abbott and Rochfort are clearly aware that without the locals' support they do not have

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87 Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 9.

88 MacLean, 'Strolling in Syria,' 416.

a chance of crossing the desert so that 'the instinctive duty of self-preservation'<sup>89</sup> prompts them into signing the agreement with the Sheik. Though this is an involuntary renunciation of agency making them dependent on perfect strangers, the two Englishmen know that such a written contract can both reconcile divergent interests and keep potential risks in check. As representatives of an emerging market economy, Abbott and Rochfort transpose their knowledge as well as their propensities, among them 'the propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another,'<sup>90</sup> onto an increasingly global stage. In this perspective, the agreement, which 'was immediately drawn up, in the Arabic language' (21), is not merely indicative of Adam Smith's 'faculties of reason and speech,'<sup>91</sup> it demonstrates that self-preservation, cross-cultural cooperation and the circulation of Enlightenment formations could give rise to global civility in a wide variety of settings.

The contract, an English translation of which is provided by Abbott (21-5), may appear as an inconspicuous part of his preparations before setting out. However, it is the interactional centrepiece around which the encounter revolves, since it connects European contractual traditions with Islamic customs at the same time as it provides the framework for Abbott and Rochfort's collectively organised self-preservation in ways comparable to Captain Wilson and his men on the Palauan beach. The 'common desire for a guarantee of security'<sup>92</sup> thus ties together the English and Arabic sides in Abbott's *Trip* and enables them to play out cultural differences in a dialogic manner. If we follow in Abbott's footsteps, we become witnesses to the ways in which both parties respect each other's customs, habits and knowledge, for example when Abbott's curiosity is curbed by the Sheik's precaution on 'Tuesday, the 20th' of July:

[We] pitched our tent on a plain called Gusser-ul-Coen; which takes its name from a deserted town; bearing S.W. by W. of us, about four miles; it appeared to us at this distance to be an ancient building, and as if it had once been fortified; but our Sheik would not allow us to approach it, for the night coming

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89 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 18.

90 Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 Vols., ed. by A. S. Skinner, R. H. Campbell & W.B. Todd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), Vol. I, 25.

91 Ibid.

92 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 25.

on, he said it would be very unsafe; wild robbers often taking shelter there.  
(45)

Ruins were among the chief attractions for Europeans in the Syrian Desert and frequently invited further investigation. But the Sheik's intimate familiarity with the surroundings lends authority to his order in this situation, demonstrating that the agreement between himself and the two Englishmen is a mutual obligation rather than a mere commercial transaction. Just as the sea, the desert seems to be a 'horizontal' space, in which 'vertical' social structures are suspended, even if only temporarily, by situational contingencies, such as the caravan leader's ability to identify potential dangers lurking along the way.<sup>93</sup> Accordingly, the traveller's propensities and the common good need not be antithetical and can be reconciled by the guide and his customers in an all-encompassing framework of global civility if the exigencies of both extreme travel and collective self-preservation take precedence over individual idiosyncrasies.

When Abbott describes a nearby village a few days later, he represents the Sheik as similarly concerned about his caravan. Carefully avoiding the robbers' lair was thus not a one-off event but emerges as part of a larger pattern of considerations aimed at achieving a maximum degree of security in adverse environmental conditions. As the following passage demonstrates, the caravan's social fabric is extremely volatile and can be jeopardised by the recalcitrance of heedless individuals:

At the distance of some miles, to the eastward of our camp, was a village called Cobeise, which we could just perceive; but Sheik Mohammed seemed studiously to avoid approaching it; indeed, he issued positive orders against any person's going there; for he said, it was a place where robbers generally supplied themselves with necessaries, and should they hear of our small party being so near, the consequences might prove fatal. All the Arabs seemed submissive to this reasonable injunction, except one man, who said he had some business to transact there, and therefore would go in spite of the order. – This being reported to the Herculean chief, threw him into such a violent passion, that grasping a heavy club, he laid about the back and shoulders of the delinquent with a fury that soon convinced him of his error, swearing he would kill him on the spot, and he would very likely have been as good as his word, had not the rest interfered to appease the Sheik, and

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93 Landry, 'Rewriting the Sea from the Desert Shore,' 253.

save the man. – Thus the unruly Arab was brought to reason, and we passed the night very quietly. (60–62)

This passage, too, centres on the importance of local knowledge, since the Sheik not only tries ‘to avoid approaching’ the notorious village, but also anticipates erratic behaviour among the rank and file of his party. By issuing orders against approaching the village he takes precautionary measures in order both to maintain security and to avert harm on the basis of personal experiences, which portends an ‘intimate awareness of the particularities of [his] immediate surroundings.’<sup>94</sup> In this respect, the caravan leader’s behaviour unites local knowledge on the one hand, and both ‘fellow-feeling’<sup>95</sup> and rationality on the other, which places him right at the centre of eighteenth century Enlightenment discourses and concerns. These discursive formations acquire global significance in the contexts represented by Abbott, illustrating how considerations for the common good can engender civility across cultural divides at the same time as they allow for sanctions against unruly individuals.

Whilst the caravan leader occupies a position of authority by virtue of both his social status and expertise, knowledge and power are neither fixed nor tied to specific social constellations. In Abbott’s *Trip*, they bend to specific exigencies and often emerge as situationally contingent, emphasising the inclusive and civil nature of interaction prevalent on this journey. The kind of cross-cultural interaction experienced and represented by Abbott has little in common with putative Oriental despotisms and shows that encounters of the European self with its extra-European other were often mutually enriching, even-handed and thought-provoking. When he relates the Sheik’s fury over the unruly Arab, for example, Abbott does not decry his behaviour, but instead soberly relates the incident at the same time as subordinating himself. In the following passage, his narrative voice is equally matter-of-factly; this time, however, there is a twist:

Although on our arrival the Arabs (who are very cautious) observed on several spots fresh camels dung, and places where fires had lately been lighted – signs not quite pleasing to our small party; yet the fresh water was too alluring to be so easily forsaken; besides, we argued thus: “the party who left these tokens behind them, must have departed hence but very lately; ergo,

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94 Bate, ‘Culture and Environment,’ 551.

95 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 13.



it was not probable they should return soon; all that we have to fear is the arrival of some other body, which is a danger we run, at every watering place; let us therefore spend the night here, and take as much good water as our vessels will hold, and for the rest trust to Providence.”

This plan was found very reasonable, and accordingly adopted; and having made a hearty supper upon some cold roasted camel's flesh, we lay down, and had a comfortable night's rest. (55-6)

Abbott here presents his readers with a finely tuned delineation of local knowledge esteeming the Arabs not simply for their ability to read several kinds of traces – their utility value, we might say–, but for who and what they are (they ‘are very cautious’), a piece of information that powerfully reiterates his insistence on the illegitimacy of many Western representations of them. Yet in this moment the party adopt a plan which seems to run counter to local knowledge, since both the camel dung and the fire places hint at the close proximity of another, potentially hostile, group of travellers. But after ‘exactly twelve hours on a stretch, through the scorching heat of the sun’ (54) the travellers are exhausted, express their wish to camp where they are and substantiate their argument with logical reasoning: this place is just as good or bad as any other in the case of an attack (‘a danger we run, at every watering place’). Accordingly, authority in this passage shifts from the Arabic to the English side, emphasising the flexible, but nonetheless complex, relationship between knowledge, power and logical reasoning in Abbott's account. Despite being contractually framed and fixed, the flexible dynamics of this encounter allow for inclusiveness, reciprocity and mutual respect without going awry. On the contrary, the Syrian Desert as represented by Abbott is a contact zone in which the (local) knowledge-power nexus can be played out in a dialogic manner and eventually lead to mutually improving relations from which both parties can benefit. Not only do discursive regimes seem to be extremely adaptable in this context, they also differ decisively from the strictly defined hierarchies and power differentials of nineteenth century imperialism.

## 5. Animals in the Enlightenment: Camels and Horses

When our party last broke for the day, they prepared a dinner made from ‘cold roasted camel's flesh’ (56). Apart from Europeans being unfamiliar with

this specific kind of meat, such a dish raises questions as to what camels in particular, and animals in general, actually represented for the desert Arabs: were they a source of food or an essential means of transport? The little travelled, but well-read, Immanuel Kant calls the camel 'the *ship* of the desert,'<sup>96</sup> thus favouring the transport function over the nutritional one. However, just as global civility depends on a multifactorial set of conditions – for example, curiosity, the readiness to be favourably impressed and an interest in cultural difference –, the interaction between humans and non-humans is a complex and multi-layered affair, with camels fulfilling various, and often seemingly contradictory, functions. Indeed, they were sources of food, a means of transport, commodities and objects of prestige in Islamic lands. For Europeans, by contrast, they were a literary project, variously described and frequently textualised by travellers for their metropolitan audiences. As such, they tell us something about the preoccupation of Europeans with ideas 'of what is human and what is beastly,' and address 'the sometimes leaky distinctions that were involved'<sup>97</sup> when travellers crossed and mapped the liminal spaces of extreme travel.

The categories on which European identities relied were at stake in the age of European exploration and expansion,<sup>98</sup> since 'knowledge of the world brought familiar and local normativities to crisis.'<sup>99</sup> With travel accounts and eye-witness reports having a monopoly of information in this context, strange and exotic animals were, of course, frequently described rarities and European travellers, explorers and scientists were at pains to integrate them into already existing bodies of knowledge. When they were abroad, some European travellers discovered the social, cultural and historical relativity of their own positions; however, others were unsusceptible to their surroundings and did not experience a comprehensive process of 'self-criticism and unlearn-

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96 Immanuel Kant, 'To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch,' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, transl., with introduction, by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 107-143, here 118.

97 Maclean, *Looking East*, 145.

98 Peter Sloterdijk, *Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals: Fuer eine philosophische Theorie der Globalisierung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2005), 21: Sloterdijk interprets the period 1492-1945 as 'terrestrial globalisation,' a period in which the 'current world system acquired its contours.' [my translation].

99 Maclean, *Looking East*, 171.

ing.<sup>100</sup> The class-conscious Bartholomew Plaisted, for example, is unresponsive to both man and beast during his time in the Syrian Desert:

The bulk of the caravan is made up of Arabs of the desert, who are an ignorant, brutish, low-lived set of people; which is no wonder, considering their manner of life, and the meanness of their education, in a place where they can have little or no knowledge of the rest of the world. They have no acquaintance with politeness or social virtue, and consequently have little regard for the distinctions among mankind, or the difference which is due from inferiors to their superiors. There is very little difference, wither in dress or behaviour, between the lowest camel-driver and the Sheik himself [...] When you are upon the road the Caravan Bashi makes a signal in the morning to load the camels, and then every one goes to work with all possible speed. However, this business belongs to the camel-men and their assistants; so that you yourself have not the least trouble about it.<sup>101</sup>

Phrases such as ‘politeness or social virtue’ are evocative of the culture of sensibility, the sentimental novel and its ‘polite and literate audience.’<sup>102</sup> But Plaisted’s distinction between himself and the desert Arabs is surprisingly sharp and clear-cut, since rhetorical exclusions from what was primarily a metropolitan European culture were neither anchored in the discourse nor to be found to an equal extent in other travel accounts of the period. Running counter to the emancipatory impulses of contemporary aesthetic formations, his representation of the camel drivers is based on their habitual environment, ostensibly engendering both low standards of education and insular attitudes (‘they can have little or no knowledge of the rest of the world’). Plaisted’s is thus a remarkable conclusion for an observer of a people who created ecologically sustainable lifeways in adverse conditions and managed to preserve their culture for centuries.

But Plaisted is not alone in this regard. William Beawes, who travelled from Aleppo to Basra in August 1745, goes further in that he does not merely suggest a class, cultural or power differential between himself and the Arabs;

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100 Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ 443.

101 Plaisted, ‘Narrative,’ 94.

102 Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38.

he readily and immediately 'consign[s] those living in Ottoman and Islamic lands to backward primitive and beastly levels of existence':<sup>103</sup>

21st. Set out this morning about four, and baiting an hour at noon proceeded till five, when encamped by a stagnated water, that stunk abominably but seemed not the least offensive to the camels or their masters, who it is certain have the best stomachs and least delicacy, both one and the other, of any men or beast in the universe.

Sept. 2nd. [...] We proceed again this evening till midnight, which manner of travelling we find very fatiguing, and am surprised that the Arabs themselves can endure it; but they are certainly in many respects so very like their camels, that Providence seems to have equally designed them for the desert. I have observed them to walk and work all day, watch at night, and repeat their labour next day without any sign of fatigue, and have likewise remarked that, like unto their beast, when food and water have been plenty their chops were never still, but can in proportion to their strength go as long without either.<sup>104</sup>

In Beawes's world view, the desert Arabs belong to the realm of natural rather than civil history by virtue of their striking resemblance of their beasts of burden. But in addition to the camels and their drivers, both the mode of travelling and the varying quality of the water found along the way are reasons to complain. Whilst Abbott, too, frequently comments on wells and water qualities, he does not complain in similar fashion and instead enjoys what the journey has to offer to curious minds. Despite travelling in an extreme, and for him largely unknown, space, Abbott's perspective on desert travel allows for cultural difference to exist independently and in its own right without being assimilated, textually or otherwise. Following Jonathan Bate's description of 'the influence of physical conditions on persons and communities' and the crucial role of 'the climate and the soil'<sup>105</sup> played in this process, we can see that Abbott accepts the climatic as well as the social differences of the desert as an objective given, whilst Beawes's comments fail to embrace, even if only

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103 MacLean, *Looking East*, 146.

104 William Beawes, 'Remarks and Occurrences in a Journey from Aleppo to Bassora, by the Way of the Desert,' in Carruthers, ed., 1-40, here 20 & 30-1.

105 Bate, 'Culture and Environment,' 551.

temporarily, his guides and thus 'commit a disservice to local epistemologies.'<sup>106</sup>

Oblivious to local knowledge and its representatives, Beawes fails to recognise 'the great affection with which [Islamic peoples] treated camels'<sup>107</sup> at the same time as his vilifications preclude any attempts at empathising with those whose 'horizons'<sup>108</sup> he does not share. It is, again, Abbott who provides a contrastive perspective:

A quarter before three in the morning was the hour that, our camels being ready, we pursued our journey; course S.E. by E. and halted at ten minutes before eight, on a dry plain, called Hoeshe; because one of our camels had hurt his foot, and the alternative was either to kill, or cure him immediately, for he could not march in that condition. This being a favorite camel, the Sheik took great pains to effect the latter, and, it must be owned, displayed his skill in surgery, to no small advantage; for in a couple of hours, his patient was able enough to keep pace with the rest of the party; and we marched again at eleven o'clock. (78-9)

This passage depicts human-animal interaction as essential to the party's success, from getting the camels ready in the morning over the cooperation between man and injured beast to setting forth again. What is more, Abbott's portrayal of the Sheik and his camel does not conjure up bestial, brutish or barbarous behaviour, terms that 'slide into one another in the language of confident English observers'<sup>109</sup> such as Beawes and Plaisted. Instead it is indicative of the observer's awareness of the spatial and cultural rootedness of knowledge, and demonstrates the ways in which differential practices and local epistemologies enrich what Europeans know, or think they know. But the Sheik does more than merely mending a problem, since his personal involvement is crucial to success ('took great pains'), a success readily admired by Abbott as European observer. Thus, the Sheik Mohammed el Fehairy emerges as knowledgeable and enlightened subject implicated in a process of mutual enculturation, in which locally specific kinds of knowledge circulate on a global scale.

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106 Felicity A. Nussbaum, 'Introduction,' in Nussbaum, ed., *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 1-18, here 7.

107 MacLean, *Looking East*, 161.

108 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 337.

109 MacLean, *Looking East*, 162.

But camels were not the only beasts of burden that featured prominently on the Great Desert Route. Horses, too, occupied a central position in the cultural and commercial transactions between East and West and contributed greatly to both English identity formation and horsemanship in the British Isles.<sup>110</sup> Although Abbott's readers encounter *equus ferus caballus* in the desert only through multiple layers of oral and written mediation, he includes a story in his *Trip* that sheds light on English equestrian obsessions as well as cross-cultural interaction in the long eighteenth century. On 'Monday, the 12th' of July, Abbott espies 'a small building in the form of a dome' on top of a hill and asked one of 'the Arabs, what it could be' (40):

"Many years ago," said he, "there was a famous Turkman robber, having a mare whose swiftness could only be equalled by that of an arrow discharged from a bow, by the most dexterous archer; which made it impossible for any one to seize him. Rambling one day at a small distance from Aleppo, in search of plunder, he unluckily fell in with a large body of the Pashaw's troops, who had often before endeavoured to seize him, and would now have certainly cut him to pieces had he not recourse to flight. – They pursued him for a long time, but finding that a vain attempt, they fired at him; when, - his ill star having decreed that a ball should strike one of the legs of his mare, - it did so, and broke it in two. Notwithstanding this mishap, such was her goodness and mettle, that without halting in the least, she outran the enemy's horse, nor would she stop till she reached this hill, where she fell dead, after saving the life of her owner, who to her memory erected this dome over her grave." (41-2)

'Ruins,' and, for that matter, buildings in general, 'were the primary stimulus to reflection'<sup>111</sup> on Middle Eastern history and culture for Western desert travellers.

But in the story of the Arab of Abbott's party there are also some puzzling, and for Western mindsets potentially unsettling, imbrications of the human and non-human spheres. As Beawes's remarks demonstrate, 'tampering with the borders between human and animal' and '[s]hifting the line between cul-

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110 For a comprehensive cultural history of the role of horses in East-West relations see: Donna Landry, *Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture* (Baltimore, Md. & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

111 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 448.

ture and nature'<sup>112</sup> could be an effective way of asserting one's superiority over the peoples living in Islamic lands. For metropolitan readers and armchair travellers, the close-knit unity between the 'Turkman robber' and his faithful 'mare' might thus indicate illegitimate intimacy between representatives of the human realm and their beastly counterparts. Exploring and inquisitive minds, on the other hand, were surprised by the results of Ottoman and Arabic kindness to beasts of burden in cultural contexts 'whose practices could appear arbitrary or cruel'<sup>113</sup> when it came to the treatment of human beings. Yet the 'willing obedience [of Eastern horses], which never ceased to amaze Westerners',<sup>114</sup> challenges all too rigid occidental epistemologies at the same time as it indicates a cultural memory based on oral transmission rather than one preserved in writing, since the Arabs 'all agreed in the narration, and no doubt believe every circumstance of it' (42). Accordingly, reflecting on this story along dichotomous Western lines yields contorted results and reveals the positionality of knowledge, social practices and the conceptual frameworks in which they occur.

What, then, do we make of this story? European travellers frequently appropriated and evaluated encounters with what is unfamiliar, foreign or exotic through the nature-culture paradigm. Central to Western thought, this pair carries with it a range of other semantic oppositions, such as self-other, human-animal and orality-literacy, which render possible textual representations of the various fields of tension to which travellers were exposed during their time abroad.<sup>115</sup> Such rhetorical inventories came in handy when Europeans were confronted with a plethora of novelties, but they did not necessarily reflect realities. For example, the accounts of Plaisted and Beawes reveal a lot about their prejudices but tell us comparatively little about human-animal interaction in the Syrian Desert. Indeed, descriptions of bestiality are often reflexive, disclosing the preoccupations of the author rather than the intricacies behind his objects of scrutiny. Whilst Abbott does not buy the story either, he nonetheless includes it in the *Trip*. In so doing, he contributes to a dialogic and even-handed exchange across cultural divides and injects parts

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112 MacLean, *Lookin East*, 172.

113 Landry, *Noble Brutes*, 8.

114 Ibid.

115 Meinhard Winkgens, 'Vorwort' in Konrad Cross & Meinhard Winkgens, eds., *Das Natur-Kultur-Paradigma in der englischsprachigen Erzählliteratur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Narr, 1994), ix-xi, here ix-x & x.

of the Arab cultural memory into a global cultural flow. The following passage indicates the extent to which he was fascinated by what he had just heard:

[B]ut though the thing to me appeared so improbable, yet there was that of gratitude in the story of the mare, that I could not help being pleased with; nor did I once endeavour to point out to them the impossibility that a mare, or any other creature, should run ninety miles on a stretch after the loss of a leg; nay, I would willingly have sacrificed something to be able to give the same degree of credit to it that they did. (42-3)

Abbott knows that the likelihood of the Arab's story is not what is at issue here. It is the unity of, and cooperation between, man and beast that fascinates him, since it mirrors the peaceful, mutually enriching and dialogic relationship between the two Englishmen on the one hand, and the Arabs on the other. His strong wish to be able to sympathise with the feeling of the representatives of his host culture strongly suggests such a reading based on mutuality and respect. But what is more, he is not alone in this regard. 'Gallantry, toughness, and apparent friendship or affection: this combination of qualities impressed early modern European horsemen who traveled east.'<sup>116</sup> Accordingly, in Islamic lands humans and animals, Europeans and Arabs, and literate and oral cultures could still converse freely in Abbott's age, a time in which the rationality so central to Enlightenment thought grew more Eurocentric and tightened its epistemological grip. This process made increasingly unlikely the possibility of synthesising entities that have come to be thought of as incommensurate today. When we return to the South Pacific in the next chapter, we can see how Enlightenment cosmopolitanism unravels and global civility starts to change under the influences of both the transportation of excess convicts and the cultural uncertainties in the age of revolution.

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<sup>116</sup> Landry, *Noble Brutes*, 8.



## **Discursive Changes within Global Civility**



## 5. Two Views of Botany Bay:

George Barrington's *An Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative* (c. 1793-4) and Mary Ann Parker's *A Voyage Round the World* (1795)

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As the previous chapter has demonstrated, Henry Abbott emphatically practiced global civility when he crossed the Syrian Desert in 1784. He treated the desert Arabs, and especially the caravan leader, with respect and was always ready to be favourably impressed by the representatives of his host culture. In the present chapter, we return to the South Pacific where the ideal of global civility starts to crack under the pressure of trafficking in human lives. By retracing the routes of both the convict George Barrington and the housewife Mary Ann Parker to the penal colonies in Australia in the 1790s, we can examine not only the extent to which domestic political events influenced the experiences of Britons abroad, but also analyse the limits of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and its inclusive qualities. The differential, but complementary, subject positions of Barrington and Parker differ from those of previous travellers discussed in this study in a number of ways. In contrast to white European men, who were free to travel for commercial or career-related purposes, the two protagonists of this chapter occupy marginal positions by virtue of being subject either to legal or cultural interplays of movement and constraint. Depicting transported felons, as well as various categories of alterity such as Aborigines and slaves, Barrington and Parker's texts are much more ambivalent and selective in their representational range than the ones we have analysed so far. In this perspective, global civility becomes situationally contingent and is sometimes stretched beyond its potential breaking point.

The following analysis will investigate the ways in which Barrington and Parker both represent and contribute to the emerging discursive cracks within

global civility. This new turn on the representation of cross-cultural encounters is part of a wider cultural and political shift, in the course of which the discussion around the literature of sentiment and sensibility ‘accelerates into crisis.’<sup>1</sup> The first part of this chapter will sketch out some of the most important developments and major fault lines of the 1790s, including the problem of excess convicts and the government’s attempts of solving it, the changing representational dynamics of sensibility and the trajectories in this complex texture of both Barrington and Parker. The chapter then proceeds to the representations of felons in the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* in order to analyse how their (non-)incorporation complicates the relationship between self and other in the contexts of cosmopolitanism and class. However, social determinants are not the only markers of difference in both texts, since the presence of the Aborigines adds a cultural element to existing patterns of attraction and repulsion. In addition to convicts and Australian natives, Parker’s text also comments on slaves in the Cape Colony, an especially intricate representational feature in the age of abolitionism. The following section thus discusses Barrington and Parker’s depictions of cultural alterity and explores their increasing ambivalence. The final section in the present chapter will contextualise the experiences of the two travellers in contemporary philosophical and political thought. In so doing, it seeks to establish how Barrington and Parker’s journeys to Australia challenge ‘the Enlightenment ideal of a cosmopolitan civic exchange’<sup>2</sup> when marginal voices come to represent other marginal voices in politically turbulent times.

Famously dubbed ‘The Prince of Pickpockets,’<sup>3</sup> Barrington’s life had been turbulent throughout, even before he became a celebrity of his day. Born in Ireland in 1755, he left school at the age of sixteen after having stolen the schoolmaster’s watch.<sup>4</sup> A troupe of travelling actors took him up, quickly familiarising the youth with the pickpocket’s trade. It was in this ‘thespian en-

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1 Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 190.

2 Elizabeth Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 29.

3 Suzanne Rickard, ‘Introduction,’ in Rickard ed., *George Barrington’s Voyage to Botany Bay: Retelling a Convict’s Travel Narrative of the 1790s*. (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2001), 3–63, here 4.

4 The account of Barrington’s life in this chapter is based on Suzanne Rickard’s exquisite introduction to his *Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative*. Compare note no. 3.

vironment<sup>5</sup> that he changed his surname from Waldron to Barrington and found his partner in crime, one John Price, who was eventually arrested and allegedly transported to America. In order to avoid arrest, Barrington fled to London, where he lived from 1773 to 1790, making a living from a 'combination of acting and stealing.'<sup>6</sup> Well-educated and good-looking, he gained access to fashionable circles, in which he not only appeared as young gentleman, but also found ample opportunity to steal from the aristocratic and wealthy both living and socialising in the metropolis. In 1775, for example, he famously tried to steal the precious snuff-box of the Russian Count Grigory Orlov, the lover of Catherine the Great. He was arrested and eventually released, since the Count did not press charges. Such incidents earned Barrington great popularity and '[r]umours about him spread like wildfire around London's taverns and coffeehouses.'<sup>7</sup> In the following years, he continued his criminal career and moved back and forth between the dock, the prison and London's streets. After a brief sojourn into Ireland and Scotland, as well as numerous further arrests, he was finally convicted in 1790 and sentenced to exile, a not unusual punishment for 'habitual offenders such as Barrington.'<sup>8</sup>

In September 1791, the convict celebrity arrived in Australia aboard the *Active*, one of the ships of the so-called Third Fleet. But Barrington's new life in the colonies was to be very different from both London's opulence and its opportunities:

Beyond rations and the barest necessities, there was nothing to be found in Port Jackson and here theft was out of the question. In the penal settlement, theft was punishable by death without any opportunity for special pleading. Thus Barrington was forced to start from scratch, to transform himself.<sup>9</sup>

And transform he did. After his arrival in the Antipodes, he became a law-abiding member of the colony, sobered by his experiences on the convict ship. And here, too, his life continued to be scrutinised by the authorities and various other interest groups; but the 'convict returns, administrative reports and formal observations'<sup>10</sup> differed considerably from stories in the scandal-

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5 Ibid., 6.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., 9.

8 Ibid., 13.

9 Ibid., 31.

10 Ibid., 5.

hungry press, which had engendered the Barrington myth in the first place. On the one hand, this breath-taking conversion is informed by, and consistent with, contemporary notions of improvement. Originally applied to attempts of increasing the productivity of labour, the language of improvement gained economic, and eventually wider cultural, currency in the wake of Adam Smith's economic writings. It was the moral philosopher-turned-economist himself who came up with 'the crucial extensions of the argument into the moral and social sphere.'<sup>11</sup> Barrington's transformation, then, is in keeping with contemporary concepts and cultural trends, not only serving as textualised role model for an offender's capability to reform himself, but also providing the authorities with a possible justification for the horrors of transportation. Accordingly, the 'trial was a turning point for Barrington in more ways than one'<sup>12</sup> and stands at the confluence of distinct, yet intimately connected, juridical and reformist discourses.

On the other hand, the press and rogue publishers in London continued to exploit the popularity of Barrington's case and very soon stories of the reformed convict started to circulate in Britain, presenting the former pickpocket now as 'Superintendent of Convicts'<sup>13</sup> in the penal colony. As a result, the *Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative* (c. 1793-4) was published with his name on the cover, but is actually a compilation of material gleaned from other contemporary texts on Australia. However, despite being a forgery, the *Narrative*, as well as the sizeable amount of publications attributed to Barrington's pen, familiarised British readers with the recently established colony at the same time as it 'was a novel attempt to personalize first contacts with Aborigines and to render such contact comprehensible to the untutored.'<sup>14</sup> Several accounts and travel books in this vein followed, some of which were published even after Barrington's death in Australia in 1804. Accordingly, by the early nineteenth century, he had become a 'floating signifier who does not exist apart from these and other representations.'<sup>15</sup> For historians and literary

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11 Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy and Pornography* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 303.

12 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 14.

13 *Ibid.*, 5.

14 *Ibid.*, 49.

15 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 51.

critics, Barrington's *Narrative* is thus 'of significant interest both as an outcome of the public's fascination with celebrities and as a product of its day, part of the invigorated genre of travel writing fuelled by exploration in the South Seas and the Antipodes.'<sup>16</sup> However, instead of situating Barrington's account in European publishing histories, the following analysis will read it into a cross-cultural context and explore the extent to which it contributes to, as well as represents, discursive changes within global civility.

Barrington's fellow-traveller in this chapter is Mary Ann Parker, who accompanied her husband to Australia in March 1791.<sup>17</sup> As commander of the supply ship *Gorgon*, Captain John Parker's mission was twofold: he was to sail to Cape Town in order to save the remainder of provisions from the *Guardian*, another vessel destined to the colonies, which was shipwrecked in December 1789. He was then to proceed to Australia to ward off starvation, since the 'infant colonies'<sup>18</sup> continued to be heavily dependent on support from the mother country. The *Gorgon* arrived at its destination in September 1791, a much-anticipated event hailed by both the convicts and their supervisors. In June of the following year, the Parkers returned to England where Mary Ann was reunited with her two children and 'her mother from whom she had never been separated for more than a fortnight.'<sup>19</sup> In 1794, Captain Parker died of fever, an event that left his wife in 'the greatest distress'<sup>20</sup> and forced her to be her family's breadwinner. In 1795, she published her *Voyage Round the World*, which she wrote 'for the advantage of her family' (P, 171). Since there was only one edition of her travel narrative, we may conclude that 'it answered the financial purpose for which it was published.'<sup>21</sup>

Apart from these facts, not much is known about Parker, whose family came from the north of England and probably had a military background.<sup>22</sup> In the preface to her account, she presents herself as an 'essentially private,

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16 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 5.

17 This summary of Parker's life is based on the following work: Deirdre Coleman, 'Introduction,' in Coleman ed., *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies* (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 1999), 1-42.

18 *Ibid.*, 2.

19 *Ibid.*, 4.

20 Mary Ann Parker, 'A Voyage Round the World,' in Coleman ed., 169-225, here 171. All further references are to this edition.

21 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 4.

22 *Ibid.*, 4.

financially embarrassed, and reluctant woman writer<sup>23</sup> both focussing on her maternal duties and bent on securing the family's well-being. Throughout her journey, she is anxious to sustain the impression of a caring mother and loving wife, peppering her book with domestic ingredients from her outward journey over social life in Cape Town and the penal colonies to her return in the summer of 1792. However, if we follow Parker on her journey, a very different picture emerges, which contrasts sharply with her self-presentation as housewife, wife and mother. For example, she had no second thoughts about following her husband 'to the remotest parts of the globe' (P, 185), and the subsequent publication of her *Voyage* gained her financial independence at the same time as it was the first travel account of the newly-established penal colonies written by a woman. What is more, during a stopover in Tenerife she surprises her hosts with her fluency in Spanish and 'laughed as heartily as I ever recollected to have done in my life' after intrepidly descending a steep hill 'on full speed' (P, 188) on a donkey's back. Accordingly, Parker's text illustrates the complex ways in which two contrasting strategies of self-presentation can coexist within a single cultural artefact.<sup>24</sup> In turn, the resultant tensions inherent in such an artefact provide gateways into the complicated interplay of literature, politics and history that framed the experiences of both Barrington and Parker.

## 1. History, Politics and the Changing Face of Sentiment and Sensibility

Faced with a vast prison population in the late eighteenth century, the British authorities had to find new places and ways to dump excess convicts after the loss of the American colonies. In search of an immediate and cheap solution, the Pitt government took the so-called Botany Bay decision in 1786, favouring New South Wales over several options on the West African coast.<sup>25</sup>

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23 Ibid.

24 Andrew Hammond, 'Typologies of the East: On Distinguishing Balkanism and Orientalism,' in Keith Hanley & Greg Kucich eds., *Nineteenth Century Worlds: Global Formations Past and Present* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), 129-146, here 134.

25 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 1. For a detailed account of the Botany Bay decision see: Mollie Gillen, 'The Botany Bay Decision, 1786: Convicts, not Empire,' *English Historical Review* 47: 385 (1982), 740-66.



As a result, the penal colonies in Australasia became the site of political contestation at home, and of a struggle for survival abroad. Indeed, '[c]rime and its just punishment preoccupied reformers and administrators, although there were those who decried experiments in human transportation.'<sup>26</sup> Barrington was among those whose forced relocation to the Antipodes was to be a long-term affair as the result of a court decision whereas Parker's stay in Australia was only temporary, since she accompanied her husband on a relief mission to the distressed colonies. However, both witnessed first-hand the hardships of the transportees at the same time as they keep them at a representational distance. By the same token, when the two authors find themselves in close proximity to the Aborigines their texts are much more ambivalent so that '[t]he desire to naturalize and recuperate the other co-exists with a sharp sense of cultural difference as savagery.'<sup>27</sup> Their accounts slide between identity and difference, as well as sympathy and revulsion, and demonstrate how global civility starts to change when contact phenomena rest upon extraneous forces rather than cross-cultural curiosity.<sup>28</sup> The Botany Bay decision thus opened a new chapter in the history of British exploration in the South Pacific but also contributed to a new, much more ambivalent, quality in the representation of cultural alterity in the late eighteenth century.

Though far-flung, the penal colonies were inseparable from Britain's domestic affairs. Barrington's case and Parker's journey demonstrate how government action taken in London could have wide-ranging consequences, geographical, social and otherwise. But the Botany Bay decision, as well as the ensuing transports, also posed moral problems, transposing controversies over crime and punishment, 'philanthropy and reform,'<sup>29</sup> emancipation and exclusion onto a global level. In similar fashion, another form of trafficking in human lives was fiercely debated in contemporary political and literary circles, causing frictions across the whole spectrum of British society. Slavery had long been part of English economic life and brought considerable wealth to port cities such as Bristol or Liverpool. Towards the end of the century, however, it became a bone of contention between abolitionists and pro-slavery

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26 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 23-4.

27 Deirdre Coleman, 'Conspicuous Consumption: White Abolitionism and English Women's Protest Writing in the 1790s,' *English Literary History* 61: 2 (1994), 341-62, here 345.

28 Ibid.

29 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 162.

activists, a conflict frequently articulated in the literature of sensibility.<sup>30</sup> But despite their eloquence, literary discussions and novelistic representations of slavery were restricted by their own potential consequences:

[T]he sentimentalist approach, while advertising the suffering occasioned by slavery, fails or refuses to move beyond the depiction of its theme to a critique of that theme's subject, slavery proper. Sentimentalist writers found it difficult to cross certain limits in their portrayal of the victims of social and economic change without endangering the entire system of values by which their world was ordered, and this they were disinclined to do.<sup>31</sup>

Accordingly, when it came to translating their writings into political action, novelists, reformists and intellectuals were reluctant to see their aesthetically formulated demands through or to challenge the economic fabric of the nation. And when in the 1790s the abolition movement became increasingly associated with radicalism because of the revolutionary turmoil in France its appeal began to wane.<sup>32</sup> As a result, the relationship between slavery and sensibility remained an ambivalent one, especially in representational terms.

But owing to its emphasis on feelings and concomitant appeals for empathy, the literary articulation of the suffering intrinsic in slavery was popular and forceful nonetheless. The 'ambiguous, mute docility of the slave subject'<sup>33</sup> lent itself particularly well to comment on all sorts of inequalities, to call for reform and to advance progressive agendas. Such representations were, however, not necessarily expressive of an even-handed, emancipatory impetus, since slaves and slavery were 'often deployed transferentially, to discuss something else.'<sup>34</sup> But what is more, the 'recuperative features of abolitionism always coexist with a panicky and contradictory need to preserve essential boundaries and distinctions.'<sup>35</sup> At the heart of this ambivalent relationship is, of course, the sufferer-spectator constellation, which establishes emotional connections between characters and readers at the same time as it depends on an asymmetrical power relation, differences in social status and the uneven

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30 *Ibid.*, esp. Ch. 2 and 3.

31 *Ibid.*, 86

32 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 29.

33 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 55.

34 *Ibid.*

35 Coleman, 'Conspicuous Consumption,' 358-9.

distribution of wealth.<sup>36</sup> In the same way, the problem-ridden penal colonies in New South Wales, as well as governmental relief missions, invoke constellations similar to those found in sentimental fiction. In this perspective, we can not only establish interconnections between sentimentalism and slavery, but also investigate the closeness of sentimental literature to other political and public issues of the day. However, whilst both Barrington and Parker comment on suffering felons in the South Pacific, sentimentalism's ambivalence frequently breaks through in their texts and global civility's inclusiveness is much more limited than in Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands*. In the 1790s, then, a complex texture of governmental decisions, political upheavals and the controversial reception of both by the British public contributed to representational ruptures and transformations in the inclusive and emancipatory configuration of global civility.

It is in this time of political vicissitudes that Barrington and Parker find themselves en route to Australia. Their accounts provide the reading public in Britain with news from the recently established colony and illuminate the increasing ambivalence in contemporary representational patterns. Right from the start of his *Narrative*, we can observe Barrington's propensity to stand out from the crowd of convicts, presenting himself as an intelligent, and sometimes extravagant, outsider among outlaws. One day before embarkation, for example, the assistance of an anonymous friend 'procured some necessaries for my voyage: government allowance being extremely slender, to one like me, who had hitherto been accustomed to most of the luxuries of the table.'<sup>37</sup> The rogue publishers behind the *Narrative* were no doubt keen on utilising and exploiting the Barrington myth, but since it was based on already existing information on Australia, as well as stories of the famous offender that circulated in Britain at the time, the outré tendencies ascribed to the literary persona of the 'Prince of Pickpockets' may not be unwarranted.

Upon leaving London the next day, Barrington's 'particular friend' (B, 69) resurfaces on the ship. He continues to look after the famous offender and 'prevailed on the boatswain to admit me to his mess, and also the liberty of

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36 For a discussion of the adaptability of the sufferer-spectator constellation to cross-cultural contexts see chapter 3 on George Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands*.

37 George Barrington, 'An Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative of the Present State of Botany Bay, in New South Wales...by George Barrington, now Superintendent of the Convicts at Paramata (c. 1793-4),' in Rickard ed., 67-118, here 69. All further references are to this edition.

walking the deck, unencumbered by those galling and ignominious chains, which my past conduct had consigned me to' (B, 69). From the outset, Barrington receives special treatment by virtue of both being a celebrity and his connections, resulting not only in spatial separation from the bulk of convicts, but also in the freedom of movement aboard the *Active*. This elevation above the status of ordinary convicts is not an innovation of the *Narrative's* compilers, but typifies the public's appetite for news about Barrington and his exploits: 'the press of the day argued' that 'there were differences in *quality* between a thieving beggar and a genteel pickpocket.'<sup>38</sup>

Barrington's self-presentation as exceptional character deserving of preferential treatment is thus attributable to both his enigmatic personality and the audience's desire to follow the lives of such iridescent characters.

The result is a clearly demarcated, and consistently sustained, split between the protagonist and the rest of the felons, none of whom are individualised in Barrington's text.

British readers were too keen on following him to his new home once he had been transported, and rumours of his feats actually preceded him on his way to the Antipodes. As soon as he spots Barrington's name on a 'list of convicts brought out' in the autumn of 1791, Captain Watkin Tench, who had arrived with the First Fleet in 1788, comments somewhat nostalgically on the infamous man: '*Barrington*, of famous memory.'<sup>39</sup> As if he remembered stories in the papers published before he left England, Tench seemed to have retained a colourful image of the convict in his imagination.<sup>40</sup> Around this time, Tench's tour of duty neared its end; he was, however, not yet ready to leave as the following passage from his *Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson* (1793) shows:

But before I bade adieu to Rose Hill, in all probability for the last time of my life, it struck me that there remained one object of consideration not to be slighted: Barrington had been in the settlement between two and three months, and I had not seen him.<sup>41</sup>

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38 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 4. [emphasis in original]

39 Watkin Tench, *A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson, including an accurate description of the Situation of the Colony; of the Natives; and its natural productions: Taken on the spot, By Captain Watkin Tench, of the Marines* (London: G. Nicol, 1793), 136. [emphasis in original]

40 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 29.

41 Tench, *Complete Account*, 157.

After having found his object of interest, Tench comments at some length on Barrington's credible transformation, stating that 'his conduct has been irreproachable.'<sup>42</sup> The Captain even hazards a guess as to how Barrington's development might continue: 'I cannot quit him without bearing testimony that his talents promise to be directed in future to make reparation to society for the offences he has heretofore committed against it.'<sup>43</sup> Since Tench is neither a sensationalist hack nor a rogue publisher his personal account of Barrington confirms the convict's spectacular conversion from sinner and celebrity to model citizen of the colony from an official point of view. But Tench's description also testifies to another, more subtle change in Barrington's circumstances: 'Of that elegance and fashion, with which my imagination had decked him (I know not why), I could distinguish no trace.'<sup>44</sup> It seems that in addition to raising Tench's expectations, comprehensive press coverage created not merely a larger than life portrait of the Prince of Pickpockets, but started to breed a perfectly self-contained myth that circulated on a global scale in the late eighteenth century.<sup>45</sup> As a result, Barrington's fate tied together the British public and the penal colonies at the same time as he was slowly but surely transformed into what Rod Edmond has described as a 'floating signifier'<sup>46</sup> between the familiar worlds of Europe on the one hand and the largely unfamiliar continents and archipelagos in the Pacific on the other.

Whilst his case was absorbed into a network of interconnected representations in Britain, Barrington had to live through many adventures both aboard ship and at his destination. One of them is particularly significant for the history of global civility because it demonstrates how inclusive and emancipatory discursive frameworks are immediately complicated by the presence of felons. In the following situation, the sufferer-spectator relationship evokes 'sympathy'<sup>47</sup> in the captain of the *Active*, resulting in an attempt to ameliorate the hardships of the transportees: 'the captain with great humanity, had released many of the convicts who had been in a weakly state from their leg irons, and they were allowed alternately, ten at a time to walk upon deck (B, 70).'

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42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 158

44 Ibid., 157.

45 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 4 & 17.

46 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 24 & 51.

47 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13.

Sentimental fiction frequently utilises such relationships to draw attention to power differentials, social evils and reformist causes, establishing emotional connections between distressed characters and emphatic readers or socially responsible observers. As Keate's *Account* shows, the sufferer-spectator relationship is incredibly flexible and can also adapt to cross-cultural contexts. However, unlike the Palauans, the felons aboard the *Active* do not reciprocate favours and promptly take advantage of the captain's generosity by plotting a mutiny. There are only two people on deck when the mutineers try to take control of the vessel; as it happens, Barrington is one of them. He fights back and 'was immediately joined by the captain and the rest of the officers, who, in a few minutes, drove [the mutineers] all into the hold, and two of the ringleaders were instantly hung at the yard arm' (B, 71).

The mutiny reported in the *Narrative* is not an invention but took place on another ship of the Third Fleet, the *Albermarle*. It was subsequently transposed to the *Active* by the publishers in order to bloat Barrington's seemingly heroic character.<sup>48</sup> But more important than historical accuracy in this case are the representational ambivalences resulting from the captain's decision. Ships are commonly severely regulated spaces, with social relationships depending on hierarchies and strict role allocations for everyone on board. In this context, the 'distances of status, the spaces of authority, the rules of role, the functions of officers' are 'measured precisely and staged with clearly specific rubric and ceremony.'<sup>49</sup> This intricate performative structure 'emplots relationships in unambivalent spaces.'<sup>50</sup> However, the captain of the *Active* chose temporarily to suspend the otherwise clear-cut chain of authority because he had obviously witnessed the poor physical condition of those at the very bottom of the ship's social fabric. He emerges as sentimental subject, addressing 'a politically disenfranchised audience.'<sup>51</sup> Yet this audience ventured outside the discursive universe of the law and thus differs decisively from other sufferers in sentimental fiction, such as beggars, the working poor or slaves. But what is more, the mutineers are repeat offenders who had already broken the

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48 Compare the editor's excellent and extensive notes no. 16 & 17 in Rickard ed., *George Barrington's Voyage to Botany Bay*, 125.

49 Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 27.

50 Ibid.

51 Stephen Bending & Stephen Bygrave, 'Introduction,' in Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), vii-xxiv, here xiii.

law, a complicated constellation only remediable by discipline. Accordingly, situational necessity transforms both the vessel and the social interaction it houses into a 'theatre of discipline, not of law.'<sup>52</sup> In addition to the two executed 'ringleaders,' the remaining 'conspirators were re-ironed' (B, 71), a move through which the captain not only reinstates the routines of disciplinary performance, but also effaces the social ambivalence his generosity had engendered vis-à-vis the suffering felons.

Needless to say, by saving the day, Barrington wins the favour of the captain who raises the protagonist's already special status even further. Indeed, 'seldom a day past but some fresh meat or poultry was sent me by the captain, which raised me in the estimation of my messmates, who were no ways displeased at the substitution of pies made of fowl or fresh meat to a dish of salt junk' (B, 71). Because of his former trade, and the fashionable circles he had access to, Barrington is well versed in social affairs and adroitly extends the captain's favours to those around him in order to consolidate his position. For the remainder of the journey, the captain keeps Barrington under his wing, giving him shore leave in both Tenerife and Cape Town. From South Africa, Barrington projects himself and the *Active* into the Antipodes, since 'nothing material happened during the voyage' (B, 73). As soon as he sets foot on Australian soil, the local authorities take over from the captain and continue to pamper him:

From the report of the captain, I had a most generous reception with the Governor. His excellency said, he had long wanted a proper person as superintendant of the convicts at Paramata [an inland settlement, formerly called Rose Hill], that he appointed me to that office, and that I should take charge of the farm house. (B, 75)

Upon reaching the inland settlement the next day, the farm house turns out to be a pleasant cottage with cultivated gardens and a 'servant who kept the house' (B, 78). Of course, such episodes ascribed to the gentlemanly convict fed the Barrington myth and suggested to some observers in Britain that transportation to the Great Southern Continent was not a strict enough sentence, a position made explicit in the *Narrative* itself when its main voice compares the 'comfortable' situation of 'industrious' convicts with that of the working men in England (B, 78). Measured against Tench's eye-witness account of Barrington, these flowery contortions quickly lose their substance. He informs his

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52 Denning, *Bad Language*, 144.

readers of Barrington's 'unavoidable deficiency of dress'<sup>53</sup> and thus counter-balances all too colourful representations of the convict by bringing him back down to earth. However, the mythical appeal of Barrington prevailed over sober reflections and first-hand experiences. But the *Narrative* nonetheless teaches revealing lessons in the politics of cultural production and presents its readers with 'jaunty' stories of an overly confident convict, 'who takes the voyage and the penal colony in his stride,'<sup>54</sup> at the same time as his fate illuminates the emerging cracks in the discourse of global civility.

Like Barrington, Parker introduces her readership to the penal colonies from a marginal position and her *Voyage*, too, demonstrates how global civility starts to change towards the end of the eighteenth century. Unlike Barrington, however, her movements are not determined by the codes of law; instead she is subject to cultural constraints by virtue of her roles as wife and mother. Accordingly, Parker's self-presentation anxiously aims at both fabricating and maintaining a strictly domestic role. Given contemporary determinants of female authorship, as well as the financial success of her publication, the appearance of a domestic alter ego in her account was probably a calculated move and a safe bet, as we may infer from her 'apology for the brevity and other great demerits of the book' caused by her 'domestic situation' (P, 171). This particular perspective provides her readers with many details of the journey proper and, in contrast to Barrington, we become witnesses of the hardships and rare pleasures of maritime long distance travel. Whilst the convict celebrity simply jumps from Cape Town to Australia, Parker becomes 'a collecto[r] of singular things and [a] connoisseur[r] of solitude'<sup>55</sup> at sea. As such, she experiences the downside of the *je ne sais quoi*, namely 'the most painful [...] interludes of navigation.'<sup>56</sup> But, as we shall see, Parker has her very own way of dealing with the inexpressibility of loneliness aboard the *Gorgon*.

Moving in the field of tension between privacy aboard ship and various inland excursions along the way, Parker initially seems to concentrate on the relation of putatively female pastimes and social events. In so doing, she not only conforms to the roles she assigned herself, but also finds the means to bridge the experiential gap between home and abroad. From the start, then,

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53 Tench, *Complete Account*, 157.

54 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 37.

55 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 12.

56 *Ibid.*



the *Voyage* paints a detailed picture of the sociable side of travelling: 'On Tuesday, the 15th of March [1791], we sailed from Spithead, by way of St. Helens; and, after a fortnight's seasoning and buffeting in the channel, I began to enjoy the voyage I had undertaken' (P, 186). Her enjoyment, however, is short-lived and she quickly comes to find the 'passage to the island of *Teneriffe* somewhat tedious' (P, 186). Once in the archipelago, Parker continues to write about dinners and invitations, but she also jumps at the opportunity to escape both the confines of the *Gorgon* and parties on shore by going on 'an excursion to *Puerto Oratava*' (187). In this situation, the carefully crafted appearance of domesticity takes a back seat and Parker emerges as intrepid and cultured woman enjoying the great outdoors. Fluent in Spanish, she relishes the 'unusual attention' paid her by local ladies, and when she is mounted on her donkey the rugged 'roads (hardly deserving that appellation)' (187) only increase her boldness: 'indeed little difficulties make social excursions more interesting' (188). Contrasting strongly with her domestic self, as well as the cosy interiors she describes throughout her journey, her public self positively accepts the excursion's challenges and expands narrowly defined modalities of gendered spaces. In addition to escaping the restrictions of such spaces, Parker discreetly complements, if not subverts, her self-imposed domesticity and demonstrates how seemingly conflicting strategies of self-presentation need not cancel each other, even if they are found within one and the same text.

By interweaving and playing with the two sides of her travelling self, Parker shrewdly employs pre-existing patterns of female subjectivity in order to secure her independence after her husband's death. Despite the contributions of a great number of women writers to eighteenth century literature and culture, their 'economic options' remained strictly limited and their legal status 'was equivalent to that of the unemancipated minor'<sup>57</sup> in many European countries. Parker accordingly lived in a society in which the 'full rights of citizenship' were 'generally limited to white property-owning males and invoked a far less inclusive notion of citizenship than did the model of open access to the domain of reason implicit in the Enlightenment metaphor of the public sphere.'<sup>58</sup> But what is more, contemporary circles of explorers and travellers consisted predominantly of men so that Parker was a female

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57 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 121 & 123.

58 *Ibid.*, 11.

exception to the rule of male circumnavigators.<sup>59</sup> However, the publication of her adventures is her opportunity to use the expanding literary marketplace not merely to support her family, but to gain autonomy in a society bent on naturalising 'a gendered separation between public and private spheres.'<sup>60</sup> The contrasting representational strands in the *Voyage*, as well as the tensions between them, thus reflect contemporary social pressures at the same time as they provide Parker with the means to subvert them by moving from one end of the public-private spectrum to the other. Hence, whilst Barrington uses his contacts and networks to elevate himself above the other convicts, Parker exploits role expectations and the conventions of female authorship to eke out a space in which she can safeguard her independence vis-à-vis society's pressures on women.

But as she travels further, Parker sustains the smooth, and seemingly innocent, surface of sociable events.<sup>61</sup> In Cape Town, for example, she receives numerous invitations to dinners, parties and dances, frequently commenting on the guest's social rank, relating local habits or simply expressing her enjoyment of the journey. But her accounts of 'feasting and singing' (P, 197) are interspersed with witty remarks, demonstrating her ability to distance herself from both contemporary etiquette and the polite rhetoric she frequently employs. One evening after a prolonged journey on a road, which 'was excessively bad' (P, 192), Parker and her companions arrive 'completely jostled and tired' (P, 193) at the home of the de Witt family. Her hostess seems to have been well-known among English visitors to the Cape; but before Parker provides the culinary details of her stay, Mrs. de Witt is the target of her all too honest reflections: 'her bulk, comparatively speaking, was nearly equal to that of a Dutch man of war, being remarkably low in stature, her size was rendered still more conspicuous' (P, 193). But since neither the food nor the company were to be complained of, we may assume that the rest of her time at Mrs. De Witt's house was agreeable for everyone involved.

Yet it is here in the midst of Cape Town's lavish social life that the true purpose of Parker's journey makes itself felt. One morning, curiosity 'directed my steps to a window, whence I beheld the small remains of his Majesty's ship the *Guardian*' (P, 194). As we have already seen, the *Guardian* was shipwrecked off the Cape in 1789. Like the *Gorgon*, it was on a relief mission to the penal

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59 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 29.

60 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 121.

61 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 29.

colonies and in this situation triggers 'disagreeable reflections' in Parker, arising 'from the idea of a probability of our sharing the fate of the above vessel' (P, 194). A little later, two ships arrive on their return journey from Australia and she 'did not receive any favourable account' (P, 196) of the state of her destination. Hence, 'every circumstance served to assure us how anxiously they waited the appearance of our happy bark' (P, 196). From then on, our female protagonist frequently reflects on the condition of both the penal settlements and their inhabitants. In so doing, Parker not only demonstrates that sentimental scenes are 'reliant on the very suffering they lament',<sup>62</sup> she also transposes the literature of sentiment and sensibility onto a global level. Unlike Keate, however, who uses the same aesthetic paradigm in order to bridge the gap between the landward and seaward sides of the beach, Parker's reflections emphasise the changing nature of that very paradigm. Whilst 'the moral ambivalence of sensibility is also the source of its peculiar force',<sup>63</sup> Parker considerably narrows its representational range by repeatedly anticipating the pleasure she will derive from the *Gorgon's* arrival in the Antipodes. Just as the sufferer-spectator constellation becomes immediately complicated by the presence of felons in Barrington's account, it is rendered ambivalent in Parker's case by her excessive self-involvement when it comes to the colonists' suffering.

Accordingly, our female traveller-author frequently prioritises her emotional satisfaction over the objects of her mission: she not only assumes the role of the sentimental protagonist, but also emerges as overly egocentric in this regard. Thus, the bad weather immediately before reaching her destination is conducive to further reflections on the colony's state:

[A] sudden squall and perverse winds coming on, deprived us of the satisfaction of reaching the wished-for haven for three long days – at least they appeared so to every one of us; when we reflected that the colony stood in such great need of the supplies with which we were so plenteously stored: however, with patience, the sovereign remedy of all evils, and the travellers best support, I passed the time in adjusting the cabin, and in other preparations prior to our going on shore. (Parker, 198)

In this passage, Parker resorts to her role as housewife in order to cope with the delay caused by the storm. But it is not long before she conjures up the

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62 Bending & Bygrave, 'Introduction,' vii.

63 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 214.

British sufferers in Australia again, retelling the entire story behind her journey in the process:

At midnight the wind shifted to the westward, which brought on fine clear weather, and I found myself once more at leisure to anticipate the satisfaction which our arrival would diffuse throughout the colony; for, owing to the loss of his majesty's ship *The Guardian*, the governor and officers were reduced to such scanty allowance, that, in addition to the fatigues and hardships which they had experienced when the colony was in its infant state, they were obliged, from a scarcity of provisions, to toil through the wearisome day with the anxious and melancholy expectations of increasing difficulties. What then could afford us more heart-felt pleasure than the near event of relieving them? for it is surely happiness to succour the distressed; a satisfaction we fully experienced. (P, 199)

Captain Watkin Tench, whom we already know from his eagerness to see the Prince of Pickpockets, provides a complementary perspective from the Antipodean shores. It corroborates the reports Parker received in South Africa – ‘we hailed [the *Gorgon's* arrival] with rapture and exultation’<sup>64</sup> –, and demonstrates the ambivalence at the heart of sentimental representations of social evils and distressful situations. However, the frequency with which Parker dwells on her own feelings runs counter to sentimentalism's reciprocal inclusiveness, widening the gap between the sufferer on the one hand and the spectator on the other. Her expectations are always reflexive in this respect and place those whose situation she comes to alleviate at a representational distance. The following passage, for instance, begins with her afflicted countrymen on shore, but quickly switches over to Parker's exultation:

With what anxiety did they await the ship's arrival! with what eagerness did they hasten onboard! The circumstances are too deeply engraven on my memory ever to be eradicated; but, alas! My pen is utterly incompetent to the task of describing our feelings on this occasion. (P, 199)

Adding that ‘our ship diffused universal joy throughout the whole settlement’ (P, 200), Parker once more reinforces her own point of view without attempting to individualise either a convict or a supervisor. Her arrival in New South Wales is thus indicative of the increasing ambivalence in the literature of sentiment and sensibility towards the end of the eighteenth century at the same

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64 Tench, *Complete Account*, 139.

time as it reflects transformations in the discourse of global civility. Despite the *Gorgon's* arrival, then, the rising numbers of transported felons, as well as a lack of qualified superintendents, exacerbate the colony's situation further – a problem which Barrington experienced first-hand.

## 2. Watching from a Distance: Barrington and Parker on Convicts

Parker is not alone in representing the felons collectively. Even though he is always close to them, Barrington never individualises one convict, neither during the passage nor in the colony. He is at once aware of their lamentable state and reluctant to identify with them, always keeping those who are his fellow felons at a representational distance. There is, accordingly, a persistent split between the representing subject and the represented objects, which draws the reader's attention to the plight of the transportees whilst simultaneously avoiding close contact or direct action to ameliorate their situation. However, after having settled in his new home, Barrington draws a dire picture of the convicts' constitution:

Numbers of convicts fall victims, but it must not be wholly ascribed to the weather, as the weak state in which they were, for the most part when landed, would, were it a more favourable climate, be attended with a considerable mortality; and they are generally too weak that they cannot be put to any labour. (B, 112)

As is the case with slaves shipped across the Atlantic, the reasons behind the high mortality rate of convicts are the conditions under which they are transported. Echoing Barrington's words, Tench's report is equally alarming: 'Such was the weakly state of the new comers, that for several weeks little real benefit to the colony was derived from so great a nominal addition to our number.'<sup>65</sup> Upon arriving in the Antipodes, Parker's husband seems to have witnessed the convicts' hardships, too; however, he acted rather promptly: 'From a most humane sugesttion [sic] of Captain Parker, of the *Gorgon*, the governor issued orders for a regular survey to be taken of the condition of the convicts on their landing from the different transports' (112). Suffering, we may conclude, was a pervasive feature of both transportation and colonial life, as well as frequently reported and represented by visitors to New South

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65 Ibid., 51.

Wales. Yet only a few tried to ameliorate it by directly addressing its causes, such as the shortage of supplies, the want of space aboard ship and a lack of medical supervision.

From the outset, Barrington is an attentive observer of his surroundings. Witty, intelligent and well-connected even after his conviction, both his instinct and his former experiences in London's fashionable circles always seem to point him in the right direction, but when it comes to other convicts, his empathy is strictly limited. Before leaving England, his special friend made sure that the former celebrity could sail to Australia in relative comfort, especially compared to the bulk of felons aboard the *Active*. Though ready to describe their hardships, he emphasises his special status, with class, taste and education being central to his self-presentation. On the morning of embarkation, for example, he depicts his fellow travellers and draws a clear line between his seemingly civil self and its criminal others:

This procession, though early, and but few spectators, made a deep impression on my mind; and the ignominy of being thus mingled with felons of all descriptions, many scarce a degree above the brute creation, intoxicated with liquor, and shocking the ears of those who passed with blasphemy, oaths, and songs the most offensive to modesty, inflicted a punishment more severe than the sentence of my country, and fully avenged that society I had so much wronged. (B, 69)

By describing the felons and their outrageous behaviour, Barrington marks himself off from them because they insult his delicacy of feeling and taste, which are undoubtedly qualities of a gentleman. As such, he refuses to identify with the drunkards around him at the same time as he dehumanises them. In this situation, then, his class-consciousness prevents him from seeing anything other than mere animals in the rest of the convicts. Accordingly, this clear-cut split between the genteel pickpocket and the body of felons illustrates the limits of global civility. Obviously from a different social background and well-schooled in his early life, Barrington is acutely aware of both his status and difference, and this awareness curbs his ability to express empathy in the face of suffering.

In the above passage, the limits of discursive inclusiveness and empathy are connected to social determinants. Forced by his sentence to mingle with those 'scarce a degree above the brute creation,' Barrington encounters an environment he was able to avoid during his London-years. However, the time aboard the *Active* compels him to witness the conditions of transportation and

eliminates the possibility of remaining silent, even though he is spatially separated from the offenders. They are thus a constant presence and confront him with a socially charged variation of the sufferer-spectator constellation, in which a gentlemanly offender comments on a collectively depicted mass of transportees. In this context, global civility cracks and Barrington's representational ambivalence breaks through:

My fellow prisoners to the amount of upwards of two hundred, were all ordered into the hold which was rendered as convenient as circumstances would admit, battens being fixed for and aft for hammocks, which were being hung seventeen inches apart from each other; but being encumbered with their irons, together with the want of fresh air, soon rendered their situation truly deplorable (B, 70).

Despite calling the felons his 'fellow prisoners,' Barrington seems to be content with both the spatial and representational distances between himself and those whose appalling circumstances he describes. Upon reaching the penal colony, he is neither afraid of reiterating their distress nor of rendering the horrors of transportation understandable to his readers. Yet in this situation his empathy is strictly and sharply limited, since he refuses to single out one or two convicts in order for his readers to identify with their suffering:

[T]he convicts were all ordered on shore; their appearance was truly deplorable, the generality of them being emaciated by disease, foul air &c. and those who laboured under no bodily disorder, from the scantiness of their allowance were in no better plight (B, 75).

In this passage, Barrington uses the narrative strategies employed by sentimental literature, but is oblivious to the emotional impetus that usually impels well-off observers to help their distressed fellow-citizens. Instead of evincing genuine fellow-feeling for the convicts and eliciting a reaction in his readers, Barrington relies on the complex theatrical apparatus of sentimental fiction and polite sociability but does not follow it through. Accordingly, he consistently sustains the split between his genteel self and the represented convicts, thereby reinforcing the power differential on which his self-presentation relies whilst simultaneously contributing to global civility's increasing ambivalence.

Immediately after being appointed to the post of superintendent at the inland settlement Parramatta (formerly Rose Hill), Barrington takes things even further. He assumes the paradoxical role of a criminal enforcing the law

and subsequently always moves 'among the convicts at one remove.'<sup>66</sup> When '[i]n the morning a general muster of the convicts took place' they

were informed by the officer of the trust of the governor had been pleased to repose in me, and that any misbehavior or disobedience of orders issued from me, would be as severely punished, as though they proceeded from the governor himself: they were dismissed to their several employments. I proceeded through the different gangs of people, observing their occupations; and found them much more attentive to their business, and respectful to those over them, than I could possibly have imagined. (B, 78)

Endowed with special powers, Barrington is overly confident and represents himself in an aloof manner. Before the governor's appointment he had to rely on the social connections of his former life, but now he has acquired both a new role and a position of authority. Indeed, men 'like Barrington soon found themselves in demand for supervision of the penal settlement,'<sup>67</sup> but his new job also agrees with his extravagant tendencies to draw himself larger than life. And what is more, the above passage cements the division between our male protagonist and the bulk of convicts, and thus illustrates the transformations in the inclusive discourse of global civility.

Unlike Barrington, Parker did not witness the conditions of transportation, nor was she exposed to large numbers of convicts before her arrival in New South Wales. En route to Australia, the wretched condition of the young colony becomes a screen onto which she projects her expected emotional satisfaction, repeatedly conjuring up the sufferer-spectator constellation and exposing its intrinsic ambivalence by overemphasising her part in it. Accordingly, the anticipated pleasure of providing relief, as well as the relation of social events, figures as coping mechanism enabling her to deal with the *je ne sais quoi* of maritime long distance travel. The convicts are kept at a distance in this context not only by Parker's reflections on her emotional reward, but also by her lack of knowledge of how the British authorities organised the transportation of felons. In many different respects, Parker emerges as an educated and clever woman, using both the book market and her readership's expectations to secure her independence by skilfully crafting the impression of a housewife aboard ship. But she seems to have known remarkably little of the economics behind transportation: talking to a crew member of one of

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66 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 38.

67 *Ibid.*, 37.



the convict ships, Parker finds out that after having 'landed their convicts and discharged their lading, the masters of them were at full liberty to proceed upon their owners' employ' (P, 201). But 'the fear of losing the time of their employers' (P, 201) and monetary concerns had disastrous consequences for the felons:

'Their appearance,' to use the words of Captain Parker, 'will be ever fresh in my memory. I visited the hospital, and was surrounded by mere skeletons of men – in every bed, and on every side, lay the dying and the dead. Horrid spectacle! It makes me shudder when I reflect, that it will not be the last exhibition of this kind of human misery that will take place in this country, whilst the present method of transporting these miserable wretches is pursued; for, the more of them that die, the more it redounds to the interest of the ship-owners and masters, who are paid so much a-head by government, for each individual, whether they arrive in the colony or not.' (Parker, 200)

Shipping the convicts to the Antipodes was a business opportunity for private contractors who used the Botany Bay decision as a means of financing their outward journeys to the Far East. After discharging their human cargo, those with a special permission went 'to China, to take in a freight of Teas on account of the East-India Company' (P, 196). As the report of Captain Parker reveals, time, money and profit overrode humanitarian concerns and it seems that his wife was not fully aware of the 'human misery' before she departed England.

Despite becoming aware of the rationale behind transportation, Parker shuns a detailed representation of its consequences. Instead, her depiction of life in the penal colony shifts to its sociable side, which either effaces the felons or merely registers them 'as a brooding, invisible presence.'<sup>68</sup> Like Barrington's account of them, Parker's descriptions give way to an elevated aloofness, in which she is equally detached from those she represents. Exploring the vicinity of Botany Bay, Parker, 'Mrs. King, Mr Johnson, and the Ladies who resided at the colony' 'made several pleasant excursions up the Cove to the settlement called *Paramatta*:'

Upon our first arrival at Paramatta, I was surprised to find that so great a progress had been made in this new settlement, which contains above one thousand convicts, besides the military. (P, 206)

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68 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 31.

According to Deirdre Coleman, 'Parker never gets close enough to the felons to describe them to us.'<sup>69</sup> However, the consistently detailed accounts of people, events and landscapes throughout her journey create a very different impression and indicate that she was well aware of her surroundings. In New South Wales, she continues these descriptions but largely excludes the felons from them. Parker had ample opportunity to witness all transactions of the new colony and is ready to relate its progress or social life, but emerges as reluctant to focus on its most distressing side. In the same way, her mention of the military is not merely listing the properties of Paramatta and making them accessible for her readers: during the ensuing night, Parker 'found every thing perfectly quiet, although surrounded by more than one thousand convicts' (P, 206). They probably left her uneasy and she needed to reassure herself that 'the military' could protect her in the event of danger.

In order to avoid describing 'the poor miserable objects' that 'died in great numbers' (P, 200) at sea or after their arrival, Parker resorts to collective representation. Leaving the colony, she thanks the governor for his hospitality, reemphasising the pleasant and sociable side of life in Australia. However, the representationally excluded felons creep back into the picture, albeit in highly formal and abstract language:

The uniform attention which the Governor paid us during our short stay at the colony will always be remembered with singular satisfaction: - he may be justly called, like the Monarch of Great Britain, "The Father of his People;" and the convict who has forsaken the crimes that sent him to this country, looks up to him with reverence, and enjoys the reward of his industry in peace and thankfulness. (P, 211)

Nowhere – neither in her descriptions of sociable domesticity, nor in reporting events aboard the *Gorgon* – is Parker as detached from what she relates as in this passage. Her aloofness prevents her from sympathising with the plight of the convicts, and the representational distance between the subject and the object of the relief mission develops into a constellation over which only the representing subject, but not the represented object, can exercise authority. Predicated on unilateral power rather than reciprocity, such an abstract summary of the convicts' lives effaces the moral implications of the sufferer-spectator relationship and suggests that transportation is reformatory despite its human cost. Parker, like Barrington, creates a barrier between herself and the

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69 *Ibid.*, 30-1.

felons at the same time as she briefly alludes to their hardships. Accordingly, both authors are aware of ubiquitous suffering but refuse to make it accessible for their readers by individualising a convict's fate. Whilst portrayals of the distressed in sentimental literature aim at eliciting emotional responses, similar constellations in both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* remain superficial, abstract or distanced. In this respect, both authors transform the representational and discursive patterns of global civility, to which curiosity, mutuality and the readiness to be favourably impressed are essential, into a restricted paradigm in which the recognition of the other by the self is either situationally contingent or dependent on the traveller's idiosyncrasies.

### 3. In Unknown Territory: Barrington and Parker on Cultural Difference

The representation of convicts in Barrington and Parker's accounts illustrates the changing nature of global civility in the Pacific arena, which is connected to the Botany Bay decision on a political level, and to an increasingly controversial discussion of sensibility on an aesthetic one.<sup>70</sup> The presence of felons in this context complicates the overall picture considerably because they ventured outside the confines of polite society by breaking the law. In so doing, global civility, as well as the literature of sentiment and sensibility, is stretched to its limits to include a group of people beyond its representational range. However, the hardships of the transportees aboard the convict ships are reminiscent of slaves and slavery, one of sentimentalism's most popular themes. Accordingly, the transportation of convicts to New South Wales evokes the suffer-spectator constellation, through which the felons become representable in the context of sensibility and its reformist agenda. But both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* illustrate the difficulty of incorporating those who broke the law in a discursive universe dedicated to inclusiveness, reciprocity and even-handed exchange. The result is, as we have seen, an ambivalent one, in which the convicts and their plight are mentioned in both accounts at the same time as the authors keep them at a safe representational distance.

In addition to social difference, Barrington and Parker also comment on racial difference by virtue of the presence of Australian natives. Their representations of the Aborigines are more nuanced than their depictions of felons

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70 Compare: Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 190-221.

and thus show the ways in which the relationship between self and other within the framework of global civility has become more complicated, without running the risk of disintegrating, however. Indeed, the 'dark-skinned visitors who exchanged fresh fish for baked bread'<sup>71</sup> were by no means unwelcome intruders in the settlements of the Sidney region. On the contrary, Governor 'Phillip was anxious to encourage any system of barter which could lay the foundations for cooperation and continuing peaceful relations.'<sup>72</sup> Barrington, too, observes that the natives' surplus of fish might be a gateway to establishing a relationship based on reciprocity and trust:

As the natives frequently caught more fish than they could immediately use, great pains have been taken to induce them to barter it at Paramata for bread, vegetables, &c. Several of them carried on this traffic, and there was reason to hope that a tolerable fish-market would soon be established. (B, 105)

Given the state of the newly-established colonies, the English settlers depended on all the support they could get. Establishing mutually improving relations with the Aborigines was thus crucial to survival because the newcomers found themselves in unknown territory, had to put up with 'successive crop failures'<sup>73</sup> and suffered from a lack of agricultural skills. But by interacting with the natives, the settlers had access to local knowledge and resources. In this regard, then, initiating bi-directional traffic with the natives of New South Wales might be a means to secure bare necessities and could eventually lead to an encounter framed by reciprocity and exchange.

However, English attempts at intensifying the tentative relations between themselves and their Australian counterparts are deeply flawed from the start. Governor 'Phillip wanted an intermediary to demonstrate to the local Aborigines the benefits of mixing with the settlers'<sup>74</sup> and thus sent some soldiers 'to get a man or two in his possession who might be taught enough of the language to render themselves useful negociators' (B, 89). The governor's idea aimed at ongoing and peaceful relations with the natives, but results in the visible denigration of the two captured individuals:

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71 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 44.

72 Rickard, *Voyage to Botany Bay*, 149, note no. 159.

73 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 37.

74 Rickard, *Voyage to Botany Bay*, 140, note no. 92.

Banalong [one of the two captured natives] [...] was a smart, active, good-looking young man, of a lively disposition: they were treated with the utmost kindness; but least they should attempt an escape they wore each of them an iron on one leg, with a piece of rope spliced to it, and a man was ordered for each, who was responsible for their security. – Wherever they went they were accompanied by their leaders, holding one end of the rope. (B, 90)

This passage problematizes the reciprocity inherent in global civility because the encounter it depicts is neither voluntary nor based on mutual curiosity. Necessity and want rather compel the English to trade with the natives, whose readiness to do so seems to have been situationally contingent or inconsistent in the settler's perception. Although Barrington emphasises 'utmost kindness,' the two men cannot not conceive of themselves as captives, which is why this scene not only illustrates the increasing ambivalence of inclusive representational frameworks, but also prefigures the coercive, and often fatal, treatment of native peoples by Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries throughout the Pacific region. Whilst trying to educate a go-between might have seemed like a good idea, its realisation is incommensurate with the inclusive and emancipatory impulses of global civility.

But if such scenes open up the ugly face of European exploration and discovery, they also illustrate the complexities of transnational contact zones, in which forced enculturation was coeval with peaceful attempts at cross-cultural commerce, and even-handed contact was interrupted by occasional hostilities. Accordingly, Barrington's readers can find another forceful, but also slightly ambivalent instance, of Anglo-Aboriginal interaction in the last pages of his *Narrative*, in which racial difference is represented by the convict celebrity in the form of a suffering native woman. In the following situation, Barrington took a stroll in the outback with his companion, a boy called Tim. When the day draws to a close, a kangaroo suddenly appears before them and is shot dead by Barrington; but the animal being too heavy to carry home, they are obliged to spend the night in the wild. Looking for a safe place to sleep in, they suddenly hear a groan. Barrington 'was at first for retreating, but on recollecting that I might render some service to the afflicted, and that I equally stood in need of assistance' (B, 116), he decides to approach the spot where the groan was issuing from. The emotionally charged tinge of his reflections on reciprocity evokes a sentimental scenario between a distressed observer and a needy individual, and prolongs itself into the description of his ensuing discovery:

[A]pproaching the entrance of the cave, a most interesting scene presented itself to my view: a young creature seated on a jet of rock, mournfully contemplating the extended body of a man whose expiring groan had just pierced our ears: all her faculties were so absorbed with grief so that we were yet quite entirely unnoticed: a sympathising sorrow pervaded all my frame. (B, 116)

The native woman, whose name is 'Yeariana' (B, 118), is alone with her injured brother. This doubly enticing view is both a sentimental scenario and an exotic novelty for the observer Barrington. He, in turn, evinces fellow-feeling in the form of 'a sympathising sorrow [that] pervaded all my frame' (B, 116). In the Australian outback, then, we find the sufferer-spectator relationship adapted to a cross-cultural context, demonstrating how Barrington's *Narrative* incorporates cultural difference without giving way to a reductive description of the above scene. Of course, a suffering female native is an enticing view lending itself to being expressed in sentimental terms, but this scene nonetheless demonstrates a benevolent, less egocentric side of Barrington's character.

Barrington's spatial and emotional distance from the bulk of convicts rendered global civility ambivalent both aboard the *Active* and at Parramatta. But faced with Yeariana's situation, he overcomes his extravagant tendencies and represents the encounter in sentimental terms, allowing her to exist in her own right as culturally different, but nonetheless fully recognised human being. Caution and initial mistrust are mutual when Barrington approaches the cave, but both overcome their apprehensions and enter into a (non-verbal) dialogue comparable to the one on the Palauan beach:

I endeavoured by every sign I could suggest, to do away her fears and retired a few paces, leaving her at liberty to go from the cave had she chose.

I made signs to her that if she would go and acquaint her friends with her situation, I would watch by her brother till her return: her eyes glistened with joy as she gathered my meaning, and with an assenting inclination of her head, more eloquent and expressive of her feelings than in the power of the most refined language to convey, she quitted us with a celerity quickened by fraternal love, and in a few moments was out of sight. (B, 117)

Previous representational ambivalences in Barrington's account notwithstanding, in this urgent situation, in which one party lost their way and another has to deal with a potentially fatal injury, the transported pick-

pocket and the native girl cooperate across cultural divides. Conversing by signs, both sides not only establish an even-handed and mutually enriching exchange, but also act in a fully-fledged sentimental frame. Accordingly, Barrington represents Yeariana's reaction by using sentimentalism's 'repertoire of conventions', in which 'fainting, weeping, sighing, hand-holding, mute gestures, the beat of the pulse, blushing – and so on'<sup>75</sup> were included. During Yeariana's absence, he successfully reanimates her brother, following 'the imperative call of humanity' (B, 117). After her return an unnamed 'old man examined the wound, and with great skill extracted the barb' (B, 118). Following this operation, the natives invite Barrington and Tim to their 'cave': 'The reception we met with from these grateful people, almost bordered upon adoration!' (B, 118). Hence, initial trepidation on both sides of the contact zone need neither give rise to ambivalence nor conflict, but can engender friendly interaction and mutual support. This particular situation thus bends sentimentalism to cross-cultural exigencies and defies reductive notions of racial difference at the same time as it renders understandable the humanity of Australia's native population to English readers.

In Parker's *Voyage*, by contrast, there is a distinctly ambivalent undertone when she is among the Aborigines, repeatedly resurfacing in various constellations and situations. But by and large, the settlers and the natives interact peacefully in her account after tentative relationships had been established. Unlike her aloofness in the representation of convicts, Parker is frequently very close to the Aborigines, describing them in some gender-specific detail. The men 'ornament themselves with a fish-bone fastened in the gristle of the nose, which makes them appear really frightful,' whilst the women 'are extremely negligent of their persons and are filthy to a degree scarcely credible' (P, 209). And from rubbing themselves with fish oil, they 'smell so loathsome, that it is impossible to approach them without disgust' (P, 209). However, curiosity seemed to have prevailed over repulsion in Parker's case: 'Notwithstanding the general appearance of the natives,' she writes, 'I never felt the least fear in their company being always with a party more than sufficient for my protection' (P, 209). Seemingly perfectly at ease, she performs being calm because of her countrymen's 'protection' and support:

I have been seated in the woods with twelve or fourteen of them, men, women, and children. Had I objected, or shewn any disgust at their appear-

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75 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 19

ance, it would have given them some reason to suppose that I was not what they term their damely, or friend; and would have rendered my being in their company not only unpleasant, but unsafe. (P, 209-10)

As if to reassure both herself and her readers of her calmness, she mentions the potential consequences of showing her true feelings vis-à-vis the Aborigines. Keen on observing their social life, and accompanied by her countrymen, she overcomes her disgust and finds herself in close proximity to them. But although she is ready to study a largely unknown people, she remains caught up between attraction and repulsion. In this situation, then, her reserve prevents the gathering from opening out into an encounter governed by mutual interest and reciprocity, and thus illustrates both the increasingly ambivalent representation of cultural difference and the incipient transformations within global civility.

Despite Parker's uneasiness, the encounter does not go awry, nor does it degenerate into a representation of essentialised, or unbridgeable, difference. Her experience of the Antipodes is rather equidistant from emphatic practices of global civility on the one hand, and instances of wholesale colonialism on the other. Cross-cultural curiosity in the *Voyage* is thus counter-balanced by situations that prefigure the exoticization of native lifeways for European spectators in later decades, in which differential practices were not only represented in relational terms, but also scrutinised, observed or denigrated from consolidated and unchallenged look-outs. Aboard the anchored *Gorgon*, Parker finds such a look-out:

The natives very frequently surrounded our vessel with their canoes. [...] Sometimes, for the sake of amusement, I have thrown them ribbands and other trifles, which they would as frequently tye round their toes as any other part of their person. (P, 210)

This situation entails a crude voyeuristic and self-centred element, in which the other is caught up in a hierarchized relationality. Just as Parker's aloofness in her representation of convicts prevents her from empathising with their plight, her lack of comprehension of cultural difference obviates the intensification of already existing contacts. Yet in the paragraph subsequent to this passage, Parker performs a dramatic representational shift when she suddenly relates the fate of Banalong, one of the captured males in Barrington's *Narrative*. He was brought to England by Governor Phillip and pays Parker a



visit; upon seeing a picture of her deceased husband, 'the tear of sensibility trickled down his cheeks' and he

spoke, with all the energy of Nature, of the pleasing excursion which they had made together up the country. The above is one amongst many instances which I could relate of the natural goodness of their hearts; and I flatter myself that the time is hastening when they will no longer be considered as mere savages; – and wherefore should they? (P, 210)

Safely lodged in the comforts of her home, Parker is ready to represent Bana-long in sentimentalised terms. Though influenced by Rousseauesque tropes of the noble savage, this portrayal differs decisively from the disgust Parker related earlier, even ending on an emancipatory, inclusive note. When measured against other episodes in her account, this passage demonstrates that the representation of cross-cultural encounters has become situationally contingent and contextually dependent. In this regard, her *Voyage* presents a new turn on global civility, in which favourable representations of other cultures are replaced by ambivalent, and sometimes denigratory, depictions of extra-European peoples. This representational rupture was caused by a multifactorial set of conditions, and is rooted in the Botany Bay decision, the changing representational dynamics of sentimentality and the various degrees of cultural and social difference that Parker encountered.

Both Barrington and Parker present their readers with strangely detached depictions of felons and ambivalent, or shifting, representations of Aborigines. But in the *Voyage* there appears a category of racial difference which we do not find in the *Narrative*, and that is slaves. Parker visits the Cape colony twice – before as well as after her journey to Australia – but she consistently preserves the boundaries and distinctions between herself and the slaves, and in so doing disenfranchises them discursively and materially. Especially during her second visit to the Cape, she spends more time relating the life of its socially excluded workforce, but only to illustrate the '*mild treatment of the Slaves at the Cape*' (P, 216; emphasis in original). She tells her readers time and again that 'the slaves were treated at the Cape with the greatest humanity: and only in name bore the degrading distinction' (P, 216) whilst simultaneously mentioning that 'as a token of their servile condition, they always go barefooted, and without a hat' (P, 217). She continues her extensive survey of them by admiringly describing how in

the houses of the wealthy, every one of the company has a slave behind his chair to wait upon him: this slave has frequently a large palm-leaf in his hand, by way of a fan to drive away the flies, which are extremely troublesome in these hot climates (P, 217).

In this passage, Parker deprives the slaves of their humanity and reduces them to the status of mere instruments, which 'drive away flies' in the 'troublesome' climate of the Cape. They emerge as silent participants and are unable to articulate themselves in similar fashion to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which he calls the 'slave [...] a living tool.'<sup>76</sup>

Given the popularity and thrust of the abolition movement in contemporary Britain, it is surprising that Parker neither objects to nor criticises slavery in the Cape Colony. Rather, she implicitly ponders the advantages of a slave-owning society, as her reports of everyday life in South Africa show. But even in situations in which she does not reflect on their usefulness, the relationship between herself and the represented slaves always rests on a clear-cut power differential. During her extended sojourn into South Africa on her return journey she resides again at the de Witt family's house and tells her readers that 'there were thirty slaves belonging to this house:'

The beauty of one of the females particularly struck my attention; the elegance of her deportment, the symmetry of her features, and the pleasing curl of her fine dark hair, could not pass unnoticed by any, excepting those who were unwilling to pay that tribute to the simplicity of nature, which all the assistance of art could not place them in the possession of. (P, 216)

Unlike Parker's sentimentalised portrayal of Banalong, this passage does not balance the natural simplicity she sees with a feature of metropolitan culture, such as a tear of sensibility. Instead, the female slave before her is a distanced beauty, which is nonetheless close enough to be admired by Parker. This scene thus mirrors her attitude to slaves and slavery, which encompasses numerous episodes of their putative usefulness at the same time as it quietly, but decidedly, advertises the advantages of a slave-owning society. In Parker's case, then, global civility loses its all-encompassing impulse not only by virtue of domestic cultural changes in a politically turbulent time, but also, and more

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76 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, transl., with introduction and notes, by Martin Ostwald (New York & London: Macmillan, 1962), 236.

importantly, because of a multifaceted and complex presence of various categories of social, cultural and racial difference.

#### 4. **By way of Conclusion: Barrington, Parker and Alterity in the 1790s**

Barrington and Parker's ambivalent attitudes towards social and cultural difference are not merely idiosyncratic features of their travel accounts. They rather reflect conflictual constellations implicit in the age of reason in general, and the political volatility of the revolutionary period in particular. Despite the cosmopolitan spirit of the Enlightenment, its contours became blurred and started to change in the late eighteenth century, especially when European intellectuals started to respond to the reverberations of the political upheavals in France. But just as the 'enabling fiction'<sup>77</sup> of the European Republic of Letters was first and foremost the stomping ground of male intellectuals, so were the responses to the political maelstrom that swept Europe in the 1790s. By the same token, most of the travellers discussed in this study were almost exclusively well-educated men, who travelled for commercial or career-related purposes at the same time as they were bent on exposing themselves to a different cultural universe. And even if their experiences in foreign lands were accidental as in Keate's *Account*, they were framed in the idioms of polite culture. In other words, polite culture, and the representations of global civility it engendered, was an emancipatory, inclusive and egalitarian discourse, which is inextricably linked to the emergence of rationalist thinking from the 17th century onwards. It had its blind spots, as the non-inclusion of the Jews in Blount's *Voyage into the Levant* or the marginalisation of the Chinese sailors in Keate's *Account* show. But only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did it start to crack under the influences of a plethora of events, such as the trafficking in human lives or the increasing political influence of European countries, such as Britain and France. The long-standing history of the slave trade shows that trafficking humans was not new per se, but the Botany Bay decision for the first time subjected white Europeans to its heinous practices. Accordingly, the class-conscious Prince of Pickpockets and the wife of Captain Parker suddenly found themselves on the way to Australia, but they viewed and described contemporary events from marginal

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77 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 114.

positions. As a result, both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* represent perspectives that are distinct from those who set out to the Ottoman Empire or the sea of islands before Barrington and Parker. Coupled with contemporary developments, their journeys necessitate a discursive transformation within global civility. On the other hand, the shift of power from the East to the West in the course of the eighteenth century was neither abrupt nor did it result in the immediate disempowerment of the once dominant Ottomans. Such changes take time and are accompanied by slow, uneven, but nonetheless noticeable, transformations as we shall see when we return to Islamic lands in the next chapter.

## 6. The Attraction of Repulsion:

Charles Colville Frankland's

*Travels to and from Constantinople* (1829)

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The previous chapter has examined how the ideal of global civility starts to crack under the pressure of trafficking in human lives towards the end of the eighteenth century. Coupled with the politically turbulent context of the 1790s, as well as the 'controversy of sentimentalism',<sup>1</sup> George Barrington and Mary Ann Parker's encounters with various categories of social, cultural and racial difference on the way to Australia illustrate how cross-cultural curiosity, the readiness to be favourably impressed and discursive inclusiveness give way to representational ambivalence, distance or even aloofness. Since European representations of the Islamic world are subject to a similar shift, we return to the Ottoman Empire in the present chapter in order to explore the emergence of what Edward Said has described as modern Orientalism by discussing Captain Charles Colville Frankland's *Travels to and from Constantinople* (1829).<sup>2</sup> Frankland's account is at once sensitive to the peculiarities of the Ottoman world and aggressively biased in many of its judgments. This situation is connected to, and complicated by, the rise of European colonial ambitions and the political turmoil in the Levant in the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, Frankland advises other travellers 'to learn a few Arabic or Turkish phrases of civility and salutation', adding that 'civility costs noth-

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1 Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 190.

2 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995) 3.

ing.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, however, he devalues the worth of such cross-cultural exchange by pouring scorn on 'the never-changing manners of the

East.'<sup>4</sup> Moving in this field of tension between favourable representation and civilizational prejudice, Frankland's account both contributes to modern Orientalism and sheds light on the changing nature of global civility.

In what follows, I will examine how the large-scale incorporation of already existing evidence in order to substantiate and qualify one's eye-witness account contributes to the genesis of self-referential levels within selected cultural texts and the societies in which they circulate. In doing so, I demonstrate that discursive practices, such as Orientalism, are much more complex and multi-layered than straightforward periodisations suggest, as well as how individual or collective cultural agents – in this case, travellers – actively contribute to their formations. In the first part of this chapter, I follow Frankland's journey through the Balkans to Istanbul and discuss his encounters with Muslims and Ottoman imperial culture. As soon as he reaches Istanbul, his judgments become less ambivalent and more temperate as he witnesses the Sultan and the greatness of his imperial centre. At this point, I will pause in order to examine his 'Remarks and Notes' on Istanbul, which he inserted after his return to England. This part of the chapter will explore and contextualise the emergence of Said's notion of modern Orientalism as citational system by looking at the ways in which Frankland borrows from Comte *Andréossy's Constantinople et le Bosphore de Thrace* (1828). It seems that the captain put more trust in the former French ambassador's account than in his own observations. But despite both Frankland's lack of informational depth and his shortcomings as a writer, the *Travels* illustrates Said's crucial assertion that '[e]very writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies.'<sup>5</sup> From here, I continue retracing Frankland's journey and follow his footsteps in Greater Syria where he has to cope with the pleasures and hardships of extreme travel in the east. The last part of this

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3 Charles Colville Frankland, *Travels to and from Constantinople in 1827 and 1828*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (London: Henry Colburn, 1830), 180. All further references are to this edition. Roman numerals indicate the respective volume.

4 Charles Colville Frankland, *Travels to and from Constantinople in 1827 and 1828*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1830), 96. All further references are to this edition. Roman numerals indicate the respective volume.

5 Said, *Orientalism*, 20.

chapter examines the historical reverberations of the multi-cultural Mediterranean in Frankland's day. It explores the way in which both sea and desert retain their essentially cross-cultural features even as Eurocentrism becomes the dominant paradigm through which other cultures are being represented in the course of the nineteenth century.

Of course, the main voice in this chapter belongs to Charles Colville Frankland, who was born in Bath in 1797 and had risen to the rank of admiral by 1875.<sup>6</sup> A multilingual, widely travelled and 'hardened explorer'<sup>7</sup>, he died a year later after having served in South America and undertaken extensive journeys to the Islamic World and North-eastern Europe. Unfortunately, only little is known about this prolific, if sometimes dull, traveller-writer, who befriended the famous Lady Hester Stanhope on his journey through the Ottoman Empire. In 1829, he published *Travels to and from Constantinople* (2 vols.), which was followed by *Narrative of a Visit to the Courts of Russia and Sweden* three years later. In both accounts, there is a complex tension between his frequent complaints about indigenous peoples, customs and institutions, and a readiness to shower praise upon specific aspects of the cultures he encounters. Greedy Scandinavian innkeepers and Baltic seamanship irritate him tremendously, whilst the city of Helsinki and selected stretches of landscape offer breathtakingly beautiful views.<sup>8</sup> The same holds true for Ottoman lands, where, at least in Frankland's representations of the Sultan's dominions, still-existing signs of imperial greatness and audacious reforms under Mahmud II alternate with denigratory stereotypes frequently gleaned from other accounts. Accordingly, contemporary reviewers and 'critics thought little of his outbursts,' attacking him not only for the poor quality of his information, but also for being 'too hasty a traveller to make his account valuable.'<sup>9</sup> But the tensions in his writing and the ambivalent nature of his feelings towards the Ottoman Empire allow us to trace the emergence of Orientalist discourses and firmly to root them in tangible historical and political circumstances – in this case, in the troubled Levant that Frankland experienced in the late 1820s.

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6 For a short account of Frankland's life consult: Reinhold Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama: British Travellers in Nineteenth Century Turkey* (Amsterdam & Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 373-4.

7 Tony Lurcock, 'Not So Barren or Uncultivated: British Travellers in Finland, 1760-1830' (London: CB Editions, 2010), 178.

8 *Ibid.*, 171, 180, 182 and 184.

9 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 374.

Travelling during the Greek uprising and between the two major Ottoman reform efforts in the first half of the nineteenth century – the *Nizam-ı Cedid* ('New Order') under Selim III and the *Tanzimat* ('Re-Ordering') under both Abdülmecid I and Abdülaziz I –, Frankland was in Istanbul only one year after the Janissaries had been abolished (1827). However, eulogising this move during his time in the capital does not prevent him from claiming 'that the Ottoman nation is the bitterest enemy to the human race, and the severest scourge that ever was sent by Providence to chastise mankind' (I, 187) when he is back in England. British views of the Ottomans in this period were indeed ambivalent and gave rise to the so-called Eastern Question:<sup>10</sup> the crumbling power of Ottoman Turkey created a vacuum, which Russian imperial ambitions threatened to fill. In order to prevent the Russians from expanding their spheres of influence, Western powers developed a strategic relationship with the Ottomans and supported them if it served their interests. At mid-century, this intricate triadic arrangement led to the Crimean War, in which Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire fought against the authoritarian rule of Tsar Nicholas I.<sup>11</sup> Thus, both the West's ambivalent relationship with the East and Frankland's seemingly contradictory sentiments call for a careful and nuanced reading that starts where this chapter's protagonist started, namely with the 'wonderful revolution [that] had just taken place at Constantinople' (I, 1).

## 1. Captain Frankland and the Ottoman World

The Sultan's audacious efforts at reforming 'one of the most extraordinary and interesting empires of the earth' (I, 1) attracted the attention of Charles Colville Frankland of the Royal Navy. Both 'the grandeur of the supposed Barbarian Emperor's character' and the desire 'to see with [his] own eyes that admirable man' (I, 2) take him to Ottoman lands in 1827:

The Sultan Mahmoud had trod in the steps of the greatest reformer of nations the world had yet seen – Peter the Great, and, like that monarch, had extirpated a factious and ungovernable soldiery [the Janissaries], who upon all occasions had shown themselves the enemies of civilization and of the best interests of humanity. (I, 1/2)

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10 Stefanie Markovits, *The Crimean War in the British Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7.

11 *Ibid.*



Formerly the backbone of Ottoman military supremacy, the Janissaries had become synonymous with stagnation and retrogression by the early nineteenth century. They had toppled two Sultans in quick succession and Mahmoud II took considerable time before he violently abolished these military units so rich in tradition.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, the Ottoman ruler caught the imagination of those enamoured by improvement and progress like the Russian Tsar had done more than a century earlier. But favourable portrayals of Peter and Mahmoud are frequently bound up with their efforts of rebuilding and reorganising their empires in accordance with western standards.<sup>13</sup> Frankland's emphatically expressed desire to witness on-going changes in the Ottoman realm is no exception: what at first sight appears to be in line with admiring representations by travellers from previous centuries, turns out to be a deeply divided, ambivalent and often inconsistent picture of a long-lived polity under internal as well as external pressures.

### Political Reflections on the Way

Frankland's journey starts in Vienna from where he proceeded through the Balkans to Istanbul. He does not travel alone but refuses to reveal his fellow-traveller's identity, only mentioning that he was 'an English gentleman who was going thither upon business of importance' (I, 2).<sup>14</sup> The Captain's detailed, and sometimes long-winded, account of this voyage is a mixture of general information and personal observations, in which complaints about the locals' incompetence or indolence on the one hand and favourable representations of hospitality on the other add up to an ambivalent whole.<sup>15</sup>

This ambivalence informs his political remarks, too. On several occasions, Frankland, a Philhellene and supporter of Greek independence, encounters

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12 Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (London: Murray, 2005), 413-446.

13 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 318-321; and Frankland, I, 207: 'the Sultan is taking every opportunity of assimilating, as much as possible, the new institutions to those of Europe; and, should he live, he will effect great ameliorations in the state of things in this country.'

14 Frankland later adds that his 'companion was charged with despatches from Sir Henry Wellesley [British ambassador to Austria] to Mr. Canning.' (I, 3-4).

15 Compare: Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441-58, here: 445: According to Landry, Frankland's 'pleasure and pain were deeply interfused' and cannot be separated from one another. This somewhat paradoxical constellation informs the entirety of Frankland's account.

the newly organised troops who prompt him to reflect on the empire's past and present. Immediately before reaching the imperial capital, his praise of Greek culture finds an outlet vis-à-vis the Sultan's forces:

I could not help being struck with the circumstance of meeting these barbarous and implacable enemies of the Grecian name and nation, the hordes of Asia, upon their march to invade the classic fields of Attica and Lacedaemon; and I was, in imagination, carried back to the days of Darius and Xerxes, of Leonidas and Miltiades. (I, 87)

Not only is this disparaging judgment of the new troops diametrically opposed to his initial objective of seeing the Ottoman Peter and the changes he had already effected,<sup>16</sup> it is also sandwiched between two accommodating references to the very units that trigger this reflection. This apparently paradoxical constellation is rooted in gross political facts: whenever the Ottomans seem to violate Frankland's philhellenic sentiments, he is quick to invoke the achievements of classical antiquity in defense of the Greek cause. By contrast, in the absence of threats to Greece's 'suffering sons and ravished daughters' (I, 283) the author is ready to survey contemporary Ottoman civilization and its various manifestations which can signal everything from innovation over misgovernment to decay in his account. Accordingly, these two impulses – either representation of conditions on the ground or hasty vilification – do not cancel each other and largely anticipate the pattern for further observations of this kind. Interestingly, upon approaching the new troops in the above passage, Frankland and his companion 'met with no incivility on the part of these troops' (I, 86), and after his rant at them he reminds his readers that 'we must not forget that the Turks are now only beginning to discipline their troops; and that all things must necessarily have a *beginning*, and cannot at once reach perfection' (I, 87; emphasis in original).<sup>17</sup>

Like Blount nearly two centuries earlier, Frankland encounters an Ottoman army on the march. Unlike Blount, however, he is only moderately impressed and often reminds us that the centre of gravity of international

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16 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 318-321.

17 Immediately after this encounter, Frankland informs us that 'not an instance of pillage or disorder ever occurs with the new troops, in the towns and villages through which they pass. Formerly, the people always fled upon the approach of troops, well knowing that their rapacity and indiscipline were equally dangerous to their friends and foes' (I, 88)

politics and diplomacy has shifted to the west. Overwhelmed by their order, discipline and strength, Blount had to integrate the soldiers he met into his framework of imperial rationality and global civility, whereas Frankland could afford a dismissive comment every now and then. Given recent unrest and political efforts at reform, the Ottoman Empire of Frankland's day was on the retreat. On his outward journey, for example, our naval officer tells us that Budapest is 'renowned for its warm mineral baths, constructed, I believe, by the Turks, when they were so long masters of this country' (I, 6). The Ottomans gained control over this city in the sixteenth century under Süleyman the Magnificent but their glory in Hungary had long since vanished. Accordingly, whilst seventeenth century travellers admired an efficient and powerful military apparatus that threatened Europe with its capabilities, Frankland's impressions in the Balkans signify past greatness in territories the Ottomans had already evacuated.

### **En route to Istanbul: To be civil, or not to be civil, that is the question.**

Early travellers in the Ottoman Empire were frequently overwhelmed by its splendour, grandeur and military power. In this realm, Europeans had to be civil and recognise their guides, interlocutors and hosts as members of a highly advanced, if not superior, culture, with both a global reach and a long history. In the Balkans in 1634, Henry Blount caught the attention of an Ottoman general 'who presently sent for me, and making me sit, and drinke *Cauphe* in his presence.'<sup>18</sup> In this situation, Blount had ample opportunity to observe a powerful empire at work but only because it was his 'fortune to hit his [the general's] humour so right.'<sup>19</sup> Invited to join the Ottoman forces, he eventually has to wiggle out of what seems to have been a complicated cross-cultural predicament, since denying hospitable offers from a 'representative of absolute power' was 'potentially life-threatening.'<sup>20</sup> But the skilful lawyer finds the solution to his problem in the linguistic barrier between himself and his Ottoman counterparts, emphasising that he would be causing '*tumults*' and was unable to obey '*Commands*.'<sup>21</sup> However, he does not leave the general's tent without expressing the admiration of Englishmen for 'the *Turkes*, whom we

18 Henry Blount, *A Voyage into the Levant* (London: John Legatt, 1636), 15.

19 *Ibid.*, 15

20 Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 152.

21 Blount, *Voyage*, 16, [emphasis in original].

not only honored for their glorious actions in the world; but also loved, for the kinde *Commerce of Trade* which we finde amongst them.’<sup>22</sup>

If we follow Frankland’s footsteps in the same region about 200 years later, we find that cross-cultural traffic had lost its clear-cut power differential by then. For him, the Ottomans are no longer ‘the only moderne people, great in action.’<sup>23</sup> They are rather a retreating, if still somewhat powerful, shadow of their own past, and his ambivalent representations of Ottoman life, customs and politics bear witness to this shift. Entering Ottoman lands in Pitesti, Romania, Frankland is clearly aware of both a territorial and a cultural transition.<sup>24</sup> However, he and his companion are eager quickly to proceed to Bucharest, only to discover ‘a strange mixture of European luxury and Oriental filth and squalor’ (I, 32). Of course, this dichotomously structured and generalised impression is not new and our naval officer joins, consciously or obliviously, a long tradition of experienced or imagined transitions into the East.<sup>25</sup> Yet unlike many of his predecessors, Frankland only revises preconceived ideas when he is inescapably confronted with imperial grandeur or scenic beauty on the one hand or flawless, and thus unexpected and surprising, interpersonal conduct on the other.

Unsurprisingly, then, Frankland’s first forays into Anglo-Ottoman interaction are superficial and lack sensitivity to cultural difference. From Bucharest, his company travel with a guide – ‘a Tartar, with a green Turban’ (I, 39) called ‘Hadjee Emir Achmet’ (I, 40) –, whom he represents somewhat stereotypically as ‘preced[ing] us with the utmost gravity of countenance, smoking his short chibouque, or pipe, neither appearing to sympathize in our discomforts, or to partake in our joviality’ (I, 40). The turbaned, grave and smoking Turk is a contemporary metropolitan vignette, of course. Painters like Eugene Delacroix had already offered their European audiences Orientalist canapés with paintings such as *Turk Sitting smoking on a Couch* (1825) and *Portrait of a Turk in a Turban* (c. 1826).<sup>26</sup> These exemplary scenes portray

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22 Ibid., 15.

23 Ibid., 2.

24 ‘Here one begins to feel that one has left Europe and arrived among a different people; for at this point the manners and constume of the East first begin to show themselves’ (I, 30-1).

25 Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 148-150, and: Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ 447.

26 Compare Chapter 6 in: Frank Anderson Trapp, *The Attainment of Delacroix* (Baltimore, Md. & London: John Hopkins Press, 1971), 111-141.

decontextualised, inert and exoticised figures of an imaginary and imagined Orient, which 'was always already familiar as the object of representation – written, printed, painted, orally transmitted.'<sup>27</sup> But where is Frankland's place in this emerging Orientalist tableau? Like Delacroix, he presents us with an exotic appetiser which, while worlds away from Blount's admiring portrayal of the Ottomans, is not yet part of Orientalism's representational inventory in all its unvarnished cruelty.<sup>28</sup>

On the cusp between enlightened cosmopolitanism and Orientalist contortions, Frankland's journey and the resultant picture of the east are divided and ambivalent. Spending time in Ottoman lands does not render him particularly susceptible to cultural subtleties so that the country is often barren and his comprehension shallow. We do not know whether he had ever enjoyed eastern hospitality or seen Muslims pray before this journey, but he has to prove at any cost that the last word is his in cultural, and for that matter religious, affairs. Having 'coffee with the Turks' in 'a tolerably clean and spacious khan' (I, 48) after a long day on the road seems to be an excellent opportunity for the Captain to tempt members of his host culture in their own territory. Even though 'it were Ramazan', Frankland 'left a glass full [of punch] purposely on a little tabouret, which was placed near me; and in the morning the punch had disappeared, although the glass remained!' (I, 48). One of the five pillars of Islam, fasting during Ramadan is essential to the religious identity of Frankland's hosts.<sup>29</sup> But even outside the holy month the Qur'an does not permit 'intoxicants' of any kind.<sup>30</sup> Disregarding fundamental rules of hospi-

27 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 447.

28 Compare Said, *Orientalism*, 118: 'Popular Orientalism during the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth attained a vogue of considerable intensity.' However, in the course of the nineteenth century, writers, artists and politicians take up these stock representations and develop them into the self-referential and solidified network that Said has called modern Orientalism. Henri Regnault, for example, moulds terrifying distortions from his predecessors' material and thus helps to popularise the putative horrors of oriental despotism. His *Summary Execution under the Moorish Kings of Grenada* (1870) is a fully-fledged Orientalist contortion of Al-Andalus and its cultural production. Compare: Roger Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics: Art, Colonialism, and French North Africa, 1880-1930* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2003), 71.

29 The five pillars of Islam are the declaration of faith (shahadah), giving alms (zakah), prayer (salah), fasting during Ramadan (sawm) and the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

30 Sura no. 5, 90-1, Al-Ma'ida (The Feast): 'You who believe, intoxicants and gambling, idolatrous practices, and [divining with] arrows are repugnant acts – Satan's doing –

tality, Frankland has to 'prov[e] that he knew better than the locals'<sup>31</sup> and was able momentarily to suspend their religious zeal. And zealous they were indeed: 'During the whole of our journey to Constantinople, at sunrise and sunset, Hadjee Achmet and our surrudjees [postillions] never failed to perform their religious ceremonies, and to pray and sing to Allah' (I, 50). Apparently relating Islamic devotion, this passage suddenly tips over into an assertion of difference: 'Sometimes, by way of contrast, I would sing them a cavatina by Rossini, or an aria by Mozart, to their great astonishment' and 'was now and then tempted to laugh at their barbarous shouting and monotonous chanting' (I, 50). Frankland here pitches his own culture against his hosts' religious practices at the same time as he depends on their knowledge and guidance. His attitude is thus not only self-congratulatory and culturally solipsistic,<sup>32</sup> it also degrades the east to a screen for purposes of display, appealing to European audiences and turning the locals into mere supernumeraries.

Since these situations merely serve as backdrop against which he defines himself, Frankland's behaviour seems to be akin to A. W. Kinglake's orientalist crudities published only a few years later. In *Eothen* (1844) Kinglake resorts to sweeping generalisations and objectifies the Islamic world for his purposes of self-fashioning. Equipped with an English saddle and spurs,<sup>33</sup> Kinglake both celebrates his 'equestrian egotism'<sup>34</sup> and deliberately renounces Ottoman accoutrements. However, despite his sallies, Frankland relies on and employs local guides and resources throughout his journey and is not consistently dismissive or ironic in his account.<sup>35</sup> His judgments constantly oscillate between approval and disapproval, favourable representation and denigration, or admiration and derision and thus illustrate 'the tension between shared space and unshared values'<sup>36</sup> in the contact zone as well as the discursive changes within global civility.

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shun them so that you may prosper. With intoxicants and gambling, Satan seeks only to incite enmity and hatred among you, and to stop you remembering God and prayer. Will you not give them up?' *The Qur'an*, transl. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 76.

31 MacLean, *Looking East*, 155.

32 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 444.

33 *Ibid.*, 444.

34 *Ibid.*, 442.

35 *Ibid.*, 443.

36 Graham Huggan, *Interdisciplinary Measures: Literature and the Future of Postcolonial Studies* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 11.

For a moment, however, Frankland approximates Kinglake's ignorant solipsism when a postmaster in Burgas, Bulgaria, demands an extra charge for his services. Although the guide tries to dissuade the Captain from having his way – Hadjee Achmet 'pointed to his throat, and showed evident signs of terror and dismay' –, Frankland's 'wrath was kindled' (I, 74). His performance aims at proving both his intrepidity and superiority in matters of cross-cultural negotiation by threatening the postmaster 'to set fire to his khan if he did not immediately order out the horses:'

The Tartar and the Turks meanwhile looked on in utter amazement, expecting every moment to see the Hadjee postmaster draw his yatagan, and smite off the head of the presumptuous giaour, who had dared thus to beard the lions in his den. This demonstration of resolution on my part produced however, although tardily, the order for the horses, which were to carry us on, all the way to Constantinople (three days' journey). (I, 75)

Has an Englishman abroad ever confronted adversities more heroically and at the same time behaved more insensitively and ignorantly? Though efficient and only brief, this outbreak nevertheless bears witness to global civility's discursive transformations and concomitant changes in the representability of cultural alterity. Those who were once the 'Present Terrour of the World' or the only 'race of men' strong enough to 'beare downe the world before them'<sup>37</sup> can now be challenged in their own territory by the new imperial subjects from the British Isles.<sup>38</sup> But what is more, not only does Frankland's relation underscore this contemporary process, his language also corresponds to the geographical parameters of his journey: 'beard[ing] the lion in his den' is to be taken literally, given the Captains's proximity – 'three days' journey' – to the Ottoman capital.

Colourful self-assertions on foreign soil such as Frankland's seem to point to an Orientalist mindset, especially when they are spiced up with a good deal of ostentatious, but unverifiable, heroism. Such a perspective would, however, neglect his receptivity towards selected aspects of Ottoman imperial culture and his favourable representation of some of his hosts along the way, which are interwoven with moments of privileged-induced idiosyncrasies. Hence, a

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37 Richard, Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes, from The first beginning of that Nation to the rising of the Othoman Familie*, 5th ed., (London: Adam Islip, 1638), 1, and: Blount, *Voyage*, 97.

38 Compare: MacLean, *Looking East*, 174-198.

glance at the other side of the coin reveals the representational complexities of Frankland's oriental rambles at the same time as it sheds light on some persistent, though situationally contingent, features of global civility. Even-handed exchanges and comparative perspectives did not disappear with the rise of modern Orientalism and continued to exist even as Europe's expansive forces gathered pace.<sup>39</sup> The *Travels* preserve this shift in the form of Frankland's attraction and repulsion to the territories he criss-crossed in 1827-28, and thus allow us, in Said's words: 'to see complementarity and interdependence instead of isolated, venerated, or formalized experience that excludes and forbids the hybridizing intrusions of human history.'<sup>40</sup>

Frankland's everyday adventures and struggles on the road, then, defy straightforward categorisations and complicate Orientalism's historical trajectory considerably. His divided attitudes to Ottoman culture are neither expressive of a consistently Orientalist perspective nor do they sustain the division between European self and Turkish other in domineering terms throughout the account. His disparaging comments are inextricably intertwined with favourable representations, friendly encounters and new impressions, just as his pleasure and pain are 'deeply interfused.'<sup>41</sup> What readers find in Frankland's *Travels* is thus not 'an internal consistency and a highly articulated set of relationships'<sup>42</sup> which support, reproduce and normalise colonialist mentalities and their solidified cultural visions. Instead, Frankland's account presents a divided picture of the Levant which maps discursive transitions and bespeaks emerging rather than consolidated Orientalist structures and paradigms.

Whilst his tour may have lost the piquancy of earlier journeys in the east, it nevertheless adds important pieces of knowledge to the west's archives. Reenactive by nature, oriental voyages necessarily follow in the footsteps of those who went before.<sup>43</sup> But since there is no repetition without differences, the Ottoman Empire's contemporary reforms testify to both its efforts at remaining an important player in international diplomacy and a general will-

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39 Raymond Williams's distinction between dominant, residual and emerging cultural features is pertinent here. Compare: 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory,' in Vincent B. Leitch et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Norton, 2010), 1420-1437.

40 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), 115.

41 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 445.

42 Said, *Orientalism*, 22.

43 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 447.



ingness to break open encrusted structures.<sup>44</sup> The abolition of the Janissaries was the most decisive domestic measure at a time when the empire had to confront internal as well as external pressures, and observers like Frankland were fully aware of possible ramifications of Mahmoud's move. Not far into Ottoman territory, he encounters some of the new troops and complies with their wish to exercise them. Faced with their aptitude, Frankland recalls past greatness 'for should the Turks once take cheerfully to the new system of organization, Europe will find them more formidable than she had ever thought them to be' (I, 46). In the thick of military exercise, he lacks the time to reflect on the soldiers' putative barbarity or to indulge his rather abstract affinities to Greek antiquity. In lieu of condemnation of all things Ottoman, he presents his readers with a culturally and historically comparative perspective that allows for change, adaptation and eventually resurgence. In this situation, Frankland is very close to Blount's praise of the Ottoman army and does not judge rashly. Vis-à-vis Europe's others, his bloated sense of self collapses and global civility's cracks are glossed over by showers of praise. Accordingly, the seemingly paradoxical juxtaposition in his account of favourable instances of Ottoman life with indications of decay, cross-cultural ridicule and abstract resentfulness illuminates both the tension-ridden Levant he experiences and the large-scale changes from all-encompassing civility to the hegemonic structures of modern Orientalism.

Hence, not all is 'filth and squalor' (I, 32) in the East, nor are all Turks impersonations of oriental despotism. The Captain's breakfast 'in a clean Bulgarian cottage', in which '[t]he poor people themselves, humble and obliging, give you readily all they have' (I, 52), balances his disparaging comments upon entering the Ottoman realm in Romania. By the same token, the inclusion of the helpful inhabitants of 'the village of Emirs' (I, 62) qualifies his breaches of decorum in some of the khans he and his party pass through. Ground to a halt by an overflowing river, Frankland's party is supported by the villagers jumping into the water and leading the horses to the opposite bank:

I was much astonished and pleased with the gallantry and alacrity with which these fellows rendered us so important a service; for indeed I think that without their assistance the horses could not have kept their footing,

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44 Carter V. Findley, 'The Foundation of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry: The Beginnings of Bureaucratic Reform under Selim III and Mahmud II,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3: 4 (Oct., 1972), 388-416.

and would most probably have been washed away down the stream. Hadjee Emir Achmet paid them vey liberally [...]. (I, 62)

Having bought local knowledge finally pays off in this extreme situation and encourages cross-cultural admiration in a fashion similar to Abbott's journey across the Syrian Desert. But whilst Abbott refutes charges of treachery against his Arab hosts and is consistently civil, Frankland's civility is only situational. However, faced with the villagers' helpfulness, he is pleasantly surprised. But not only does he express his astonishment, he also represents the men as subjects in their own right without either inflating his own intrepidity or imposing his culturally consolidated sense of self.

Frankland's brief sojourn into Ottoman military exercise and his discursive reciprocation after collectively braving fluvial dangers are not isolated exceptions to otherwise dominant Orientalist structures and paradigms. They are, rather, the favourable counterpoise to his derisive moments and recurrently complicate the relationship between European self and extra-European other. But what is more, these external scenes are being mirrored by interludes of hospitable domesticity, in which Frankland and his guide coexist counterfactually in a cosmopolitan cross-cultural setting. Immediately before reaching Istanbul

we halted for the night, at a very neat and clean café, kept by a civil Greek; but did not find the room they assigned us to sleep in, much better or sweeter than the usual average of Turkish khans. Here we supped heartily with our Tartar upon pillau, or, as the Turks call it, pilaff, and remained until half past two in the following morning. (I, 84)

Despite the unchanged quality of accommodation, Frankland neither complains nor throws a tantrum in this passage. In the absence of female charms, feasting Turks or greedy postmasters he embraces the opportunity of participating in this scene of hospitality. The oriental model of global civility, which was initiated by Blount and emphatically endorsed by Abbott, had thus not vanished in Frankland's day and age and could still engender even-handed exchanges. However, discursive transformations and political changes, as well as their complex interrelationships, render mutually-improving cross-cultural traffic increasingly dependent on situational contingencies and reveal ambivalences that earlier travellers were not confronted with. Imperial grandeur, military power and samples of eastern hospitality proved both daunting and overwhelming, which is why Blount and Abbott represented

their others as civil peoples. For Frankland, this representational consistency is hard to achieve given the complex political, historical and epistemic shifts of his time. The Ottoman capital is, however, a very special chapter in this story.

### In Istanbul: Imperial Grandeur or Ottoman Decay?

After many ordeals, adventures and rare pleasures all compressed into a little less than three weeks on the road, Frankland's party reach Istanbul on the 11th April 1827. The view from afar proves both singular and overwhelming for him at the same time as it reminds us of the reenactive character of oriental travels: 'No pilgrim ever hailed the towers of the Holy City with greater delight than did I, sinner as I am, the minarets of Constantinople' (I, 89). Even though Englishmen looking east had ample opportunity to prepare themselves for the Ottoman capital by 'study[ing] the writings, prints and paintings put on the market by their predecessors,'<sup>45</sup> actually experiencing the city's panoramic views overpowered many of them and frequently resulted in the evocation of inexpressibility topoi.<sup>46</sup> However, the availability of information and the city's popularity notwithstanding, the experiences of travellers did by no means conform to pre-established homogenous patterns. Blount, for example, enthusiastically reports that 'of all places, that I ever beheld, [it] is the most *apt*, to command the world,' since 'for *strength*, *plentie*, and *commoditie*, no place can equall it.'<sup>47</sup> By contrast, William Lithgow, another seventeenth century traveller, is more reserved and opens up a 'contrast between the hallucinatory beauty of Istanbul's exterior and its deeply disappointing interior.'<sup>48</sup>

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45 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 135; Landry's notion of 'perpetual re-enactment' is also relevant in this context: 'Saddle Time,' p.447

46 Even as an avid draughtsman, Frankland fails to convey the 'magnificent view of Constantinople' on one of his excursions: 'I endeavoured to make a sketch of this beautiful view; but I quite despair of giving anything like a true picture of the scene, either by the *trait de plume* or the *coup de crayon*' (I, 151).

47 Blount, *Voyage*, 25/26.

48 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 151; Lithgow, who was in Constantinople in 1610-11, writes: 'Truly I may say of Constantinople, as I said once of the world, in the Lamentado of my second Pilgrimage: "A painted Whoore, the maske of deadly sin/ Sweet faire without, and stinking foule within."' See: William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse of The Rare Adventures & Painefull Peregrinations of long Nineteene Yeares Travayles from Scotland to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affrica* (Glasgow: James MacLehose, 1906), 124.

Like Lithgow, Frankland describes outward beauty that gives way to wretchedness as soon as he ‘reached the dirty and offensive streets of *the celebrated Pera* [the Frank district]’ (I, 91). Just as the rest of his journey, his experience of Istanbul is divided between imperial grandeur on the one hand and signs of Ottoman decay on the other. But given both the city’s rich history and centrality in the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, his verdicts here are often more benign than in either the Balkans or the Levantine provinces on his return journey. And like Blount before him, he represents the city as commercial hub that is truly global in nature when he gives us a glimpse of ‘the quays crowded with shipping of all nations’ (I, 154). In such a place, the traveller’s impressions are manifold, of course, and the Ottoman Empire’s ethno-religious diversity is among the first features Frankland records: ‘[H]ow could I convey any idea of the grouping of the splendid Orientals among whom I found myself?’<sup>49</sup> (I, 94-5). Admiration for the empire’s flexibility in creating a coherent whole out of many disparate communities is indeed a transhistorical element in travellers’ accounts and Frankland is no exception. Confronted with a plethora of different attires in the bustling city, he comparatively describes familiar styles of clothing as ‘the mean-looking costume of Europe’ (I, 96). It seems that despite his philhellenic tendencies, Frankland is ready to be favourably impressed by selected aspects of Ottoman culture and not all is ‘dark and filthy’ (I, 91) within the city’s bounds.

Three days after his arrival, Frankland and a fellow Englishman – ‘Mr. Vane, (now Lord Henry Vane,) son of Lord Darlington’ (I, 102) – set out to explore Istanbul together. On this and successive trips they ‘met [...] with no incivility from the men, who generally took no notice of us’ (I, 110). However, from behind their windows some Ottoman females voice their disapproval of the two upper-class travellers perambulating their city (I, 110), and thus assert a minimum of both agency and subjectivity vis-à-vis those whose gaze failed to penetrate their veils and often idealisingly confined them to the

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49 ‘It is easier to conceive than to describe the feelings with which I contemplated the lovely scenery before me. I now indeed felt that I was amply repaid for the fatigue and anxiety incident to such a journey as I had just performed. I longed for the pencil of the artist and the pen of the poet, to enable me to give some faint picture to my friends at home, of those sensations which, delightful as they were, almost overpowered me, and to which I knew not how to give a sufficient vent. Again, how could I convey any idea of the grouping the splendid orientals among whom I found myself? (I, 94-5).

most mysterious of oriental spaces, i.e. the harem. As this episode suggests, cultural traffic between English travellers and Ottoman subjects was indeed class- as well as gender-specific on both sides of the contact zone. Not only did male European travellers greatly outnumber female ones, they also frequently judged the Ottoman capital and its dazzling cultural fabric according to their own socio-economic backgrounds and gender-specific values.<sup>50</sup> In so doing, many of them centred their descriptions on aspects that seemed to match familiar circumstances at home most closely or, on the other hand, reproduced their prejudices, expectations and desires when they came close to Istanbul's population, which was gendered differently.<sup>51</sup>

One of the few occasions that provided travellers with first-hand experiences of the capital's social life were Ottoman outdoor recreations. Intricate and difficult to explore, yet out in the open, they offered alluring and contrastive images to Istanbul's seemingly monotonous urban streets and their crowds.<sup>52</sup> But many European travellers across the centuries were strictly limited in comprehending 'the multi-ethnic and essentially urban populace of the capital.'<sup>53</sup> Their 'images indicate a European construction of Ottoman reality'<sup>54</sup> which they started compiling as soon as the Turks set out to picnic either in one of the numerous cemeteries or along Istanbul's waterways. When the city's inhabitants gather 'in groups, under the deep shadows of the cypresses', Frankland is there to observe them:

The Turks, although barbarous, are remarkable for their tenderness to their females and their offspring; and while they visit infidelity and disobedience with death, they are generally kind and caressing to the faithful wife and the dutiful child. (I, 123)

Like others before and after him, he too indulged in people-watching. Barbaric and tender, cruel and caressing, Istanbul's population proved too fascinating for our naval officer to be omitted in favour of political enquiries or scenic beauty. But his description of Ottoman sociality is full of commonplaces and decontextualized superficialities indicating an abstract desire to

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50 Compare Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 224, 229, 247 and 345.

51 Henry Blount is a notable exception to this pattern. Compare his *Voyage* and chapter two in this study.

52 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 209.

53 *Ibid.*, 211.

54 *Ibid.*, 210.

see one's flowery notions of the Orient confirmed. And he frequently peppers this perspective on his host culture with widely circulated stereotypes – for example, when he comments on 'the indolent life and the languid customs of the East' (98) or reiterates popular charges of the Turks' 'cruelty' (I, 106) –, which explains the resultant polarity of Europe's others in his works. Confronted with an ethno-religiously diverse metropolis, in which 'urban and rural elements co-existed',<sup>55</sup> Frankland, and indeed many other western travellers, found Istanbul difficult to represent. Resorting to clichés while relating the city's variegated features, as well as his frequent fluctuation between familiarity and otherness, may hence be described as intercultural coping-mechanism enabling Frankland to come to grips with the city's rich texture.

Once firmly connected to the English community, Frankland nonetheless cherishes the opportunity to contribute his idiosyncratic share to western knowledge of the Ottoman capital. Always intrepid and fearless, he rejects the British embassy's offer to furnish him with guards: 'I am averse to going about with an armed attendant, as this shows a suspicious and unconfiding disposition, and cannot be at all flattering to the Turks' (I, 138-9). But Frankland being Frankland, he immediately qualifies this seemingly unconditional stance of cross-cultural openness: 'I always, however, in my solitary rambles, carried my pocket-pistols, as the "ultima ratio" in the event of my personal safety being compromised' (I, 139). In so doing, he grants himself privileges that Istanbul's inhabitants no longer enjoyed because 'the Sultan was determined to protect Franks in the most effectual manner [...] by disarming the populace of the capital' (I, 143). These remarks on personal safety are indicative of his limited receptivity to cultural difference and translate well to the depth of his observations: instead of assessing the disarmament of the capital within a framework of general security, in Frankland's account it solely serves western interests and benefits the Franks first and foremost. Even though he is keen on experiencing Ottoman life, his 'untrained European eye',<sup>56</sup> together with a penchant for witnessing colourful oriental scenes, curtails his ability to do so. Hence, we might say that even in times of institutional change and political tension first-hand experiences of alterity were the best antidote to ideological contortions, such as Frankland's Philhellenism. However, criss-crossing Ottoman dominions did not necessarily heighten his sensitivity to

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55 *Ibid.*, 138.

56 *Ibid.*, 210.

their specificities, nor did it lead to great observational depth when he came face to face with their representatives.

In this regard, Frankland's adventures differ decisively from both Blount and Abbott's journeys. Unlike his predecessors, he frequently dives into the thick of Ottoman life together with other Englishmen, and this company creates an extended personal space at the same time as it contains Frankland's contact with Istanbul's population. Rather than exposing himself directly to the imperial centre's bustling life, Frankland chooses limited interaction at this point of his journey and is thus unable to develop the cross-cultural empathy required for unlearning his emergent Orientalist mind-set.<sup>57</sup> Accordingly, in most instances, aesthetic features of oriental splendour predominate over informational value as is the case when he 'saw the Sultan go by in immense state in his beautiful galley':

I cannot attempt to describe this procession, it shot so rapidly past us, and was surrounded with so much state and splendour, that the dazzled imagination could not comprehend its individual features, but only seize the general effect. [...] It was a lovely scene. (I, 171-2)

Whilst the Captain is clearly aware of the conditions and limits of visual perception, he emphasises the situation's grandeur and splendour. Despite his strictly political motivations at the outset, he repeatedly frames favourable aspects of Ottoman life in primarily aesthetic terms that are too general to be informative. These raptures sometimes lead to unusually temperate verdicts that emphasise cultural commonalities rather than differences:

Indeed, I am sure that if we knew the language of this interesting people, and would try to become acquainted with them, we should find them more traitables and civilized than we are apt to imagine. (I, 173)

Unfortunately, however, such moderate judgments and comparative perspectives are situationally contingent in Frankland's *Travels*. We find them when either Ottoman splendour inescapably overwhelms him or he admires Istanbul's beauty spread out before his eyes.

In order to satisfy his appetite for picturesque views, Frankland joins English expatriates in their pastimes, of which excursions were an integral constituent. He tells us how he spent some 'delightful days' among his 'countrymen in one of the most interesting quarters of the globe' (I, 177). When the

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57 Landry, 'Saddle Time,' 451.

Captain recounts these trips he apparently adopts comparative viewpoints and seems to evince his more benign cosmopolitan self:

I shall not attempt to describe the outward beauties of the city of Constantinople. [...] I should utterly fail in the endeavour to pourtray such various and glorious features; nor can I compare it with any thing I have yet seen either in Europe or America. (I, 103)

As naval officer, he has presumably seen many ports and cities but the Ottoman capital's beauty clearly stands out. Its panoramic attraction rests not merely on its otherness as both imperial and Islamic metropolis, but on the singular convergence and amalgamation of rural and urban elements within its bounds.<sup>58</sup> Away from both 'narrow and offensive streets' and the crowds frequenting them, Frankland's description carries favourable connotations but also sheds light on the limits of global civility in his account, which are clearly linked to his limited talent as a writer. Whilst Istanbul is represented as overpoweringly beautiful in this passage, Frankland's description is far removed from the city's human elements. As such, his vision is purely aesthetic and undercuts its own inclusiveness at the same time as he constitutes his command and authority over the scene on the basis of the other's absence.<sup>59</sup>

Frequently noted by travellers before and after Frankland,<sup>60</sup> these panoramic scenes lead us back to the reenactive quality of Middle Eastern travel. On a sojourn to 'the woods of Belgrade' (127), during which he sees beautiful 'valleys' and 'ravines' (I, 128), the Captain treads in the footsteps of one of the most famous English travellers in the Ottoman Empire: 'We visited the former abode of the charming and lively Lady M. W. Montague, now, alas! no longer inhabited by the Muses and the Graces, but by a herd of goats' (I, 128). Immensely popular, Lady Mary's *Turkish Embassy Letters* (posthumously published in 1763) provided ground-breaking insights into the private lives of Ottoman women for the first time. However, travelling more than a century after her, Frankland cannot find 'the Muses and Graces' he might have hoped to detect in the famous writer's home, but is instead forcefully reminded of both eastern decay and filth by the scene before him. This situation mirrors

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58 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 138-9.

59 Edmond, Rod, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 21.

60 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 138-9.



larger patterns in his account, in which overwhelming beauty, imperial greatness and political mutability coexist and are intertwined with impressions of bygone glory, indicators of decay and institutional stasis. Hence, the difference between the capital's outward attraction and its filthy and inscrutable interior – which is exemplified in Frankland's case by 'the contrast between these scenes [of panoramic beauty] and the dirt and meanness of [his] abode' (I, 125), which he tries to shun by going on excursions – encroaches upon the moments of aesthetic contemplation so dear to him.

However, scenic beauty largely retains its untarnished purity for him for the rest of his time in Istanbul. And most evenings were pleasantly filled with male English conviviality (I, 155), thus acting as counterpoise to dirty streets and their crowds. But it is specifically his military expertise that widens the gulf between European self and Ottoman other when he spends his mornings 'looking at the troops and ships' (I, 155). His eye may be untrained in deciphering social intricacies of Ottoman society, but we may assume some reliability in military, and especially naval, matters. Whereas Blount experienced a well-organised and insurmountable empire in the seventeenth century, Frankland's ambivalent representations of the Ottomans are expressive of both their crumbling vigour and the ascendancy of European powers, especially Britain, France and Russia (I, 192). In the capital he reiterates earlier observations on the new troops and this is what he has to say about Mahmoud's soldiers:

They are just now very contemptible troops, consisting almost entirely of boys, with a sprinkling of very old men to discipline them; they are, to use the French term, 'entre loup et chien,' having lost the elan and energy of their old system, and not yet attained the advantages of European tactics. Let Europe, however, beware of them; for they display an aptitude for martial exercises, which, if once properly applied by their government, and placed under the restraints of discipline, will render them again formidable to the nations of the West. (I, 117)

Ottoman defeats and accompanying retreats, as well as Western incursions into the Islamic world, such as Napoleon's mission in Egypt, had lasting effects on the balance of power between Europe and its Ottoman neighbours. Aware of these shifts and Ottoman efforts at reform, Frankland not only comments on what he saw, but also weaves his observations into larger historical frameworks. Bygone power and contemporary stagnation notwithstanding,

he reckons the Ottomans could, if they continue rigorously to adapt to political exigencies, rise again and become 'formidable' adversaries once more.

However, the language in this passage evinces greater European self-confidence than in previous centuries. Although Frankland's assessment of the new troops potentially allows for an Ottoman comeback, his use of expressions such as 'advantages of European tactics' and 'nations of the West', as well as his advocacy of 'discipline,' are indicative of the changed, and changing, dynamics between English self and Ottoman other. The empire's contemporary military apparatus seems to have been in a rather poor condition owing to Mahmoud's recent political and military purges and connoisseurs like Frankland were clearly aware of that. Commenting on 'the imposing-looking Ottoman fleet', our naval expert finds, on closer inspection, 'vessels, the hulls of which are in such a state, that I should think few Europeans would deem them sea-worthy' (I, 108). And what is more, not only are the Sultan's ships a shadow of their glorious past, the Ottoman seamen appear to be in a condition akin to their vessels – a problem that, according to Frankland, can be solved by 'the energy of the bastinado, which, no doubt, is liberally applied throughout the squadron' (I, 109). Even though he had never been aboard an imperial ship, he resorts to hearsay when it comes to judging the crews' discipline. That he can do so authoritatively on daytrips in the Ottoman capital in particular, and in his account in general, points to the increasingly ambivalent relationship between European travellers, especially those with a military eye, and the Ottoman territories they traverse.

## 2. Citationality and Nascent Orientalism

After his return to England, Frankland inserted a section on 'Remarks and Notes' (I, 179-219) dated 'London, Dec. 1828' into his *Travels*. Here, he retrospectively comments on the Ottoman Empire by presenting a collage of received wisdom as well as quotations gleaned from other sources on his subject. No longer in transit and equipped with 'good authority within [his] reach to refer to' (I, 179), he believes that retrospective armchair travel in a well-stocked library is conducive to sober judgments: '[N]ow that I am no longer upon the wing from one scene to another, nor under the continual excitement of constant variety, together with its accompanying fatigue, I have abundant leisure to write' (I, 179). However, safely lodged in the comforts at home, Frankland's idiosyncratic account of greatness and degeneration drawn up en route sud-

denly gives way to an untimely obituary. Vis-à-vis 'the increasing power, moral and physical, of all the nations around it' the Ottoman Empire

remains nearly in the same condition as it did when first it forced its way into Europe, with this only difference, that it has long ceased by its warlike energies to terrify and to overcome the nations of the West. (I, 189)

His assertive employment of the term 'the West' evokes its opposite and is suggestive of the emergence of a dichotomously structured epistemological grid. In this logic, the East is stagnant, if not regressive, and displays everything the West is not through 'the handy figure of inversion' which translates cultural difference into 'anti-sameness'.<sup>61</sup> Although Mahmoud's difference ('the supposed Barbarian Emperor'[I, 2]) and his capability of reform initially prompted Frankland to travel east, his 'Remarks and Notes' bespeak Orientalist prejudices rather than cross-cultural curiosity. Adding that there is 'no instance in history of the regeneration of such a people as this' (I, 189), Frankland's frame of reference not only subjects the complexities of contemporary Ottoman history to simplistic degeneration narratives,<sup>62</sup> it also re-

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61 Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, transl. by Janet Lloyd (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 212-13.

62 The association of the Ottomans with degeneration is not new. Whilst favourable accounts of Ottoman splendour, grandeur and military power circulated in Europe throughout the early modern period, they were counterbalanced by less favourable reports, in which charges of cruelty, stagnation or even degeneration served as coping mechanisms for Western intellectuals to come to grips with the Eastern empire. As early as 1668, long before the decisive victory of Christian forces over the Ottomans at Vienna in 1683, Paul Rycout, secretary to the English ambassador at the Sublime Porte, detected omnipresent signs of decay: 'But he that takes a view of the *Ottoman* Armies, as described in various Histories, renowned for their Chivalry and Discipline in the times of *Sultan, Selim*, or *Solyman* the magnificent, and designs thence to extract a draught, or Copy for his present speculation, will find himself much at a loss in framing true conjectures of the puissance of the Turkes, or the Rules of their Government, by comparison of former times with this present age. For that ancient sublimity and comely Majesty in the Emperor is much abated; the forces by Land decayed, and the Maritime power by ill success and unskilful and slothful Seamen, reduced to an inconsiderable condition; the countries are dispeopled and the Royal Revenue abated; nothing remains of those plenteous stores and provisions of War, nor that Regiment and Discipline continued in Peace, none of that ancient observation of their Laws and Religion, not that love and respect to the Militia, which is now become degenerate, soft, and effeminate; nor is the *Ottoman* Court so prone to remunerate the services and

duces the Sultan's realms to a disposable political quantity. Hence, in this part of his *Travels*, Frankland takes global civility beyond its discursive breaking point and his story tips over into the projected demise of the Ottoman state.

### Retrospective Glances at the Ottomans: Emerging Citationality

For centuries, global civility as practiced by Westerners among the Ottomans contained respect for the empire's power and efficiency at the same time as it allowed for cultural cross-fertilisation. After the Ottomans had ceased to threaten Europe with their military capabilities,<sup>65</sup> the so-called Orient became a screen onto which Enlightenment thinkers could project their desires and artistic yearnings. 'Ex Oriente Lux' – 'Light from the East'<sup>64</sup> – was a popular contemporary motto and inspired a good deal of the cultural production of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>65</sup> However, according to Edward Said, the late eighteenth century also marks the onset of modern Orientalism, a far-reaching and drastic shift in Europe's relations with the Islamic world brought about by Napoleon's mission in Egypt.<sup>66</sup> It gave rise to 'a powerful system of citationality'<sup>67</sup> that has provided the west with an authoritative toolkit to speak for and about the east in ways completely divorced from its subject-matter. The result is a fully-fledged and self-referential corpus of tropes, rhetorical strategies and (mis-)representations that exerts its domineering influence on the basis of 'flexible *positional* superiority.'<sup>68</sup>

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exalt the interest of the Cavalry, or maintain the reputation of the Janizaries. In brief there are no reliques of ancient justice, or generosity of discreet Government, or Obedience to it, or Courtesie or Concord, of Valour or Counsel, nor yet Confidence, Friendship, or generous Fidelity.' Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London: John Starkey and Henry Brome, 1668), 169-70.

- 63 After the second siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottomans began withdrawing forces from their European provinces, especially since the so-called Holy League constantly increased its pressure on the empire's resources.
- 64 Juergen Osterhammel describes this perspective *ex negativo* in: *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1998), 308-9
- 65 *Pars pro toto*, I would like to mention Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* (1779), Mozart's *Abduction from Seraglio* (1781), Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) and Goethe's *West-Eastern Divan* (1819).
- 66 Said, *Orientalism*, 3 and 87.
- 67 Gerald MacLean, 'Strolling in Syria with William Biddulph,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 415-439, here: 433.
- 68 Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

In the preface to his *History of British India* (orig. publ. in 1818), James Mill explicates the inception of citationality precipitated by the detached, and thus seemingly objective, scholar. Solely based on the study of representations, Mill's comprehensive work illuminates the internal dynamics of Orientalism:

Whatever is worth seeing or hearing in India, can be expressed in writing. As soon as everything is expressed in writing, a man who is duly qualified may obtain more knowledge of India in one year in his closet in England, than he could obtain during the course of the longest life, by the use of his eyes and ears in India.<sup>69</sup>

Obviating sensory contact with India is key in Mill's rationale and makes possible the systematisation of its culture, which, in turn, renders it manageable for other scholars. But '[e]xtracting the precious ore from a great mine of rude historical materials'<sup>70</sup> is always bound up with the hegemonic patterns underlying the observer's society. It involves both asymmetrical cultural translations and complex transitions from orality to literacy, especially when these histories of extra-European peoples are written for metropolitan audiences. According to Said, Mill's influence 'on British rule in the Orient (and India particularly) was considerable,'<sup>71</sup> illustrating the ways in which consolidated knowledge-power bases evolve from detached research in the 'closet.' By contrast, Javed Majeed interprets the *History* 'as a text whose contradictions are indicative of a body of thought struggling to articulate itself'<sup>72</sup> in contemporary ideological battles between 'conservatism and utilitarianism.'<sup>73</sup> In his book *Ungoverned Imaginings* (1992) he contends that 'current approaches to "colonialist discourse" are misguided when they deal with texts such as this,'<sup>74</sup> emphasising that 'in using British India as a testing ground for utilitarianism, it was fashioning a critique of British society itself.'<sup>75</sup> Whilst for those involved in the intellectual and political debates at the time there may have been a self-reflexive element in Mill's *History*, its influence and reception history came to embody 'a vigorous reason shaping the matter of the world according to its

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69 James Mill, *The History of British India*, Vol. I. (London: James Madden, 1858), 23.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 23

71 Said, *Orientalism*, 214.

72 Javed Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's The History of British India and Orientalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 4.

73 *Ibid.*, 2.

74 *Ibid.*, 3.

75 *Ibid.*, 128.

own dictates.<sup>76</sup> When such positions are socially, culturally and institutionally reproduced and normalised, they become dominant epistemological grids by incorporating increasing numbers of texts, paintings and other artefacts. Within this framework, armchair archaeology and travel tell us more about the Orient's past and present than travellers were able to learn by actually going there. As a consequence, scholars, politicians and colonial administrators can take decisions without having to experience a given geo-physical unit, in this case the Orient, in sensory or personal fashion.

Frankland's *Travels* is crucial in this context, since it helps us to understand Orientalism's emergence as citational system as well as its historical trajectory. The Captain initially went to Istanbul in order to see for himself whether Mahmoud was the Ottoman Peter. His eye-witness account and personal experiences notwithstanding, after his return to London he finds it necessary to furnish his readers with 'some authentic information, in the shape of notes and extracts, from an author whom I have consulted since the compilation of the few rough and ill-composed pages of my Journal' (I, 180). But what is more compelling than either personally visiting the Ottoman Empire or relating first-hand experiences of it? From Frankland's point of view, Comte Andréossy's *Constantinople et le Bosphore de Thrace* (1828) seems to have been more 'authentic', instructive and interesting than what he had seen in the East. He quotes extensively from Andréossy's book, and in so doing introduces a representational level divorced from his actual experience into his account. The resultant intratextual tension between his impressions recorded along the way and his retrospective additions mirrors the one between the Islamic world's diverse culture and the west's reductive representations of it.

Andréossy was crucially involved in this complex relationship from the late eighteenth century onwards: after having accompanied Napoleon on his mission in Egypt and subsequently contributing to several works on that country, the Comte served as France's ambassador to the Sublime Porte from 1812 to 1814.<sup>77</sup> Whilst his German translator Johann Adam Bergk praises the breadth and depth of Andréossy's knowledge of all things Ottoman, he fundamentally

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76 *Ibid.*, 135.

77 Antoine-Francois Andreossy, *Constantinople et le Bosphore de Thrace: pendant les années 1812, 1813 et 1814 et pendant l'année 1826* (Paris: 1828); A German translation was published in the same year: *Konstantinopel und der Bosporus von Thrazien in den Jahren 1812, 1813, 1814 und 1826*, aus dem Franzoesischen mit Anmerkungen Uebersetzt von Dr Bergk (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Glueck, 1828), 6-7 and 5.

disagrees with his verdicts: 'Andréossy has represented the Turks and their Sultan Mahmoud II in a much more favourable light than both time and history show them.'<sup>78</sup> Characterising the Turks as 'indolent, superstitious, full of prejudices and intolerant,'<sup>79</sup> Bergk not only resorts to generally accepted stereotypes, he also disregards the Comte's expert knowledge both derived from living among the Ottomans and sustained through continued contacts with the French embassy in Istanbul.<sup>80</sup> Despite emphasising that Andréossy's role enabled him to observe Ottoman life and government in some detail, Bergk, a literary gentlemen and translator, assumes authority on a subject that he was only acquainted with through texts. This is citationality in full armour and is in keeping with Mill's insistence on the detached, and seemingly more objective, study of cultural difference from within the 'closet'.

Frankland adopts a similar stance in his 'Remarks and Notes' by selectively and strategically quoting from Andréossy's work in order to lend retrospective colour and weight to his report. In so doing, he exacerbates the divided and ambivalent representations of the Ottomans in his account at the same time as he forgets his fascination with selected aspects of their culture. The lack of personal connections with the Ottoman world after his return to England, as well as his unquestioned praise of the Greeks, explains the radical disparity between the benign parts of his impressions recorded along the way and his unvarnished onslaught in the 'Remarks.' Here, the Ottoman world is comparable to 'Europe in the darker ages' and praise for the construction of aqueducts 'belongs not to the Turks, but to the ancient Greeks' (I, 183). Fond of antiquity, Frankland tries to discover the infrastructure behind Istanbul's water supply but can only find one of 'the great cisterns of Constantinople' (I, 210). Since this subject buttresses his fierce Philhellenism, he is eager to include it in his account; but without being able to detect all the cisterns Andréossy mentions, Frankland simply resorts to quoting from the Frenchman's book: 'I shall merely note the three first that he describes, as being sufficient for my purpose' (I, 210). The quoted passages gloss over his archaeological shortcomings and put him in a position of putative authority over the territories he had traversed:

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78 Andréossy, *Konstantinopel und der Bosporus von Thrazien*, p. 5 [my translation].

79 *Ibid.*, 32, note no. 1 [my translation].

80 *Ibid.*, 9.

The traveller will not fail to observe, that these great national works were raised, not by the Turks, but by the Greeks; and that the barbarians (although in some instances they have had the good sense to follow up the ancient system of conducting water to the capital,) have in general let these magnificent monuments of a polite age and people fall into ruin [...]. (I, 213)

Frankland conjures up images of omnipresent decay under the auspices of Islam and the Ottomans, thereby precluding cultural cross-fertilisation as well as unravelling global civility. Yet his drastic judgment in this passage is based not on personal experience but on episodes gleaned from the Comte's text. Here, citationality engenders authority and is put to political ends in this case. But most importantly, this passage also demonstrates how discursive systems evolve through the incorporation of apparently authoritative material and then develop into dominant paradigms, the textual constituents of which refer to each other rather than their subject-matter. Frankland's account illuminates this complex socio-cultural process for what Said has called modern Orientalism at the same time as it contributes to its development.

Writing with usurped authority on the remains of an infrastructure one fails to detect is one thing; commenting on Ottoman women is another, much more controversial, undertaking. But Frankland, who 'had a keen eye for prettiness in a girl'<sup>81</sup>, tries his hand in this field, too. In keeping with the overall pattern of his account, his representations of Ottoman women are divided and indicate his penchant for witnessing colourful oriental scenes. Because of his 'fond[ness] for sketching Turkish ladies'<sup>82</sup> he had some face to face encounters with them, which he wilfully ignores in his 'Remarks and Notes' in favour of Andréossy's limited insights on the fair sex. Hence, once again textual evidence divorced from his experiences takes precedence over what he saw, felt and recorded in Ottoman lands and largely effaces his selective civility towards the Turks.

During his stay in Istanbul, however, Frankland is a keen observer of women and reflects on the propriety of conversing with them, 'knowing that it is not customary in the East to speak to females in public' (I, 140). Shortly after his arrival, he might still have entertained some hopes of getting access to spaces normally closed to (male) outsiders and is unusually self-critical when he writes that Ottoman women are 'by no means the encaged and watched

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81 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 374.

82 *Ibid.*



captives which we Europeans are apt to imagine them' (I, 146). Later on, he is more realistic and outlines the gender-specific determinants governing the exploration of the 'domestic life' of the Ottomans:

[O]f this we must for ever remain in ignorance: for such is the inviolable sanctity of the harem, and such the mystery that envelopes all that passes within its walls, that no traveller, with the exception of Lady M. W. Montague and Lady Hester Stanhope, has had opportunities of exploring its recesses, and becoming acquainted with the life and manners of its inmates. In short, all that we see of the Turks is their out-of-door existence. (I, 181)

Socially determined and culturally relative spaces do not meet with Frankland's disapproval here and his assessment is clearly aware of its own limitations. In this case, he neither resorts to hearsay nor exploits widely circulated stereotypes, but demonstrates that encounters with Ottoman society and its representatives could lead to balanced judgments as long as political agendas had no role to play in his adventures.

In the absence of Istanbul's attractions and repulsions both his benign cosmopolitan self and the experiential treasures accumulated in the Ottoman realm vanish into thin air. In the passages added after his journey proper, his section on 'Women in Turkey' (I, 196-98) is devoid of any personal insights and solely consists of quotations and observations from Andréossy's account. Whilst these are comprehensive, they are not his own: incorporating them thus creates a representational level that is divorced from Frankland's experience at the same time as it allows him to exploit the content of the Comte's book to disenfranchise the Ottomans discursively. The Captain's way of representing Ottoman women in the 'Remarks and Notes', which he considers more authoritative than the narrative passages of his *Travels*, thus contributes to the genesis of a consolidated knowledge-power base from which armchair travellers, politicians and colonial authorities can judge the Islamic world in Britain' imperial nineteenth century.

By contrast, Andréossy's judgments are much more benign than Frankland's and he respects the Ottoman Empire as political entity in its own right. In the introduction to his book, he dispels popular myths about the Ottomans and views their civilisation comparatively: 'It would be unjust to believe that the Turks belong to the group of people commonly called barbarians; one misjudges them by either looking at them only from afar or evaluating them ac-

ording to one's own standards.<sup>83</sup> And Unlike Frankland, he does not idealise Greek culture for its past glory but explains Ottoman models of empire-building by including subject peoples into clearly-defined hierarchies: 'When the Turks destroyed the Greek Empire they spared its inhabitants, preserved them and assigned them the second rank.'<sup>84</sup> Never would the Ottomans have achieved glory and prosperity in a long-lasting empire, he goes on, had haphazard despotism been the guiding principle of their governments.<sup>85</sup>

These remarks, then, illustrate how Frankland's ideological agenda bent available knowledge to political exigencies. Unbalanced by face-to-face encounters with the Ottomans, his fierce Philhellenism retrospectively distorts the selected aspects of Ottoman culture his cosmopolitan self had previously enjoyed, especially in the capital. There, he had to contain his fascination with the city's exterior beauty – '[I] must pause, lest I should appear too enthusiastic. Go, reader, and see!' (I, 154) – and forcefully expressed his regard for 'the finest panoramic view in the world (I, 155)'. Whilst maintaining the startling and oft-cited contrast between picturesque beauty and filthy interior, his later additions represent a reversal of emphasis:

The streets are full of filth, and heaps of carrion; from time to time the stranger lights upon some marble palace or mausoleum, surrounded by the black and miserable remains of whole districts destroyed by those continual fires, which lighted either by the rage of conflicting parties, or by the carelessness of the predestinarian Mussulmans, so frequently lay waste the capital of Constantine. (I, 208)

The Captain here chooses to make himself blind to his own account of the Ottoman capital and conjures up both received wisdom and deeply entrenched stereotypes. He marks his civil European identity off from the apparently retrograde world of Islam by charging it with carelessness, fatalism and ignorance.<sup>86</sup> Hence, in the 'Remarks and Notes' global civility's inclusive vision gives way to Orientalist prejudices. The ensuing tensions between Frankland's adventures recorded along the way and his retrospective additions thus bear witness to both an emerging network of Orientalist citationality and the ways in which severed emotional ties can give rise to wilful misrepresentations

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83 *Andréossy, Konstantinopel und der Bosphorus von Thrazien*, 32 [my translation].

84 *Ibid.*, 32 [my translation].

85 *Ibid.*, 31

86 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 165.

as soon as political agendas disrupt experiential connections. Unfortunately, however, this is not the only way in which Frankland integrates Orientalist structures into his account.

### **Fearless Englishmen, Intrepid Britons: Anecdotes and Silenced Histories**

In addition to quoting extensively from Comte Andreossy's book, Frankland incorporates what he calls anecdotes into his *Travels*. They, too, contribute to Orientalism's evolvment as domineering paradigm whilst reflecting larger shifts within East-West relations and the cultural and commercial traffic at their heart. For centuries, British identity, as well as the goods, commodities and institutions on which it depended, emerged from interaction with the Islamic world. And given the reenactive nature of Middle Eastern travel, successive generations of travellers added layer upon layer to its palimpsestic history. In Frankland's anecdotes we can find prime examples of how these intertwined histories are being reinterpreted when accumulated knowledge, political change and global civility's increasing ambivalence form a complex texture that the British used to fashion themselves as fully-fledged imperial power in the course of nineteenth century. In the Captain's anecdotes, two particular areas – horsemanship and seafaring – are reflective of Britain's metamorphosis from envious epigone to paradigmatic icon in imperial matters.

Horses were an indispensable part in this national transformation and Frankland seemed to have indulged in equestration, too.<sup>87</sup> On a daytrip in Istanbul, he records a fine meadow to which 'all the horses of the Sultan are brought in great state' on a particular day of the month. '[O]ccasionally' he adds, 'the favourite ladies of the Imperial harem are conveyed hither' and 'the eunuchs of the seraglio are posted on horseback all around on the hills, to keep off the gaze of intrusive eyes' (I, 149). Since he is frequently keen on witnessing examples of oriental otherness, both exotic women and strong horses might have aroused the desire to add his pair of intrusive eyes to the scene. However, apparently aware of who is calling the shots in the imperial centre, he concentrates on equestrian matters and tells his audience that the 'eunuchs are noted for [...]their skill in horsemanship, and in the use of their weapons' (I, 149). In so doing, he is able to indulge in his penchant for exotic stories and at the same time appeals to the equestrian proclivities of his English readers.

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87 Ibid., 374.

Equestrian culture has not only been an integral constituent of English identity from the early modern period onwards, it is also inextricably intertwined with 'international contact and exotic appropriation.'<sup>88</sup> Frankland relies on this essentially cross-cultural history, but exploits it in order to reinforce his country's collective imperial identity by weaving it into the anecdote of an Englishman who suddenly finds himself in the very meadow our naval officer has already mentioned:

One of the eunuchs soon came up with him, and fired his pistol without effect; upon which the Englishman, before his adversary had time to draw his sabre, hit him over the face with the butt end of his whip, and brought him to the ground, not waiting to receive the second pursuer, who, seeing how his comrade had fared, reined in his Arab steed, and left the field of battle to the intrepid Briton. (I, 150)

Based on a story told by his landlord, Frankland enthusiastically reports the anonymous hero's success in foreign territory. Yet this is not merely an innocent anecdote or an outré digression, since its incorporation into the *Travels* reflects shifts in English domestic affairs as well as transformations on a global level. In the above passage the 'Englishman' becomes an 'intrepid Briton' and this choice of words is revealing: 'During the eighteenth century, people in the British Isles came to identify themselves as Britons as opposed to English, Irish, Scots or Welsh, largely through a consciousness of their shared differences from the French and other Europeans'<sup>89</sup> on the one hand and extra-European peoples on the other. Hence, after successfully outrunning the two Oriental adversaries, Frankland's hero is not English anymore, but British. And in his day and age the British had acquired an empire that was to grow even more powerful in the course of the nineteenth century. This anecdote, then, both encapsulates and mirrors transcultural processes of identity formation, which are either reduced to simplistic and straightforward narratives of British greatness or muted by reactionary voices and proponents of empire.

But what is even more significant is the Briton's ability to outrun the two skilled horsemen in their own territory, thus demonstrating the superiority of his culture in general and British horsemanship in particular. However,

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88 Maclean, *Looking East*, 208; and Donna Landry, *Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture* (Baltimore, Md. & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 108.

89 Landry, *Noble Brutes*, 2.

before Britain emerged as global power her subjects first looked and then travelled east in order to observe the well-established and powerful empire of the Ottomans at work. Indeed, English identities largely depended on interaction with the Islamic world whose goods proved integral to their historical trajectory:

From the 1650s onward, the East increasingly became for the English upper classes a source of absolutely essential ingredients with which to concoct an identity that would advertize their cultural superiority at home as well as abroad. Horses were a crucial part of this phenomenon, as the English vied for position in the global marketplace.<sup>90</sup>

As multi-layered and historically contingent amalgam Englishness is not a self-evident historical category. It has to be contextualised within the nation's diplomatic, mercantile and cultural relations of the Early Modern and Enlightenment periods in order to map the structural and contextual changes at its heart in the so-called imperial nineteenth century, to which Frankland's equestrian anecdote undoubtedly belongs. The intrepid Englishmen as its protagonist is reliant upon skills, resources and animals that his country could only nationalise, and eventually proudly emulate, because of the import of Middle Eastern horses into the British Isles. When viewed in isolation, this little story is indicative of apparently clear-cut historical transparency. But as soon as it is divested of patriotic overtones the interactional, cooperative and improvisational aspects of British history in the pre-imperial era confirm that horsemanship in Britain would be unthinkable without her long-standing involvement in the Islamic world.

The commodity and cultural exchanges at the heart of this involvement depended on trade routes and means of transportation, of course. Both overland and sea routes were fraught with hazards, but 'commercial success abroad ensured by a dominance of naval power'<sup>91</sup> contributed to Britain's reputation as prosperous seafaring nation. As Captain of the Royal Navy, Frankland embodies this ideal both in his biography as widely travelled Englishman and in his interpretation of incidents at sea. Immediately before reaching Smyrna (Izmir) on his return journey along the eastern Mediterranean seaboard, he

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90 *Ibid.*, 85.

91 Suvir Kaul, *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 1.

proudly relates how swiftly his sea-tested countrymen of the ship 'Helme' rescue three sailors from an 'Austrian brig-of-war,' who had fallen overboard:

I believe all three of the poor Austrians (or Venetians) would have been drowned; for such was the confusion created on board their vessel, and such the time taken to get their boat into the water and clear of the brig, that the Englishmen reached the struggling swimmers long before their countrymen were near them, and rescued them from their apparent fate. (I, 244)

In similar fashion to his equestrian anecdote, Frankland emphasises English heroism in this passage at the same time as he obfuscates the cooperative and interlocking aspects of encounters at sea. In so doing, he conceals the sea's 'protean'<sup>92</sup> nature as an 'in-between space of transformation and change where nothing is ever fixed but everything always in flux.'<sup>93</sup> But instead of elemental and cultural fluidity, as well as the improvisational encounters they gave rise to, British superiority appears as both unquestioned and ahistorically self-evident in this situation. It thus points to the emergence of a consolidated knowledge-power base on which those who were a 'polite and commercial people'<sup>94</sup> in the eighteenth century erected their global, and often unvarnished, dominance in the nineteenth.

In these stories, then, the ingredients that went into the formation of empire appear as essentially British because Frankland's emphasis on the achievements of 'intrepid Britons' divests them of their origins in liminal, and often little-explored, spaces. But in light of the maritime vicissitudes to which seamen, diplomats and merchants in pre-imperial times were exposed, nineteenth century assertions of British imperial dominance look less clear-cut. According to Alison Games, English identities were made, not born,<sup>95</sup> in cross-cultural contexts, turning many commercial, diplomatic and adventurous travellers from the British Isles into early modern cosmopolitans.<sup>96</sup> There

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92 Bernhard Klein & Gesa Mackenthun, 'Introduction: The Sea is History,' in Klein & Mackenthun, eds., *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 1-12, here 9.

93 *Ibid.*, p. 3

94 Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 2.

95 Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9.

96 *Ibid.*, 10.

was a 'steady stream of travel accounts, promotional literature, and histories that English printers produced for an interested market,'<sup>97</sup> which represented, fuelled and shaped both attitudes to cultural difference and imperial fantasies. However, both the obfuscation and dehistoricisation of cultural origins in the formative phases of the British Empire have a long-standing history themselves. When the seamen in Frankland's story reach those in distress 'long before their [Austrian] countrymen,' they rule, in James Thomson's words, the waves. In his jingoistic ode 'Rule, Britannia' (1740), he too divests imperial ambitions of their historical contexts and projects Britain's emerging global reach onto the seas as both self-evident and divinely ordained mission:

When Britain first, at heaven's command,  
Arose from out the azure main;  
This was the charter of the land,  
And guardian angels sung this strain:  
"Rule Britannia, rule the waves;  
Britons never will be slaves."<sup>98</sup>

Thomson and his ode ignore Britain's cultural imports in the Early Modern period and imply that future missions enjoy divine protection. This vision of self-sufficient national greatness is insular in both senses of the word: on the one hand, it suggests that Britain's status as an island nation sets it apart from others, primarily its European competitors; on the other, it denies the country's cultural indebtedness to the polities that had realised imperial ambitions long before the British were able to do so. Indeed, at first they were latecomers to empire and their pre-imperial '[c]osmopolitanism facilitated survival and success overseas, and thus emerged in part as a series of learned behaviours. It was often a posture derived from weakness, and central to English expansion when the kingdom itself was weak.'<sup>99</sup> Unaware of this little acknowledged strand of history, Frankland perpetuates the obfuscatory stance expressed in Thomson's ode, and in so doing mutes the cross-cultural past before his country rose to global prominence. Thus, when the English seamen in Frankland's account set out to rescue the Austrians, the Islamic Levant, as well as the mul-

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97 *Ibid.*, 9

98 James Thomson, *The Works of James Thomson: Volume the Third. Containing, Sophonisba, Agamemnon, and Alfred* (London: A. Miller, 1750), 253.

99 Games, *The Web of Empire*, 10.

tical Mediterranean, merely serve as backdrop against which the Captain defines himself and his identity in ahistorical fashion.

### 3. The Charms of a vagrant Life? Captain Frankland in Greater Syria

After leaving Istanbul, our naval officer criss-crosses the eastern Mediterranean, calling at Tenedos, the Troad, Smyrna (Izmir), Napoli di Romania (Nafplio), Athens and Cyprus before reaching 'Baruti, or Bairout' (I, 325) in August 1827. Unlike the journey through the Balkans and his stay in Istanbul, Frankland's journey in Greater Syria largely comes without English company, except for 'old Ponto, an English pointer' (I, 345). His journey *from* the Ottoman capital offers thus more immediate impressions than his journey *to* it, a fact already signalled by his visit to the Turkish Bath, or Hamam, in Smyrna.<sup>100</sup> Although direct experiences of Ottoman social practices in the Hamam temporarily suspend his prejudices, they do not trigger a comprehensive unlearning of cultural privilege in Frankland's case. In the bath, a 'savage-looking and naked tormentor', who is a 'garlick-breathing Moslem', starts tormenting 'your delicate European skin' (I, 251). Surprisingly, at the end of the process the traveller 'feels quite restored to vigour and elasticity, and there is a *satiny* smoothness of his skin, to which before he was a stranger' (I, 253). But instead of revising his cultural compass after this adventure, Frankland sticks to the representational inventory he has furnished us with up to now, namely divided and ambivalent impressions of the Ottoman dominions. Unfortunately, his rambles in Syria conform to this pattern, too.

However, at the end of his time in Syria, Frankland's account radiates with representational benevolence and adopts a comparative cultural perspective. Before heading to Egypt, the Captain tells us that the 'charm of the vagrant kind of life which [he] led in Syria, is inconceivable'

My wants were but few, and easily supplied; my bed was the ground, my covering a cloak, and my canopy the heavens; in such a climate I could desire no better. Yet I sometimes felt that solitude was very painful. (II, 177)

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<sup>100</sup> David Urquhart, Frankland's contemporary and a former Philhellene, who found himself increasingly attracted to Ottoman culture, introduced the Hamam into England in the mid-nineteenth century. Compare his: *The Turkish Bath, with a View to its Introduction into the British Dominions* (London: Bryce, 1856).



As Donna Landry has shown, Frankland's 'pleasure and pain were deeply inter-fused,'<sup>101</sup> and thus integral to his experience. In keeping with this pattern, the above passage 'dramati[s]es hardships'<sup>102</sup> at the same time as it registers the delightful aspects of the traveller's adventures in the east. Essential to these is, according to Frankland, the absence of all that is known and familiar:

Of civilization I had seen enough. In the capitals of Europe, the manners of the world only differ by slight, and almost imperceptible degrees. He that has seen London, Paris, and Vienna, Rome, Naples, and Petersburgh, will find, that in all these cities, man is nearly the same creature of art, and living under the same common rule of the European compact. In the East, all is widely different from the West; and here the European traveller finds a new mine to explore. (II, 178/179)

In this perspective, geographical difference breeds cultural difference, and the further a traveller travels, the more he can learn. Whilst Frankland may have a point here, his 'new mine' is not really new. As we have already seen, Henry Blount had the same objective three centuries earlier; but in contrast to Frankland's lukewarm insights, Blount's achievements were truly ground-breaking for both travel and travel-writing. Hence, Frankland's claim to novelty is caught up in the same 'dialectic of novelty and repetition'<sup>103</sup> that has governed Oriental travel since antiquity. And what is more, given his ambivalent attitude to the Islamic world so far, the above passages invite further scrutiny – an undertaking that demands following in his footsteps in Ottoman Syria.

Upon disembarkation, Frankland is surprised 'to find the little town of Baruti, and its environs, so beautiful' and exclaims: 'So here I am in Syria!' (I, 325/326). Conspicuously articulated upon arrival on the Levantine littoral, this exclamation, one might think, suggests a new beginning, or chapter, in his comprehensive account. Indeed, at first the Captain is favourably impressed by Beirut, in which '[e]ach house is like a castle, built of solid stone masonry' (I, 327). Not only is this spot 'doubly classical' (I, 328) by virtue of both its antique heritage and Richard Cœur de Lion's presence here during the crusades, it also challenges Frankland's preconceived ideas on Syria:

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101 Landry, 'Saddle Time', 445.

102 *Ibid.*

103 *Ibid.*, 441

The vegetation was surprisingly verdant and vigorous, and my imagination, which had previously recoiled with horror from the idea of Syrian sands and deserts, was delighted with the reality which here presented itself of smiling valleys, and huge rocks crowned with the sweetest smelling and most lovely-looking evergreens. (I, 331)

This passage is a striking example of how sensory experiences can dismantle popular myths about the east. It demonstrates how deeply ingrained simplistic representations of the Islamic world really are and draws attention to their trans-historical constancy. In Frankland's case at least, not all is sand and desert in the Levant, but the trope has nevertheless determined the region's history down to the present day. Its merits as well as its ethno-religiously diverse history do not serve 'as models for desirable futures'<sup>104</sup> but are overlooked by the orientalisng gaze of those who are unaware of the origins of western modernity in the Islamic east.

Frankland, too, is unaware of the intertwined histories between east and west, but his account nonetheless registers the plethora of communities under the Ottoman umbrella in Syria. Its inhabitants consist of

Turks, Metooalis, Arabs of the Christian communion, Greeks, Jews, Druses, Ansyrians, or Ansari, and many other tribes. The Turks are numerically inferior to the Arabs; but they hold the sea-ports and fortresses, and govern more by fomenting the disunion of the various tribes than by force. (II, 169)

According to the Captain, an Ottoman actualisation of the ancient *divide et impera* is at the heart of the empire's policies in Syria. What he overlooks, however, is that the Ottomans left local customs largely intact and respected established traditions without too much interference from the imperial centre.<sup>105</sup> Unfortunately, Frankland's sense of cultural superiority prevents him from fine-tuning his receptivity towards his surroundings whereas one of his predecessors was aware of some intricate details of the country's multi-cultural texture. As early as 1669, one T. B. had already informed his readers that Christians could collect certain taxes from Muslims.<sup>106</sup> A local 'captain' invited him and his fellow-travellers to dine at 'a Village, called *Upshara*': 'This man is a *Maronite*, and takes *Caffar* or Toll of the Turks, which pass that way with

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104 MacLean, 'Strolling in Syria,' 416.

105 *Ibid.*, 421.

106 *Ibid.*

their Sheep and Oxen; he hath a hundred Souldiers under his command, who are all Christian.<sup>107</sup> Of course, knowledge of such details depends on the traveller's readiness to interact with the locals. Frankland, by contrast, does not shed his European self, with his account merely enumerating various communities, as well as offering conjectural explanations of inter-communal arrangements. Measuring his *Travels* against earlier accounts thus reveals that global civility cracks as European cultures become less receptive to alterity in the process of asserting and consolidating their imperial ambitions in the nineteenth century. In so doing, they change the representational dynamics between travellers and their oriental host cultures, which once served as imperial role models at the same time as they presented themselves as insurmountable political entities.

Given Frankland's limited cross-cultural receptivity, what do we make of his emphatic rejection of civilisation? It is very well possible that he inserted it in a moment rife with nostalgia after his return to England. On the road, however, he hardly ever tires of emphasising key elements of his English identity. Where Blount readily 'pu[t] off the old man'<sup>108</sup> and was somewhat critical 'of the professional clergymen, whatever his nation or sect,'<sup>109</sup> Frankland insistently fashions himself as Christian Englishman when neither a party of fellow travellers nor the Frank establishment in Istanbul can filter his immediate experiences of the territory he traverses. Without these safeguards to fall back upon, his Englishness seems to have been his sheet anchor vis-à-vis Syria and its inhabitants. According to Frankland, '*rational Protestants*' should bring 'education' to this part of the world, since it provides the only hope 'of dispelling the Cimmerian darkness which overshadows the minds of these benighted people' (II, 20). A little further on, he spots some Arab Christians in a village called Akoura. Here he tells his readers that he 'did feel a great degree of pleasure upon beholding, in a Mussulman country, the supremacy of the Christian power' (II, 39). Even the trope of 'Syrian sands and deserts' resurfaces later on, albeit in a figurative sense. After a prolonged trip to Damascus – a city that is 'from without indeed beautiful; but within, it is like all

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107 T.B., 'A Journey to Jerusalem: Or, The Travels of Fourteen Englishmen to Jerusalem, in the Year 1669,' in *Two Journeys to Jerusalem...Collected by R.B.* (London, 1759), 70-93, here 72.

108 Blount, *Voyage*, 4.

109 MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, 169.

other Oriental cities, mean and shabby (II, 100-101) – via Mount Lebanon, Frankland seems to have been rather fond of civilisation:

I know not what the traveller in Syria would do were it not for the Frank convents, which, like so many Oases in the Desert, are scattered about this country. They are become the deposits of the Christian virtues, and are so many rallying points of civilization. (II, 122).

Like William Biddulph long before him (1600-12), Frankland enjoyed meeting other Christians in the Levant.<sup>110</sup> For him, they are a decisive factor to the region's well-being and serve as crucial points of contact for exhausted European travellers. But in light of these remarks Frankland's rejection of civilisation's comforts appears frivolous and his rambles in Syria must have been more exhausting than anticipated.

Contrary to his professed rejection of European amenities, Frankland readily jumps at every opportunity to enjoy them, especially when English company is on offer, too. The extent to which he missed 'all sorts of English comforts and luxuries, from which [he] had been so long estranged' (II, 137) becomes apparent when he receives an invitation to visit the famous traveller Lady Hester Stanhope near Sidon in November 1827.

Stanhope, the daughter of an English aristocrat, had already been living among the local population for some years when Frankland came to stay with her for a few days. 'She was dressed *a l'Arabe*' (II, 137) – a practice cultural critics have called *ethnomasquerade*<sup>111</sup> – and the Captain tells his readers that she 'has laid out large sums of money upon this place, and has indeed contrived to make a little paradise in the desert' (II, 138). In this case, he portrays civility in the Ottoman realm in favorable fashion but only because two English citizens of the same social class meet in an artificially created setting adapted to their needs. Their encounter does not transcend cultural boundaries and represents a decontextualised instance of English conviviality in foreign territory, with soupçons of local life merely lending colour the scene. It thus exploits Ottoman Syria as a projection screen onto which both travellers project their

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110 Ibid., 78.

111 Kader Konuk, 'Ethnomasquerade in Ottoman-European Encounters: Reenacting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 393-414, here 393: 'Ethnomasquerade is defined here as the performance of an ethnic identity through the mimicking of clothes, gestures, appearance, language, cultural codes, or other components of identity formation.'

orientalist desires. Whilst Stanhope is ready to live among Arabs, she does not share their lifestyles; instead she created her own exotic micro-cosmos from her personal wealth. Frankland, on the other hand, finds unexpected English company and can boast of having met an illustrious contemporary in foreign lands. But what is more, their interaction depends on the exclusion of the local population. Even when Stanhope informs Frankland that ‘at this moment two great Mahometan visitors [are] under her roof’ he ‘never sees them by any accident’ (II, 142). An offer of personal protection by one of them, which Frankland declines, is transacted through their mutual host rather than personal contact. In Frankland’s version of Lady Hester’s Arabic abode, then, the Arabs are excluded – or enveloped in the unspoken, as Pierre Macherey would say<sup>112</sup> – in order to allow him to enjoy *intra*-cultural traffic in a cross-cultural context.

Outside this paradisiacal spot, however, Frankland has to put up with both the locals and other travellers. Surprisingly, on his return journey from Damascus to Beirut he approaches two merchants staying in the same khan as he:

My neighbours were two Turkish merchants from Aleppo, – I was very civil to them, and gave them coffee and arrack. The muleteers and camel-drivers made a great noise all night, and the fleas, as usual, prevented my sleeping much. (II, 113)

Noisy caravan attendants, ‘filthy khans’ and ‘flea-infested camps’<sup>113</sup> are integral constituents of oriental travel in those days. The extraordinary aspect here is, of course, Frankland’s unconditional civility towards the merchants. As they find themselves bound to the same destination, both parties choose to travel together from here. After more drinks and nights on the road, leave-taking is imminent. The two merchants

made great professions of regard for me, as they had received civilities at my hands on the route, and said, that for the sake of our companionship, they would make me a present of [a turban], or of any thing else I might choose to select out of their bales, upon our arrival at Bairout. However, I never saw any more either of them or of their goods, their recollection of me failing

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112 Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, transl. by Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 85.

113 Landry, ‘Saddle Time,’ 445.

when they no longer drank my coffee and arrack. (II, 118/119) [emphasis in original]

In this situation, he experiences how civility can be revoked from both sides of the encounter and that Europeans do not have a monopoly on granting it, especially as Turks are entitled to call the shots in their own empire. Episodes such as this one may have confirmed some of Frankland's prejudices, which is why towards the end of his Levantine journey he draws a rather disappointing conclusion on interacting with the locals: 'I have only found one honest man in the country, and that is my own servant' (II, 162). But even Jiaccomo, whom he hardly ever mentions, cannot be admitted unconditionally to the realm of the faithful: he was an 'honest fellow', but our naval officer is quick to add 'for an Arab' (II, 172).

But not all is doom and gloom in Greater Syria. Just as both his journey through the Balkans and his stay in Istanbul have their pleasant sides, the eastern Mediterranean is not devoid of attractions. Whilst dealing with the locals is a necessary evil for our class-conscious naval officer,<sup>114</sup> he nevertheless enjoys the scenic charms and beautiful views on offer in the Levant. For example, close contiguity with 'camels and their savage-looking drivers' (II, 104/105)<sup>115</sup> in the crowded streets of Damascus does not go down well with him. But as soon as spatial conditions allow for distanced aesthetic contemplation both camels and conductors blend in with their surroundings and evoke standardised tropes by which Frankland judges the Orient.

Whilst still in the Syrian capital, Frankland comes across another caravan that he describes as follows: 'The grouping of these huge unwieldy beasts, and their drivers occupied in unloading them, was highly picturesque and Oriental' (I, 112). However, this one is less annoying by virtue of the author's distance from it. And further on in his journey, Frankland finds the views not merely satisfactory but 'complete.'

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114 Compare II, 163: 'Whatsoever enjoyment you may derive from visiting the East, it is poisoned by the continual attempts, on the part of the native population, to extort money from you, in all dealings which it may be your misfortune to have with them.'

115 This is not the only instance of Frankland expressing his contempt for camels and their conductors. See also II, 84: 'We met a large caravan of camels, with their savage-looking Bedouin conductors.'

The sea was on our right hand, and the mountains, with their picturesque Arab towns and vineyards, on our left. Camels and Arabs, beach and fishing-boats completed the scene. (II, 134)

He appears to be taking stock in this situation of the components determining oriental picturesqueness. Unfortunately, this idiosyncratic way of both exploring and representing the Islamic world often reduces its population, as well as its flora and fauna, to a backdrop against which he either defines himself or that he judges according to its degree of perfection. In such a climate, even-handed and mutually improving encounters are difficult to sustain and become situationally contingent. Hence, Frankland's ambivalent, and sometimes schizophrenic, attitude to Islam and the Ottomans maps the transition from global civility to imperialism that took place from the late eighteenth century onwards.

#### 4. What about the multi-cultural Mediterranean, then?

Captain Frankland is indeed less receptive to the Muslim world than some of his predecessors. Where Blount admired the ingeniously crafted empire of the Ottomans in the seventeenth century and Abbott emphatically asserted that the Arabs 'are not treacherous'<sup>116</sup> in the eighteenth, the imperial nineteenth century changes Europe's relationship with the East fundamentally and lastingly. Frankland is on the cusp of this transformation, since his account both openly displays western arrogance and bespeaks a sense of entitlement at the same time as it retains traces of civility and notions of enlightened cosmopolitanism. Though these are few and far between in the *Travels*, they nonetheless exist and allow us to plumb the breadth and depth of modern Orientalism's rise to epistemological prominence. According to Frankland, the traveller

will do well to learn a few Arabic or Turkish phrases of civility and salutation; always remembering that civility costs nothing, and that the Orientals are scrupulous observers of this sort of etiquette, and are favourably impressed by any stranger, who is gracious in his manner and kind in his speech. (II, 180)

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116 Henry Abbott, *A Trip...Across the Grand Desart of Arabia* (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1789), 12.

It is somewhat ironic that Frankland does not practice what he preaches, but civility nevertheless found its way into his account, albeit only as atrophic discursive remnant. In later decades, and especially at the beginning of the twentieth century, comparable remarks become marginal and are relegated to a distant past of cross-cultural cooperation. The most influential study on this topic to date – Edward Said’s *Orientalism* – impressively retraces this development.

Nonetheless, in Frankland’s account the Mediterranean is still represented as multi-cultural and hybrid contact zone. Despite indications of Europe’s increased presence and dominance there,<sup>117</sup> our naval officer furnishes us with pieces of information that illuminate the cultural, mercantile and religious cross-fertilisation of past centuries.<sup>118</sup> On Frankland’s return journey through the Mediterranean, during which he calls at Cyprus, Alexandria, Malta and Italy, he experiences first-hand the coeval presence of East and West, Christianity and Islam, as well as the intermingling of civilisations, that engendered what he himself calls ‘the European compact’ (II, 178). His consolidated European sense of self notwithstanding, both the fluidity of identities and the interconnectedness of cultures creep into the picture as he sails homeward. At sea, terrestrial patterns of behaviour are interrupted by its fluidity and one comes to understand radical interconnections<sup>119</sup> that not only defy straightforward categorisations but also resist attempts at taming them. Even as European powers increasingly assert their cultural and political dominance in Frankland’s day, the sea’s elemental waywardness safeguards its role as trans-cultural locus of cooperation, exchange and resistance to dominance.

In Malta, for instance, Frankland is confronted with a wide variety of impressions, traditions and peoples. He is thus implicated in a multi-cultural context, which can neither be subjected to Eurocentric claims to hegemony nor allows for simplistic narratives of cultural unity or purity. When some fellow officers from the Russian navy invite him aboard their flagship, he attends ‘an honour which had not been conferred on any occasion since the

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117 Compare: II, 140-141.

118 Daniel J. Vitkus explores this part of British history in *Turning Turk. English Theatre and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), 23: ‘English contact with the Mediterranean continually challenged the borders of English culture, and English representations of its diversity and instability continually confront and express that challenge.’

119 Caroline Rooney, ‘What is the Oceanic?’ *Angelaki* 12:2 (August 2007), 19–32, here 30.



days of Peter the Great', namely 'the presentation of the flag of St. George' (II, 210). Other British officers join him in the ceremony, which is celebrated with gunfire, flag-waving and naval camaraderie. This *intra*-European spectacle in international waters is followed by a remark on the local population, which seems to exemplify even more insistently that both sea and shore are loci where cultures meet, mingle, clash or merge into new constellations: 'The Maltese speak a dialect of Arabic, and still wear the long red cap or tarboosh of their ancestors of the Desert. Their history is involved in the impenetrable mist of remote antiquity' (II, 214). According to Frankland, Malta's culture is a hybrid confluence of eastern and western habits, practices and qualities. And not only do the Maltese retain their ancestors' language and sartorial items, their origins seem to lie in the east, or in the 'Desert' to be precise. Hence, both sea and desert are thus not 'outside or beyond history'<sup>120</sup>. They are rather transnational zones of interaction, with the one being always in flux, and the other acting as historical repository storing up 'the rubbish of centuries'<sup>121</sup> in A. W. Kinglake's words. Accordingly, Europeans going east enter a world of the past, in which Malta was a Christian outpost in the Islamic Mediterranean, and experience how things used to be.<sup>122</sup> Unfortunately, Frankland's pronounced European identity prevents him from properly connecting to the territories he traverses, without tipping over into the hegemonic discourse of the age of high imperialism, however. His *Travels to and from Constantinople* thus demonstrate that 'contrasting representational strands can coexist within a single text'<sup>123</sup> and help us to map the historical trajectory of both global civility and orientalism at a crucial historical juncture in Euro-Islamic relations.

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120 Klein & Mackenthun, 'Introduction: The Sea is History,' 2.

121 A. W. Kinglake, *Eothen* (London: George Newnes, 1898), 22.

122 MacLean, 'Strolling in Syria,' 417.

123 Andrew Hammond, 'Typologies of the East: On Distinguishing Balkanism and Orientalism,' in Keith Hanley & Greg Kucich eds., *Nineteenth Century Worlds: Global Formations Past and Present* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), 129-146, here 134.



## **Transitions and Conclusions**



## 7. From Representational Ambivalence to Colonialism

F.E. Maning's (fictional)

Autobiography *Old New Zealand* (1863)

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The last section reflected on increasingly ambivalent representations of global civility in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It considered how Mary Ann Parker and George Barrington's narratives registered the complications caused by the presence of convicts and slaves at the same time as their accounts were receptive towards selected aspects of Aboriginal culture. Similarly, Charles Colville Frankland was at once aggressively biased towards the Ottoman Empire and expressed admiration for both Sultan Mahmoud's reform efforts and the panoramic beauty of his dominions. Accordingly, these travel books contained contrastive representational strands, illustrating the ways in which stereotypes, reductive attitudes and simplistic conceptualisations of social, cultural or racial difference could be coeval with cross-cultural curiosity and admiration for the capabilities and selected achievements of those who are different. The present chapter proceeds from this conflicting relationship and addresses the transformation of global civility into a discourse of colonialism by discussing F.E. Maning's *Old New Zealand* (1863). Maning's text, a literary pastiche fusing elements from autobiography, ethnography, adventure-story, history and satire, is modelled on Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Like Tristram, Maning's literary alter ego constantly loses the thread of his story by incorporating statements, stories and facts which are not at all connected to what he set out to do. Looking back to "the good old times' – before Governors were invented, and law,

and justice and all that"<sup>1</sup>, Maning attempts to write the story of his life, which task is complicated by his propensity to digress as well as the incorporation of biased ethnographic material. In what follows, I will explore these different layers and complexities in order to establish how the text's reliance on Sterne's novel, the conventions of autobiography and the sometimes hostile, sometimes mocking, representation of the Maori illuminate and reflect the transition from global civility over representational ambivalence to colonialism.

The first part of this chapter analyses how Maning uses *Tristram Shandy* in order to familiarise his readers with the intricacies of life in nineteenth century New Zealand. But what appear to be humorous references to Sterne's idiosyncratic hero turn out to be contortive depictions of Maori culture aimed at drawing oneself larger than life. Whilst Tristram's digressive style entertains, and sometimes exasperates, his audience, Maning uses Sterne's register as a vehicle to lure his readers into his story only to pour scorn on the tribal communities he was intimately acquainted with. In addition to these more or less subtle attempts to entertain his readers at the Maori's expense, Maning also narrows the representational range of global civility by writing his autobiography and using New Zealand's natives as a screen onto which he projects the symptoms of his estrangement from their culture. The following section examines intertextual aspects in Maning's text that go beyond his use of Sterne. In an anecdotal digression, he introduces his readers to the concept of *tapu*, a Polynesian practice that rendered important persons, objects or resources untouchable whilst simultaneously protecting them or their culturally specific functions. Citing canonical literary texts, Maning reduces this complex Pacific texture into a risible instance of prohibitions and constraints aimed at entertaining European and settler audiences. The chapter then discusses his land purchases, which he turns into ridiculous affairs complicated by the natives' acquisitiveness. However, thanks to his tenacity, he keeps the upper hand in this prolonged affair and effectively excludes the Maori from the incipient land dealing business by drawing up a written contract in English. In so doing, he employs a cultural form alien to the Maori and at the same time ensures that they remain outside the legal universe of the European settlers who came to dominate New Zealand in the course of

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1 F.E. Maning, 'Old New Zealand; A Tale of the Good Old Times,' in Alex Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 91-198, here 93. (All further references are to this edition).

the nineteenth century. The penultimate section in this chapter draws attention to some disturbing epiphenomena of colonialism and discusses how the skewed representation of ethnographic knowledge places the Maori outside the realm of civilisation. The chapter then concludes by demonstrating that even sensationalist accounts of foreign cultures contain valuable information without which we would probably know much less about Europe's others. The chapter as a whole forms the last part of the long way we have come since setting out to the Ottoman Empire with Henry Blount in 1636, demonstrating that global civility slowly but surely disappeared as Britain tightened its imperial grip in the Victorian era.

But who was Frederick Edward Maning? Just as his text sits at the cross-roads between different genres, Maning himself spent much of his life as an intermediary between cultures.<sup>2</sup> Born in Ireland in 1811, his family emigrated to Tasmania. In 1833 he arrived in New Zealand and lived as a *pakeha Maori*, an adopted member of a Maori tribe who conformed 'to the social patterns of his hosts.'<sup>3</sup> Maning's criss-crossing of cultural divides culminated in his marriage with a Maori woman with whom he had several children. However, after her death and the growing estrangement from his offspring, he turned away from Maori tribal culture in order to pursue a career in the settlers' institutions. In 1862, Maning published *History of the War in the North*, and a year later his best known work *Old New Zealand* followed. He sought political patronage and through these works he gained it: in 1865 he was appointed Judge of the Native Land Court and dispossessed Maori of their land.<sup>4</sup> After being diagnosed with cancer, he went to London where he died in 1883. The trajectory of his life-story, which is primarily set in liminal spaces but ends in the metropolis, helps us to understand how global civility transformed during the age of imperialism into a discourse of European, especially British, superiority. Yet this development's embeddedness in Shandean digressions calls for a careful and nuanced reading which starts where both Sterne and Maning start: with the problem of beginning.

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2 Joan FitzGerald, 'Images of the Self: Two Early New Zealand Autobiographies,' *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 23: 1 (1988), 16-41, here 36.

3 H. E. Maude, 'Beachcombers and Castaways,' *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 73: 3 (1964), 254-293, here 275.

4 Alex Calder, 'Maning's Tapu: Colonialism and Ethnography in *Old New Zealand*,' *Social Analysis* 39 (1996), 3-26, here 3.

## 1. Intertextuality in *Old New Zealand*

### Inception Problems

Landing in New Zealand proves more difficult than Maning expected. From aboard ship, he ‘saw the mountains of New Zealand appear above the sea’ (94) and immediately starts preparing his disembarkation, which takes him two chapters to accomplish, however.<sup>5</sup> Just as Tristram Shandy cannot get himself born in the first two volumes of Sterne’s novel, Maning constantly digresses and loses himself in unimportant details of his preparations. He is more than anxious to leave the vessel and excitedly tells his readers: ‘As long as I am aboard ship I am cramped, and a mere slave to Greenwich time and can’t get on’ (96). However, getting on is not merely travelling further:

I positively vow and protest to you, gentle and patient reader, that if ever I get safe on shore, I will do my best to give you satisfaction; let me get once on shore, and I am all right: but unless I get my feet on terra firma, how can I ever begin my tale of the good old times? (96)

For Maning’s literary alter ego, getting on is tantamount to stepping outside the confines of European space-time in order to be able to commence his travels. Promising his readers ‘satisfaction’ by relating the ‘the good old times’, he insinuates that he holds special knowledge enabling him to deliver a little known chapter of New Zealand’s history. This particular chapter relates the time before organised colonisation began to establish an infrastructure alien to the natives and their customs. And the place to commence it is the ‘shore’ or beach, which is both a transformative and improvisational space – in other words, a contact zone – and a realm outside European temporality.

Maning’s frequent allusions to ‘the good old times’ throughout his book open up a divide between the colony’s here and now and its past. A crucial turning point in New Zealand’s history is the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), which established gubernatorial rule and marked the onset of organised colonisation. Although Maning wants to ‘avoid dates’ (94), his recurrent temporal distinction clearly revolves around this event: ‘I always held a theory that time was of no account in New Zealand, and I do believe I was right up to the time of the arrival of the first Governor’ (94). In this perspective, the country’s past was pregnant with opportunity and adventure, and the *pakeha Maori* can characterise his point of departure – the ship – as western, known and temporally

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 7.



rooted, whereas the beach and its hinterland are extraneous, atemporal and unexplored. By probing this territory, Maning offers us the exciting adventure-story he promised whilst representing the country for a western audience and the settlers who eventually followed him. Textualising the Maori and their country thus draws New Zealand into global cultural and commercial traffic at the same time as it marks the advent of European space-time.

In Maning's case, however, writing history is inextricably bound up with attempts at fixing his life-story in writing. He wants to 'forget the present, take courage, and talk about the past' (94). In order to do so, he 'must fairly get on shore, which [...] was easier to do than to describe' (94). But how does one begin either history or autobiography if one cannot accomplish the seemingly simple task of disembarkation? Maning and Tristram face the same dilemma of creating a starting point for their stories, and thus their lives, proper: where Tristram finds that he 'should be born before [he] was christened'<sup>6</sup>, Maning 'must turn back [...] a little, for [he] perceive[s] [he is] not on shore yet' (95). Their frequent digressions, as well as their reflections on them, establish meta-fictional levels dealing with the technicalities of story-writing, which twists the narrative thread considerably. As a result, the chronological order and the reading experience are constantly interrupted and complicated by the authors' propensity to digress.

Tristram's birth, Maning's life and the history of New Zealand sometimes appear to be distant side shows when the as yet unborn or still embarked heroes commence their rambling speeches. For example, when Tristram reflects on the ingredients of his story he is neither afraid of taking inclusivity to extremes – 'I have begun the history of myself,' he writes, 'as *Horace* says, *ab Ovo*.'<sup>7</sup> – nor too modest to praise the innovative character of his work:

[T]he machinery of my work is of a species by itself; two contrary motions are introduced into it, and reconciled, which were thought to be at variance with each other. In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too, - and at the same time.<sup>8</sup>

Not only does Tristram aim at including in the novel every single incident in his life from his conception over his birth to the present day of writing, he also

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6 Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. by Ian Campbell Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 47.

7 *Ibid.*, 8.

8 *Ibid.*, 58.

wants to do it in exciting new ways. But instead of either a narrative following the real course of events in his life or a relation of special occasions in it, he presents his readers with rampantly growing chains of associations, Lockean attempts at explaining the origins of ideas<sup>9</sup> and a huge number of subplots related to various characters in the text. In summary, whenever Tristram tries to give reasons for occurrences, and his idiosyncratic way of recounting them, he permits his mind to wander off to other, and still other, events.<sup>10</sup>

Arriving in New Zealand was clearly a shandean experience for Maning. Like Tristram, he is constantly distracted, frequently digresses and needs two whole chapters to land. Although the coast 'came closer and closer' (94), he ends up loquaciously elaborating on hearsay about New Zealand, the role of time and the differences between past and present until he lectures his readers on 'courage':

I have said 'plucked up courage', but that is not exactly my meaning. The fact is, kind reader, if you have followed me thus far, you are about to be rewarded for your perseverance. I am determined to make you as wise as I am myself on at least one important subject, and that is not saying a little, let me inform you, as I can hardly suppose you have made the discovery for yourself on so short an acquaintance. Falstaff, who was a very clever fellow, and whose word cannot be doubted, says – 'The better part of valour is discretion'. Now, that being the case, what in the name of Achilles, Hector, and Colonel Gold (he, I mean Achilles, was a rank coward, who went about knocking people on the head, being himself next thing to invulnerable, and who could not be hurt till he turned his back to the enemy. There is a deep moral in this same story about Achilles which perhaps, by the bye, I may explain to you) – what, I say again, in the name of everything valorous, can the worser part of valour be, if 'discretion' be the better? The fact is, my dear sir, I don't believe in courage at all, nor ever did; but there is something far better, which has carried me through many serious scrapes with éclat and safety; I mean the appearance of courage. (96-7)

Despite this lengthy detour, the narrator has neither exhausted the subject nor put across what he wanted to say:

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9 *Ibid.*, 70-1.

10 Calder, 'Maning's Tapu,' 7.

[B]ut the appearance of courage, or rather, as I deny the existence of the thing itself, that appearance which is thought to be courage, that is the thing will carry you through! – get you made K.C.B., Victoria Cross, and all that! [...] My secret is a very good secret; but one must of course do the thing properly; no matter of what kind the danger is, you must look it boldly in the face and keep your wits about you, and the more frightened you get the more determined you must be – to keep up appearances – and the half the danger is gone. So now, having corrected myself, as well as given some valuable advice, I shall start again for the shore by saying that I plucked up a very good appearance of courage and got on board the boat. (97)

These rambling passages do not convey essential information, nor do they represent Maning's disembarkation as a crucial step linking the social, ordered and western space of the ship with New Zealand's largely unexplored wilderness.<sup>11</sup> He rather uses the familiar register of Sterne's well-known novel to draw readers into his story. As we shall see, however, Maning's text is, unlike Sterne's, not a tour de force of spontaneous and hilarious story-telling, but an assertion of western authority over the Maori and their culture conveyed in apparently humorous language.

Maning's claimed objective in *Old New Zealand* is 'to place a few sketches of old Maori life on record before the remembrance of them has quite passed away' (92), clearly registering his sense that times and lives are changing after the arrival of western traders and settlers. Aiming at textualising, and thus historicising in the European sense, a primarily oral culture, Maning's account deprives the Maori, who have no power over this act of cultural translation, of the possibility of providing their own counterpoints in the resulting written record. Even as the Maori are perceived to be dying out, however, both historicisation and cultural translation wield their power subtly in this context, since *Old New Zealand* is based on Sterne's light-hearted, humorous and entertaining text. Maning uses the same rhetoric and paints a seemingly jaunty picture of travel and adventure, under the surface of which there is an ongoing, and at times violent, process of cultural displacement. Coupled with history, Maning's life-story promises an adventurer's tale set in the largely unknown waters of the South Pacific, but instead delivers linguistic colonialism by transposing *Tristram Shandy's* textual and structural grid to the Antipodes

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11 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 241.

in order to write New Zealand's history from a Western point of view. Of course, as both author and narrator Maning is the master and interpreter of what he repeatedly calls 'the good old times' without alluding to, or making explicit, his act of imposing western space-time on the Maori and their land by super-imposing a canonical text.

Most crucially, in contrast to Tristram, Maning's inception problem is not an integral constituent of the story, but an attempt of obfuscating the power relations between the representatives of orality and literacy, respectively. As such, it renders mutually enriching cross-cultural contacts – in other words, global civility – increasingly difficult to sustain and becomes the point of departure for Maning's idiosyncratic, but nonetheless effective, way to assert western dominance over New Zealand's native population.

### Autobiography and the Orality-Literacy-Divide

The digressive texts by Sterne and Maning challenge their readers' patience. Where Tristram does not manage to relate his birth in the novel's first two volumes, Maning's fictional alter ego needs two chapters to reach New Zealand's shores. Since their accounts do not establish a teleological narrative, they illustrate autobiography's generic ambiguities. Situated in a field of tension between historical accuracy and the art of story-telling, and complicated by the idiosyncracies of the human memory, both autobiography and fictional autobiography express a specifically modern desire spawned in the European Renaissance to narrate one's life. However, this desire is neither universal nor a cultural constant but rather 'a concern peculiar to Western man'<sup>12</sup> and the literate cultures from which he has emerged. Toying with narrative linearity, both Sterne and Maning question received cultural wisdom and its forms, as well as turn common expectations topsy-turvy.

Recording his life by modelling *Old New Zealand* on *Tristram Shandy*, Maning not only transposes specific cultural forms – the novel and (fictional) autobiography – to the vicissitudes of the contact zone, he also opens up a divide between orality and literacy.<sup>13</sup> Given the time and place of Maning's

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12 Georges Gusdorf, 'Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,' in James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 28-48, here 33-4.

13 A succinct introduction to the tensions between orality and literacy can be found in: Paul Goetsch, 'Fingierte Mündlichkeit in der Erzählkunst entwickelter Schriftkulturen,' *Poetica. Zeitschrift für Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft*. 17 (1985), 202-218. A full exposi-

generic transposition, this variation on the nature-culture-paradigm is crucial to understanding both the consolidation of imperial visions and the discursive changes in, and the eventual disappearance of, global civility. Since mutually beneficial relations are only sustainable as long as one's awareness of self is coupled with disinterested recognitions of an other, they are difficult to maintain in a cultural form dedicated to the writing of a single life, be it factual or fictional. Whilst the sentimental novel, and Keate's cross-cultural adaptation of it, presupposes the sentimental hero's interest in a suffering or culturally different subject that is fully recognized as such, autobiography constantly refers back to itself and its subject matter in 'a kind of unavoidable optical illusion.'<sup>14</sup> Viewed in this light, Maning's text is doubly significant in that it is a (fictional) account of his life set in the South Pacific: cultural representations of this vast ocean often mute its agency and the subjectivity of its inhabitants.<sup>15</sup> Amplifying this muteness, even if only implicitly, by a more or less rigid mode of writing is not only conducive to the 'constitution of authority on the basis of the other's absence'<sup>16</sup>, it also absorbs that which is culturally different into an alien sphere in an act of intellectual colonisation.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the orality-literacy-divide is not merely an epiphenomenon of the English settlers' presence in New Zealand, it is crucial to understanding how the Maori were textualised by Europeans without being able to even the scales.

In this respect, *Old New Zealand* raises several problems: it focuses on the single life of a settler rather than a mutually beneficial exchange, it textualises a primarily oral tribal community and, finally, it echoes a pre-existing canonical text, thereby incurring the cultural and power relations of the society from which *Tristram Shandy* has emerged. As a consequence, the Maori find themselves represented in both a medium and a genre which are not their own and 'that whites have brought from beyond the seas.'<sup>18</sup> Maning, though often satirising and mocking himself as well as the Maori, registers the serious extent to which literacy encroaches upon orality and the communities it has forged. When he remembers a Maori friend killed in a recent battle, he also

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tion of this topic is provided by: Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982).

14 Gusdorf, 'Conditions and Limits,' 41.

15 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 21.

16 *Ibid.*, 21.

17 Gusdorf, 'Conditions and Limits,' 29.

18 *Ibid.*, 29

illuminates the unilaterally transformative effects of the advent of western technologies:

Now it is necessary to remark that this young chief was a man in advance of his times and people in many respects. He was the first of his tribe who could read and write; and, amongst other unusual things for a native to do, he kept a register of deaths and births, and a journal of any remarkable events which happened in the tribe. (162)

In Maning's opinion, the young chief's marks of distinction are the mastery of foreign cultural techniques and a readiness to conform to imported practices, such as the registration of 'remarkable events.' Adding that this behaviour was unusual among the Maori, Maning implicitly indicates how he takes western customs for granted and, in so doing, narrows the space for the representation of native habits considerably. The author's awareness of the sweeping socio-cultural changes inaugurated by the influx of European goods, techniques and technologies notwithstanding, underlying this favourable portrait is a socially normalised teleological vision of progress and transformation arising from asymmetrical colonial encounters in the nineteenth century. In this passage in particular, and in *Old New Zealand* in general, the native population largely exists in relation to the coloniser's culture rather than in a sphere of its own right. Both the orality-literacy-divide and the radical difference of the Maori from Britain's metropolitan culture render the incorporation of tribal communities and cultural alterity increasingly difficult.

Maning's account differs decisively from eighteenth century travel writing in this regard. Like Tristram, Maning takes great pleasure in relating anecdote after anecdote but he uses Sterne's familiar register in order to draw his readers into his story while at the same time asserting his authority on all things Maori in a seemingly humorous tone. In some instances, however, he is surprisingly sober and relates rituals, customs and the effects of cultural change rather matter-of-factly. Hence, in *Old New Zealand* we find 'a tranche of ethnographic chapters more or less distinct from the autobiographical-cum-fictive text which surrounds it.'<sup>19</sup> This split indicates the rise of Europe's hegemonic desires caused by the sizeable amount of scientific and technological innovations and their consequences for both cultural production and the processing of knowledge:

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<sup>19</sup> Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 233.

This recurring separation of fact and fiction, history and romance, underlines the awkward accommodation of ethnographic material in nineteenth-century Pacific writing compared with the ease of its integration in eighteenth-century fictional travel writing. It can be understood as a symptom of anxiety about authority and authenticity, and as an attempt to allay that unease by self-consciously drawing upon and adding to the accumulating archive of knowledge about Oceania.<sup>20</sup>

Crisscrossing the Pacific in search of new knowledge, Enlightenment discoverers, and travellers generally, were almost always anxious because they were constantly confronted with natural and human novelties, as well as subjected to the unaccountability of the *je-ne-sais-quoi* of maritime long distance travel.<sup>21</sup> Initiating global networks of cultural and commercial exchange, discoverers like James Cook and Joseph Banks supplied the enlightened community in Europe, which consisted of natural historians, philosophers and cartographers, with hard earned-knowledge aimed at completing the great map of mankind. As a consequence, a global community bonded by civility and universal citizenship was not an unworldly chimera but an ideal to aspire to.<sup>22</sup> However, the difference between the age of reason and the subsequent age of imperialism, and the technological advancements it gave rise to, complicated the relationship between European self and native other considerably.

The restricted thematic focus of *Old New Zealand* as autobiography stands in marked contrast to Keate's *Account* and its fully-fledged sentimental rhetoric. Buttressed by science, technology, evolutionary discourse and its new temporalities, this gap grew wider and made it increasingly difficult for Europeans to conceive of themselves as on a par with Pacific islanders. On the basis of the supposed difference between themselves and extra-European peoples, learned white men and colonisers resorted to the knowledge that

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20 Ibid.

21 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 12.

22 Immanuel Kant, 'To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch,' in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, transl., with introduction, by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 107-143, here 119: 'Because a (narrower or wider) community widely prevails among the Earth's peoples, a transgression of rights in *one* place in the world is felt *everywhere*; consequently, the idea of cosmopolitan right is not fantastic and exaggerated, but rather an amendment to the unwritten code of national and international rights, necessary to the public rights of men in general. Only such amendment allows us to flatter ourselves with the thought that we are making continual progress towards perpetual peace.'

was accumulated out of scientific and commercial curiosity in the eighteenth century and turned it into a means of subjection by fusing it with the latest technological innovations. When Maning demands that ‘we must either civilise or by mere contact exterminate’ (138) the Maori, he not only relies on this consolidated knowledge-power base, he also anticipates the civilising missions that were yet to come. As one can see here, Maning’s humorous account is merely the vehicle for publicising and advocating the violent conversion of the Maori. However, using Sterne as a means of translating the Maori was just the beginning.

## 2. Discursive Formations in global Circulation: Literature, Law and binary Modes of Representation

### Intertextuality beyond Sterne: The Cultural Translation of *tapu*

The *je-ne-sais-quoi* of maritime long distance travel subjected European travellers and explorers to an experience that was both enticing and unsettling: the unknown. Especially in the South Pacific they hardly ever knew what they were about to find and the peoples, customs and landscapes on the other side of the contact zone were more often than not radically different from all things European. But informed by enlightened curiosity and eager to enhance their knowledge, eighteenth century travellers set out and established mutually enriching cross-cultural relations with extra-European peoples, which were sustainable despite the presence of alien customs, objects and entities. However, these unknown, and in many ways unaccountable, aspects of contact situations became increasingly difficult to accommodate in European representations of cultural alterity as industrialisation gathered pace, scientific innovations reshaped lives and evolutionary discourse gave rise to new temporalities in the course of the nineteenth century. An exemplary analysis of the cultural translation of *tapu* in *Old New Zealand*, a concept that has influenced western notions of cultural difference in various and changing ways in encounters between Europe and Polynesia,<sup>23</sup> shows the extent to which *pakehas*, settlers and their metropolitan audiences were puzzled by ‘this mysterious quality’ (146) that evolves into a marker of difference between civil self and native other in Maning’s translational representation.

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23 Calder, ‘Maning’s Tapu,’ 23.



As a former *pakeha Maori*, Maning had the necessary knowledge to render native customs understandable to those without first-hand experience of Maori lifeways. His efforts result in various incidents of cultural translation akin to *Old New Zealand's* autobiographical passages. Resorting to canonical or well-known texts, his representation of *tapu* widens the gulf between the literate settler culture of New Zealand and its native inhabitants' oral traditions. Accordingly, Maning's utilisation of ideologically charged textual artefacts on the colonial frontier is not merely an example of cultural circulation; it is an attempt to inscribe foreign practices, and the modes of their social reproduction, onto culturally differentially encoded peoples. In this context, *tapu* becomes a category through which Maning and his readers have coped with difference on the basis of the other's absence or silence.<sup>24</sup> Describing *tapu* in very general terms, Maning exploits this absence when he writes that 'everything absolutely was subject to its influence, and a more perplexing puzzle to new pakehas who were continually from ignorance infringing some of its rules, could not be well imagined' (146). Concentrating exclusively on *pakehas*, this characterisation heightens his readers' awareness of the seemingly fundamental difference between themselves and the Maori, which eventually opens out into an institutionally sustained, though culturally constructed, incommensurability.

Maning's explanation, then, aims not at viewing *tapu* in its indigenous cultural context, but represents it in relation to European social practices and thereby deforms it. A central concept in fictions of original social contracts,<sup>25</sup> the preservation of property becomes the centrepiece of his elaborations: 'It will be seen at once that this form of the *tapu* was a great preserver of property. The most valuable articles might, in ordinary circumstances, be left to its protection, in the absence of the owners, for any length of time' (147). Maning's first steps towards lifting his self-imposed obscurity after introducing the 'perplexing puzzle' appropriate the concept and transplant it into a European mindset. Here *tapu* becomes a screen onto which the author and his readers can project principles central to the societies from which they emerge, while at the same time muting its Maori context by not mentioning its original functions, such as rendering persons or resources inviolable in order to protect them. In so doing, Maning disregards customs into which he was initiated as *pakeha Maori*. But most crucially, neither in his explanations of

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24 *Ibid.*, 4.

25 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 134.

*tapu*, nor in his subsequent cultural translation of it does he represent a native viewpoint; he rather chooses to interpret it as abstruse impediment to western notions of improvement and progress, which offers occasional comic relief for his metropolitan readers.

Every now and then, however, he hints at *tapu*'s original use, albeit in biased and reductive ways. Among the Maori, only women, slaves and youngsters carried provisions or prepared food, since male warriors, or *rangatira*, were *tapu* and thus spared from these everyday activities. The warriors were responsible for the preservation of their tribe through fighting and solely consigned to this task. Relating one of his many digressive anecdotes, Maning 'was once going on an excursion with a number of natives' (150), but 'there was no one who had a back! – as they expressed it – and consequently no one to carry our provisions into the canoe: all the lads, women, and slaves had gone off in the other canoe' (150). But one of the natives comes up with an idea: "I'll tell you what we must do", said he, "we will not carry (*pikau*) the provisions we will *hiki* them." (*Hiki* is the word in Maori which describes the act of carrying an infant in the arms.)' (151). This is, then, the sought-after solution: 'And so, having thus evaded the law, we started our expedition' (151). However funny this incident may be, *tapu* appears primarily as obstructive to the uninitiated outsider rather than an expedient custom of Maori life. And what is more, despite Maning's allusion to those without 'a back', the comical aspects both override *tapu*'s intra-cultural significance and potentially invite ridicule from his European contemporaries entrenched in a complex socio-cultural texture of teleological progress, industrial capitalism and global expansion. Maori customs are thus prone to being perceived as primitive and deficient, and Maning's earlier remarks on the settlers' two options of dealing with them – either civilisation or extermination (138) – loom large even in seemingly humorous situations.

Though apparently light-hearted and entertaining, Maning's anecdote consolidates the gulf between civilised self and native other, and for that matter between orality and literacy. His idiosyncratic use of literary genres and texts contribute to transformations of representations of global civility, in which even-handed exchanges are supplanted by restrictive uses of artistic conventions.

And his ethnographic passages, which circulate biased knowledge of Maori lifeways, gloss over the power differential between the author and his objects of scrutiny. But Maning further recalibrates and narrows the discursive range of global civility, when he explains as well as translates 'a

most virulent kind" (152) of *tapu* – ‘the *tapu* of those who handled the dead, or conveyed the body to its last resting place’ (152-3) – by way of yet another digression.

‘What will my kind reader say,’ he asks us, ‘when I tell him that I myself once got *tapu’d* with this same horrible, horrible, most horrible, style of *tapu?*’ (153-4). Echoing the ghost’s words in the graveyard, Maning’s question conjures up a line in *Hamlet* in order to highlight the extent of his ‘excommunication’ (154), which stems from finding ‘a large skull rolling about in the water’ (154) and burying it.<sup>26</sup> Like the eponymous hero in Shakespeare’s play, he handles a skull immediately before its interment. And given that the Danish prince holds the former court jester Yorick’s one in his hand, three literary texts converge in this instance: Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, which contains a subplot on an unfortunate parson called Yorick; Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, in which the protagonist muses on life’s transience in the famous grave digger scene (V, i); and, of course, Maning’s *Old New Zealand* which both utilises these canonical literary references and transposes them to the colonial frontier in the Antipodes. The result is a dense and multi-layered network of literary allusions from various periods which sustains and highlights Maning’s ties with his readers, as well as unites them in a literate community, which is inaccessible for members of oral cultures. Although literary artefacts circulate on a global scale in this instance, the author does not bend their idioms, structures or themes to cross-cultural exigencies in order to forge bonds across cultural divides; instead, he uses them to consolidate his position as knowledgeable and reliable translator of Maori practices. It seems that even before we learn the details of his symbolic contamination we are clearly marked off from those who do not share our knowledge of the aforementioned texts.

After his act of transgression, Maning finds himself in the social wilderness. Not only do his native fellow travellers on this excursion suddenly shun him, they also inform the members of his household, all of them Maori (155), of his condition. As soon as he arrives at home, he finds it deserted and becomes aware of the social consequences of being *tapu’d*. However, despite his profound and intimate knowledge of all things Maori, and his time spent on the other side of the cultural divide, he chooses to represent his contaminated state in literary terms appealing to European readers rather than explaining

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26 Alex Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings* (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2001), 206, note no. 8.

*tapu* as native practice and condition central to New Zealand's tribal communities:

I now began to suspect that this attempt of mine to look down the *tapu* would fail, and that I should remain excommunicated for some frightfully indefinite period. I began to think of Robinson Crusoe, and to wonder if I could hold out as well as he did. Then I looked hard at the leg of pork. The idea that I must cook for myself, brought home to me the fact more forcibly than anything else how I had 'fallen from my high estate' – cooking being the very last thing a *rangatira* can turn his hand to. But why should I have anything more to do with cooking? – was I not cast off and repudiated by the human race? (A horrible misanthropy was fast taking hold of me). Why should I not tear my leg of pork raw, like a wolf? 'I will run a muck!' – suddenly said I. 'I wonder how many I can kill before they "bag" me? I will kill, kill, kill! – but – I must have some supper. (155)

Full of farcical elements, this passage both ridicules *tapu* as an important Maori practice and renders its puzzling pervasiveness understandable through appeals to a pre-existing textual grid. Comparing his state to Crusoe's involuntary insularity and quoting John Dryden,<sup>27</sup> Maning appropriates the concept and transplants it into a cultural sphere alien to its origins, while at the same time signalling *tapu's* radical difference by turning himself into a 'vaudeville cannibal'.<sup>28</sup> As such, he temporarily relinquishes his former semi-civil self – in other words, his liminal identity as *pakeha Maori* – and becomes the other of his own. This sensationalist transition aims at European audiences hungry for exotic hearsay and emphasises the dichotomously structured logic underlying *Old New Zealand*. As a consequence, Maning's transgression and its representation draw the readers' attention to the divides between self-other, nature-culture and orality-literacy, which only he has the knowledge, power and agency to transcend as often as he pleases. But most importantly, by rendering the Maori mute in his translation of integral constituents of their culture, Maning's text directly contributes to global civility's disintegration and its transformation into colonial discourse.

But how does the *pakeha Maori*-gone-savage fare in his seemingly splendid isolation? Hungry and without anyone to cook for him, he decides to light a fire and roast his pork. And before sitting down, he unsuccessfully attempts to

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27 Ibid., note no. 10.

28 Calder, 'Maning's Tapu,' 19.

decontaminate himself by conventional means. Just as the sleepwalking Lady Macbeth cannot wash Duncan's blood off her hands, Maning is unable to rid himself of *tapu*:

I washed my hands six or seven times, scrubbing away and muttering with an intonation that would have been a fortune to a tragic actor. 'Out damned spot'; and so, after having washed and dried my hands, looked at them, returned, and washed again, again washed, and so on, several times, I sat down and demolished two days' allowance.<sup>29</sup> (155)

Maning frames his attempts at purification in Shakespearean terms and equates his behaviour with performativity. He performs being wild but counterbalances his transgressive side with gestures familiar to his readers.<sup>30</sup> When finally a native priest, a *tohunga*, arrives in order properly to restore him to community-life, Maning unwillingly submits and thus indirectly seems to recognise and ratify tribal laws and customs. But Maning being Maning, he somewhat angrily reinforces the division between orality and literacy in the very moment of restoration and reconciliation:

In those days, when labouring under what Dickens calls the 'description of temporary insanity which arises from a sense of injury', I always involuntarily fell back upon my mother tongue, which in this case was perhaps fortunate, as my necromantic old friend did not understand the full force of my eloquence. (157)<sup>31</sup>

Maning's anger in this situation arises from both the *tohunga's* order to remove his contaminated clothes and the fear of being flogged. He illustrates his anger by quoting Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* and emphasises the division between himself and the native priest through his mother tongue, thus not only reinforcing the gulf between orality and literacy but also demonstrating that he is capable of transcending the divide whenever he pleases.<sup>32</sup> But contrary to his expectations, he does not meet with 'western sanctions'<sup>33</sup> and the *tohunga* calmly asks him not to become angry. However, despite the priest's serenity and mastery of this crucial situation, Maning emerges as the more

29 Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 206, note no. 11.

30 Calder, 'Maning's Tapu,' 19.

31 Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 206, note no. 13

32 Ibid.

33 Calder, 'Maning's Tapu,' 22.

powerful figure. Represented as outside Maning's 'mother tongue', the *tohunga* remains an object in the author's representation that is unable to assert his subjectivity in the sphere of western literacy to which he is neither invited nor admitted.

Maning's final disregard for the complexities of *tapu* prevents his translational digression from reaching its closure.<sup>34</sup> Although all his domestic implements were either broken or disposed of by the priest, Maning 'stole the knives, forks and spoons back again some time after, as he [the priest] had not broken them' (157). Even in this situation, which is designed to restore him to community-life, he exercises his authority by retrospectively dismantling the symbolic and material components of the decontamination ritual. The other, to whose social patterns he conformed as young *pakeha Maori*, emerges as merely an object for the gratification of the mature author's career aspirations: he textualises, translates and renders the Maori understandable for those who are either unwilling or unable to cross the cultural divide into Maori land. Literary citations and allusions are crucial in this context: their cultural sources become a means to consolidate Maning's own knowledge-power base. Whilst in the age of reason curious travellers used literature's idioms, themes and generic conventions to represent the actively lived ideal of global civility, cultural artefacts become part of consolidated visions of superiority in Britain's imperial nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup> The ways in which *Old New Zealand* appropriates the structure of *Tristram Shandy*, as well as Maning's translation of *tapu*, bear witness to this discursive change.

### Common Law, tribal Customs and the Appropriation of Land

As global civility gives way to discourses of colonialism and concomitant assertions of European superiority in the course of the nineteenth century, relations between *pakeha* and Maori became increasingly strained. Very often the Maori were primarily perceived as inherently belligerent by the colonisers, who had two options of dealing with them, one legal and institutional, another technical and potentially fatal, and both unfit for peaceful coexistence. Designed to formalise attitudes and claims to land between the two parties, the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) was among the colonisers' legal instru-

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34 *Ibid.*

35 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), 79-229.

ments.<sup>36</sup> But, of course, both the English wording and European notions of property central to all contractual fictions<sup>37</sup> differed considerably from Maori traditions and customs. On the other hand, conflicts arising over issues such as land were neither clear-cut nor easy to win for the English. The Maori were equipped with firearms, too, and could rely on their thorough knowledge of the land – a fact that Maning details in his other well-known work, *History of the War in the North* (1862). Although the author constructs a binary logic in both his books,<sup>38</sup> he nevertheless provides us with a glimpse of the colonial frontier in nineteenth century New Zealand in which ‘conditions of interdependence’<sup>39</sup> largely determined transactions between *pakeha* and Maori. Trying to purchase land from the natives, Maning not only encounters tribal complexities and Maori idiosyncrasies stemming from the desire to trade on favourable terms with the newcomers; he also invites readers to ponder the difficulties ‘between old and new, Maori and pakeha’<sup>40</sup> and thus between orality and literacy in the legal context of land ownership.

In *Old New Zealand*, Maning represents the long-winded story of how he ‘purchased a piece of land’ (127) as an anecdotal digression interrupted by his extensive elaborations on *tapu*. The two resulting episodes resemble two land purchases, one in 1834 and another in 1839, respectively. Whilst the first one illustrates the pitfalls of written contractual agreements between the representatives of a technologically highly advanced literate culture on the one hand and the members of an oral tribal community on the other, the second one represents the mutual obligations when *pakeha* transcend cultural divides and become adopted members of a Maori tribe. Although Maning describes his land purchases ‘in a skewed, sensational and dismissive way’<sup>41</sup>, his readers nevertheless learn something about the difficulties of introducing common law traditions in zones of colonial interaction, the violence entailed in that wish and the refracted European records that do not allow for the inclusion of oral counterpoints or alternative versions of dominant narratives. Here, too, the orality-literacy-divide, as well as the overarching nature-

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36 Alex Calder, ‘Introduction,’ in Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 1-14, here 9.

37 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 134.

38 Calder, ‘Introduction,’ 10.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*, 7.

culture-paradigm, are crucial to understanding the transactions between the *pakeha Maori* and his native interlocutors.

Maning's eagerness for land suffers several initial setbacks and is connected to European notions of property-ownership. A key-element of self-preservation, private property is guaranteed in western societies by the rule of law and occupies a central position in both fictions of social contracts and philosophical discussions surrounding them.<sup>42</sup> Especially when exposed to fragile forms of cross-cultural sociality, Europeans were acutely aware of the 'instinctive duty of self-preservation'<sup>43</sup> and the necessity of procuring the means to achieve it. Land was thus crucial to Maning but hard to obtain: the attitudes of Europeans and Maori to, and conceptualisations of, the ground they cultivated proved difficult to reconcile. Reflecting on his first land purchase, Maning illustrates the intricacies it precipitated:

I really can't tell to the present day who I purchased the land from, for there were about fifty different claimants, every one of whom assured me that the other forty-nine were 'humbugs', and had no right whatever. (127)

This passage represents a skewed exchange in which Maning emphasises the cultural differences between himself and the Maori. Adding that there were many claims 'which had lain dormant until it was known the *pakeha* had his eye on the land' (127), he turns the natives into a collectively represented other driven by greed and acquisitiveness. As such, they have no voice and the author neither attempts to accommodate Maori notions of property nor explains the complex set of duties and relationships governing social interaction on the colonial frontier. In this regard, property and property-ownership emerge as divisive and buttress the constructed incommensurability between civil self and native other.

Relating the details of this transaction, which took about three months to complete, Maning widens the intercultural gap even further. Many of the natives' claims to the piece of land, such as one man's ancestor who lived there as 'a huge lizard' (127), or another's right to catch rats on it although there were none, must have seemed ludicrous to Maning's European contemporaries and could not be enshrined into their systems of law. But instead of relating native customs, the mutual dependence between *pakeha* and Maori or the relativity

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42 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, 134.

43 *Ibid.*, 18



of all social arrangements, he draws up a long list with Maori claims to the disputed piece of land until he relates the completion of the transaction:

I then and there handed over to the assembled mob the price of the land, consisting of a great lot of blankets, muskets, tomahawks, tobacco, spades, axes, &c., &c.; and received in return a very dirty piece of paper with all their marks on it, I having written the terms of transfer on it in English to my own perfect satisfaction. (128/129)

Contending that the value of land in the Antipodes is 'chiefly imaginary' (129), Maning does not specify the price he paid. In lieu thereof he exploits the natives' desire – a desire that he helped to create as *pakeha* Maori trader – for European goods and silences them by simply chucking out 'a great lot' of popular items. And what is more, Maning strikes a treaty with members of a community he repeatedly represents as beyond civil society's reach.<sup>44</sup> Strictly speaking, as such they cannot enter into contractual agreements.<sup>45</sup> But despite the non-existence of legal representability, the Maori are roped into 'the discursive universe of the law'<sup>46</sup> by Maning because it suits his purposes. As a consequence, his breathtaking flexibility on selected issues secures his strong position as well as sustains the gap between the represented and the one doing the representing.

In this context, even-handed cross-cultural exchanges are difficult, if not impossible, to establish. Episodes such as Maning's first land purchase transform representations of global civility, which are based on benevolent curiosity and the self's recognition of the other's subjectivity and agency, through continued efforts at placing the Maori outside civilisation, law or literacy. And just as Maning translated *tapu* as practiced by an oral community for his European or settler audiences, he lays down the details of the land purchase in writing and thus in a cultural form alien to his Maori contemporaries. But

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44 Maning describes the Maori as living in 'a state of society wherein might was to a very great extent right, and where bodily strength and courage were almost the sole qualities for which a man was respected or valued' (133). Additionally, violence, according to Maning, seems to have been endemic in New Zealand: 'Now if there is one thing I hate more than another it is the raw-head-and-bloody-bones style of writing, and in these random reminiscences I shall avoid all particular mention of battles, massacres, and onslaughts, except there be something particularly characteristic of my friend the Maori in them' (122). He also repeats this claim on p. 166.

45 Calder, 'Introduction,' 9.

46 *Ibid.*, 8

form, in turn, determines content and in this respect, too, Maning's choice is divisive: for his 'own perfect satisfaction' he chooses English rather than a transliteration of Maori and, in so doing, reinforces the power differential between himself and those he calls 'the assembled mob.' Unable to seal the deal with their signatures, they can only leave 'their marks' on Maning's contract and are probably unaware of what exactly they ceded, sold or agreed to in the legal framework that only Europeans fully comprehend. Rooted in the divide between orality and literacy, this fictionalised micro-social incident has a macro-historical parallel: the war in the north, which Maning describes in his *History* (1862), broke out over differing interpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840).<sup>47</sup> Both treaty-making and breaking and conditions of coercion, such as the dispossession of Maori from their land, contribute to the erection of social, cultural and material boundaries between the two sides as well as testify to thoroughgoing transformations in the possibility of a continuing discourse of global civility. As a consequence, its inclusive matrix of mutual recognition and hospitality is being broken down into a dichotomously structured pattern of misunderstanding and primitive accumulation.

Maning's second land purchase, on the other hand, is framed in Maori terms but works along similar lines as the first one. It does not, however, elaborate on the 'murky and competitive interdependence'<sup>48</sup> between *pakeha* and Maori, in which the natives were eager to purchase European weapons and the newcomers sought profitable markets for their goods. Instead, this episode represents its Antipodean objects as greedy and mocks elements of mutuality in cross-cultural arrangements. Relating the details of this transaction, Maning tells the story of how he became an adopted member of a Maori tribe:

I consequently was therefore a part, and by no means an inconsiderable one, of the payment for my own land; but though now part and parcel of the property of the old rangatira aforementioned, a good deal of liberty was allowed me. The fact of my having become his pakeha made our respective relations and duties to each other about as follows [...]. (174)

Here Maning turns his voluntary liminality retrospectively into heteronomous appropriation. The comprehensive list of obligations subsequent to this passage does not clarify his 'good deal of liberty,' but denigrates those he traded

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47 *Ibid.*, 5.

48 *Ibid.*, 4.

with as young *pakeha Maori*, ridicules an agreement he had consciously entered into and explicates the terms of trade in a mocking enumeration of unilateral constraints. Adding that it was the chief's duty to prevent Maning from being 'bullied or imposed upon by any one but [the chief] himself' (175), the author represents him as greedy opponent rather than native interlocutor. Most crucially, however, Maning does not tell his readers that the tribe of 'the old *rangatira*' was the very same one to which his Maori wife Moengaroa belonged.<sup>49</sup> Maning is thus more than anxious to impart the natives' unpleasant characteristics but reluctant to share knowledge of the family, obligations and networks he entered by way of this extended transaction.

At first sight determined by the old chief, this exchange is, however, a heavily biased account of deals struck between Europeans and natives in pre-Treaty New Zealand. Written many years after the actual events, *Old New Zealand* rewrites the improvisational features of the contact period for an exclusively European and settler audience, whose benefits Maning seeks. As such, the book both maps and contributes to the evaporation of global civility in nineteenth century contact zones, which were in the process of becoming colonial frontiers. Whilst Maning's representation of *tapu* deprives cultural translation of its restitutive potential,<sup>50</sup> his depiction of cross-cultural exchanges and contracts aim at securing European privileges by mocking native customs as well as misrepresenting them. In this regard, he exploits legal discourses for purposes that are diametrically opposed to fictions of social contracts. Where curious travellers of the eighteenth century actively lived a cosmopolitan ideal that Kant later theorised in *Towards Perpetual Peace* (1795), Maning disenfranchises the Maori first symbolically in his books and then materially as judge of the Native Land Court.

However, he is breathtakingly mobile and readily sides with the Maori whenever and if it suits his purposes. After his exasperating and long-winded land purchases, Maning 'received notice to appear before certain persons called "Land Commissioners", who were part and parcel of the new inventions which had come up soon after the arrival of the first governor, and which are still a trouble to the land' (129). In pre-Treaty New Zealand, Europeans adopted by Maori tribes acted as intermediaries<sup>51</sup> and were crucial

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49 Ibid., 5.

50 Ashok Bery, *Cultural Translation and Postcolonial Poetry* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 8-9.

51 FitzGerald, 'Images of the Self,' 36.

in negotiating differences as well as important points of contact for both the landward and seaward sides of interaction. But this central intercultural position and its profitability came under threat when the Treaty established gubernatorial rule and introduced new institutions.<sup>52</sup> In this situation, Maning has to prove his title to the land and is threatened with ‘forfeiture of the same’ (129) if he fails to do so. Now he suddenly feels ‘plague[d]’ and emphasises his status as ‘a regularly naturalised member of a strong tribe’ (129). This personal makeover within a few lines from exasperated *pakeha* to proud *pakeha Maori* invites further scrutiny, since it is more than a literary ploy or a situational coping mechanism. It coincides with the transition from improvisational contact zone to regulated colonial frontier and not only demonstrates Maning’s mastery of both worlds but first and foremost illustrates how ‘flexible positional superiority’<sup>53</sup> mutes Europe’s others in Britain’s imperial nineteenth century. The vastness of the South Pacific<sup>54</sup>, its islands and inhabitants do not figure prominently as noteworthy variables in either Maning or the authorities’ strategies for New Zealand but are collectively reduced to the status of a disposable colonial quantity. This development mirrors both the transformation of global civility into colonial discourse and the trajectory of Maning’s life, which rests on the consolidated power-knowledge of two worlds.

Once in court, however, where he would later preside over cases himself, Maning continues his strategic identification with his Maori side. After a speech of several hours’ length, he finds that he is charged ‘at the rate of one farthing and one twentieth per word’ (129). Feeling cornered and ill-treated, Maning resorts to a curious inversion of earlier attempts at cultural translation: whilst he explained *tapu*’s puzzling qualities as a learned connoisseur to European readers, he employs his cultural sophistication in this case to demonstrate the absurdity not of Maori but of European customs. ‘Oh, Cicero! Oh, Demosthenes! Oh, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Sheridan! Oh, Daniel O’Connell! what would have become of you, if such a stopper had been clapt on your jawing tackle?’ (129). Given his self-conscious loquacity – ‘I can’t help being too prolix, perhaps, when describing it.’ (130) – we may infer that he was among those whose lucrative pre-Treaty arrangements were disturbed by the new order. His immediate identification with the Maori in this situation and

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52 Calder, Introduction, 5.

53 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995), 7.

54 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 1.

his later dispossession of them as judge of the Native Land Court may reflect the likely changes of a long life under the protean fortunes on the periphery of one's own culture, but the significance of his life-story runs deeper and reflects the shifting circumstances of New Zealand as a colony as well as illustrates the tremendous rise in European colonial ambitions in the course of the nineteenth century. The complex texture of, and the tensions within, Maning's life thus exemplify the intertwined European-Pacific histories and the evaporation of global civility as practiced in the age of reason.

### 3. Ethnographic Knowledge and Cultural Change

#### The Circulation of Knowledge and the Non-integration of Europe's Others

In the course of the nineteenth century, Europeans imported their discursive systems, such as law and literature, into New Zealand and othered the Maori by casting them out of civility and into the non-literate wilderness of orality. Beyond the reach of both literacy and civilisation, New Zealand's native population was collectively objectified and deprived of its history by the influx of alien customs, goods and institutions. Where commerce and enlightened curiosity carried the potential to engender mutually improving exchanges across cultural divides in the eighteenth century, colonial protagonists of the nineteenth confidently wielded their power and were fully aware of the impacts of their presence. Maning himself describes his native fellow-citizens in terms suggesting cultural uprooting – 'The fact is they are just now between two tides.' (145) – and expresses confidence in the evolutionary enforcement of western social organisation under the colonisers' continued auspices when he writes that 'it is a maxim of mine that "laws, if not *made*, will *grow*"' (145). In such a climate of cultural displacement, discourses of global civility in general and native customs in particular are difficult to accommodate in the European master-narrative of civilising missions. Thus, Maning's ethnographic descriptions are in keeping with the overall pattern of his account, in which literary form and content – that is, autobiography and a network of intertextual references – as well as legal tools, such as contracts, underpin first the symbolic and eventually the material disenfranchisement of the Maori.

Describing Maori mourning rituals, he reinforces the division between civil self and native other on several levels instead of rationalising or assessing them within the parameters of their socio-cultural sphere. On the sidelines of a lengthy native gathering, Maning takes a stroll and discovers 'lying on a clean

mat, which was spread on the ground, [a chopped-off] head' (120). Before he provides his readers with information on this unusual item's presence, however, Maning immediately turns his attention to 'a crowd of women' (120) surrounding the mat:

A number of women were standing in a row before it, screaming, wailing, and quivering their hands about in a most extraordinary manner, and cutting themselves dreadfully with sharp flints and shells. One old woman, in the centre of the group, was one clot of blood from head to feet, and large clots of coagulated blood lay on the ground where she stood. (120/121)

Adding that '[t]he sight was absolutely horrible'(121) and detailing minutely which body parts the woman cut, Maning exploits the ritual's otherness and turns it into a disturbing and sensationalist spectacle. In so doing, he not only denies her subjectivity but also objectifies both her body and grief in yet another illegitimate appropriation of native customs. And he finishes the descriptive part of this passage by turning the woman into an 'old creature' and essentialising her otherness by asserting that 'a more hideous object could scarcely be conceived' (121). Whilst this episode differs from many other instances in that Maning individualises his object of scrutiny, it nevertheless widens the gulf between his target audience and the colonisers on the one hand and the Maori on the other.

However, the former *pakeha Maori* does not stop here. He demonstrates his mastery of the subject-matter first by emphasising the seemingly savage aspects of the ritual proper and then by ridiculing its status 'in these degenerate times' (121), which are clearly marked off from his fictionalised and somewhat nostalgic version of pre-Treaty New Zealand. When he conjures up 'some degenerate hussey' who has 'no notion of cutting herself up properly as she ought to do' (121), his rather sudden change of tone indicates a transition from ethnographic survey to mockery. Since *Old New Zealand's* structure is modelled on Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, thematic innovations, radically new plots and sudden changes of tone are not surprising. But where Sterne's often comic and always self-conscious hero playfully offers his life-story as a stylistic experiment, Maning uses the novel's fragmentary, digressive and anecdotal design to impose dichotomously structured levels of representation on which global civility and discursive accommodation of cultural alterity give way to a version of colonialism built on essentialised and ontologically stable specimens of savagery. In a constant interplay between specific micro-social events and their placement within the larger frame of colonialism, native customs,

habits and traditions, and by implication Maning's acquaintance with them, do not appear as valuable ethnographic knowledge but become the material from which he forges his second career. Even the old Maori woman and her 'dirge-like wail' (121) fit this pattern.

When Maning finally reveals the story behind the disembodied head, he chooses to depict his native fellow citizens as warlike and blood-thirsty savages who unfeelingly kill their relatives. It turns out that two brothers were flying from their enemies when one of them was severely injured:

[T]he wounded man cried to the brother 'Do not leave my head a plaything for the foe'. There was no time for deliberation. The brother did not deliberate; a few slashes with the tomahawk saved his brother's head, and he escaped with it in his hand, dried it, and brought it home; and the old woman was the mother. (121; emphasis in original)

Sacrosanct in European societies, intra-familial relations emerge as fundamentally different among the Maori, and Maning's casual tone neither furthers his audience's understanding of them nor contributes positively to culture-specific analyses of the brothers' situation. Not only does he draw on and play with received stereotypes of extra-European peoples as innately different or belligerent, his explanation offers constructed, and thus culturally relative, differences that he retrospectively essentialised in spite of their situational fluidity in the contact zone. Given evolving evolutionary discourses, and social Darwinism as their corollary, nineteenth century readers of Maning's account must have been horrified by instances such as this one and inevitably conceived of themselves as superior to Maning's refracted representations. Even though he is knowledgeable in all things Maori, he does not share his expertise with his readers and glosses over the complexities of tribal rivalry as well as differences in social and family organisation by depicting violence as endemic and intrinsic in Maori life. By the same token, the brother's deed and the mother's mourning as represented by Maning do not invite ethnographic curiosity; they rather provoke reactions of disgust and put Europe's others into a vulnerable position by exposing their decontextualised behaviour to 'the civilizing mission of colonialism.'<sup>55</sup>

Most importantly, however, the tale of the head sheds light on the ugly side of contact situations and it is not the only one around which Maning structures one of his many digressions. Strolling about while the gathering

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55 Ibid., 10.

continues, he discovers ‘a company of natives’ (119) who, on closer inspection, turn out to be wooden crosses ornamented with heads. He mistakes them for ‘magnates or “personages” of some kind’ (119) and approaches them only to discover that ‘[t]he head has no body under it’ (120; emphasis in original). When suddenly another *pakeha* comes along he enlightens Maning as to what the heads are intended for: they are commodities valued by Europeans (120). A little later, Maning informs his readers that ‘[a]ll the heads on the hill were heads of enemies, and several of them are now in museums in Europe’ (122). He also comments briefly ‘on the state of the head market’ and admits that ‘the skippers of many of the colonial trading schooners were always ready to deal with a man who had “a real good head”’ (122).

These two episodes on ‘[l]oose notions about heads’ (107) in Maning’s version of pre-Treaty New Zealand change the terms of global civility and their cross-cultural practice. Attached to an elaborate and detailed description of native peace talks, his digressions appear to be ethnographic surveys of specific customs couched in a melange of mocking and seemingly factual language. On this level, Maning misrepresents native family relationships, mourning rituals and Maori forms of social organisation. In keeping with the dichotomously structured epistemological grid of *Old New Zealand*, his stories about those heads disseminate sensationalist pieces of information as well as de-contextualised examples of Maori behaviour. When we learn towards the end of Maning’s elaborations in a manner expressive of his usual mockery that he originally intended to avoid all instances of bloodshed ‘except there be something characteristic of my friend the Maori in them’ (122), we can see how far Maning’s fictional alter ego has travelled from his Antipodean beginnings as *pakeha* Maori and are suggestively invited to mistake his simplistic representation for New Zealand’s cultural reality. The many anecdotes in his book may have a true core, but frequently both his knowledge and experience are presented in a sensationalist way and reveal more about his career-related desires and the settlers’ presence in New Zealand than its native inhabitants. In the case of the heads, the latter aspect is particularly important and adds a material level to Maning’s discursive disenfranchisement of the Maori: not only are the natives’ bodies objectified, they become objects of European consumption and display. As such, the Maori are no longer recognisable as human beings and are entirely at the disposal of a perverted hunger for exotic items. In this process, *intra-* and *inter-*cultural commodification intersect and converge: some Maori sell the heads of their peers (120) and Europeans purchase them as they colonise, subject and eventually dominate all of New Zealand. When



human beings, who conceive of themselves as civilised, consume their others, global civility is disfigured beyond recognition and history has already paved the way for Europe's rise to colonial power, exploitation and cruelty, which are fundamentally different from the 'cosmopolitan civic exchange[s]<sup>56</sup> some enlightened explorers initiated in the eighteenth century.

### The Materiality of Cultural Change

Though often sensationalist, refracted and skewed, Maning's account nevertheless provides a window into pre-Treaty New Zealand and 'remains the central witness of the nation's border period.'<sup>57</sup> For any attempt of restoring complexity to cross-cultural encounters such witnesses are invaluable. However, texts like Maning's, which were written with an identifiable personal agenda in mind, call for careful readings and contextualisations if they are to reveal specific histories from within the epistemic structures to which they belong. Maning's representation of the mourning Maori woman, for example, exploits her otherness but is simultaneously a fountain 'of inevitably tainted knowledge'<sup>58</sup> about New Zealand's native population. Thus, *Old New Zealand* is complicit with colonial exploitation – symbolic as well as material – yet at the same time recorded colonialism's 'dispersed and differential impact'<sup>59</sup> across both time and space.

Despite their historical complexities, colonial and post-colonial constellations in the Pacific arena are often subject to totalising explanations in literary and historical scholarship. According to these simplified narratives, European colonisation went either smoothly and caused the disintegration of indigenous societies or they overemphasise native resistance and resilience.<sup>60</sup> Having examined *Old New Zealand's* use of literary genres, its strategic employment of selected discursive formations and Maning's contorted specimens of native customs, I will turn to this text again in order to propose an alternative assessment by focussing on the breadth, depth and scale of cultural

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56 Elizabeth Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 29.

57 Simon During, 'What was the West? Some Relations between Modernity, Colonialism and Writing,' *Meanjin* 48: 4 (1989), 759-776, here 772.

58 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 21

59 *Ibid.*, 11

60 *Ibid.*, 10.

change in contact situations. The basis for this analysis will be Maning's remarkable account of 'a general breaking up of old habits of life' (187) in New Zealand. I will analyse both the advent of European settlers and the changes they inaugurated as 'the specific activities and relationships of real men' that 'mean something very much more active, more complicated and more contradictory than developed metaphorical notion[s] of'<sup>61</sup> centre-periphery models commonly suggest or the dichotomous structure of Maning's account seems to invite. At issue here are his survey of historical settlement patterns and his skewed depiction of the old *rangatira* as a residual cultural phenomenon, respectively.

The former *pakeha Maori* organises these two intertwined yet distinct episodes around an object that Europeans brought with them: the musket.<sup>62</sup> Transposed to the Antipodes, it crossed the beach and acquired an almost fatal attractiveness for the Maori and considerable force in the transformations spurred by the newcomers. In addition to the 'flood of new ideas, new wants and ambitions' (171), the introduction of European weaponry changed the localities of Maori habitations from cultivations around fortified hill-tops to huts adjacent to swamps. There, they grew flax to exchange it for firearms, ammunition and iron but were at the same time exposed to the detrimental effects of the swamps' damp air (185-6). In this respect, the musket as single object, and skills associated with its operation, initiated tremendous alterations in the socio-economic bases of Maori life.

We can characterise this protracted process as thoroughgoing refashioning of New Zealand's material culture towards the setting of new limits and the exertion of as yet unknown pressures.<sup>63</sup> However, this shift of the cultural

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61 Raymond Williams, 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory,' in Vincent B. Leitch et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Norton, 2010), 1420-1437, here 1425.

62 Between 1818 and 1833 the so-called 'musket-wars' changed New Zealand considerably and had ramifications for the country's social and cultural fabric beyond these dates. According to Maning, '[t]he first grand cause of the decrease of the natives since the arrival of the Europeans is the musket' (184).

63 Compare Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 14: 'The important general point is that Pacific societies were colonized slowly and unevenly, and never entirely succumbed to western good, values and practices which inevitably were modified when they crossed the beach.' Furthermore, see Williams, p. 1426: 'We have to revalue "determination" towards the setting of limits and the exertion of pressure, and away from a predicted, prefigured and controlled content.'

goalposts had ramifications for global civility, too. Whilst in other arenas of Pacific travel even-handed cross-cultural cooperation (Keate) or pressing domestic concerns (Barrington & Parker) were predominant features of the respective contact zones, in nineteenth century New Zealand commercial interests, acquisitiveness and western assumptions of superiority overrode cooperative aspects found in travel accounts of the previous century. Coupled with emerging evolutionary discourses and fuelled by misguided appetites for exotic artefacts, interaction between the Maori and the ever-growing number of settlers turned eventually into a one-sided redefinition of the country's material conditions of life. Maning himself characterises the changes in some detail:

Now when the natives became generally armed with the musket they at once abandoned the hills [and] erected a new kind of fortification adapted to the capabilities of the new weapon. This was their destruction. There in mere swamps they built their oven-like houses, where the water even in summer sprung with the pressure of the foot, and where in winter the houses were often completely flooded. There, lying on the spongy soil, on beds of rushes which rotted under them – in little, low, dens of houses or kennels, heated like ovens at night and dripping with damp in the day – full of noxious exhalations from the damp soil, and impossible to ventilate – they were cut off by disease in a manner absolutely frightful. (185; emphasis in original)

What he conceals from his readers in this situation, however, is his own involvement in this process. *Pakeha maori* were traders, who, although they inhabited liminal spaces between settler and Maori cultures, sought markets for their goods and came to stay.<sup>64</sup> Even though Maning entered New Zealand towards the end of the musket wars and at a time when 'some fifty years of European contact had already effected vast changes in Maori culture,'<sup>65</sup> he nevertheless played an active role in furthering these changes and by profiting from lucrative pre-Treaty arrangements.

In his role as a trader, he could observe how western guns changed lives for good. As soon as the first tribe, the Ngapuhi in the Hokianga,<sup>66</sup> obtained the new commodity others were forced to relinquish both spear and tomahawk

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64 Calder, 'Introduction,' 2: According to Alex Calder, 'the fantasy of difference between invasive colonist and natural settler' is hard to sustain.

65 FitzGerald, 'Images of the Self,' 20.

66 Calder, 'Introduction,' 2.

as a matter of sheer survival: 'for if they did not procure [muskets] extermination was their doom by the hands of those of their countrymen who had' (186). In addition to the change of residence, which, according to Maning, was 'universal' (185), the influx of muskets was followed by 'hardship, over-labour, exposure, and half-starvation' (186) in the natives' struggle to produce enough tradable flax. And with the intensification of trade the increasing number of settlers introduced European diseases, which also contributed to depopulation.<sup>67</sup> But whilst the advent of the musket and its transformative agency impacted profoundly on New Zealand's native population, the changes it effected do not square with the fatal-impact hypothesis, the idea that Pacific societies disintegrated rapidly after first contacts had been established.<sup>68</sup> Resorting to monocausal explanations and attributing cultural change solely to the natives' fatal attraction to western goods and practices is tantamount to depriving Europe's others of their agency and history. Undoubtedly, the power differential between coloniser and colonised is an integral constituent in the history of European expansion and the arrival of western travellers, traders and settlers in many cases developed into radical inequality, with consequences ranging from exploitation and armed conflict to enslavement and genocide. However, the colonisers' arrival 'neither constitutes nor reconstitutes the whole'<sup>69</sup> of a culture's history and often met with resistance. It is tempting to read colonial history simply as flow of power emanating unilaterally from an imperial centre to peripheral zones, and the dichotomous logic of Maning's account is conducive to such a view. However, this is a narrative inextricably intertwined with the age of high imperialism and lead to different results in different parts of the globe. And despite their scale, the changes effected in New Zealand were complex and drawn out over a relatively long period of time.

Especially in pre-Treaty New Zealand, a time when individual arrangements rather than gubernatorial rule determined the terms of exchange, trade must have been extremely profitable for those who could supply weapons, ammunition, gun-powder and highly-valued iron (186-7). In those days, the Maori largely governed the modalities of inter-cultural relationships by se-

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67 Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 209, note no. 17

68 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 10.

69 *Ibid.*, 14.

lecting and purchasing the goods they needed and wanted.<sup>70</sup> Thus, the geographical and historical details of specific cross-cultural encounters are indispensable and illustrate the importance of Raymond Williams's call for inquiries into 'the specific activities and relationships of real men'<sup>71</sup> as well as emphasise the procedural dynamics rather than static constellations of contact zones. Published nearly three decades after the events it describes, and written with career-related intentions in mind, *Old New Zealand* circulates a very different picture sustained and fuelled not only by its author's goals but also by the increased scale and pace of colonisation. However, these shifts are not merely epiphenomenal, since they are intertwined with New Zealand's transition from a largely adventure-filled and improvisational sphere between cultures to a settled colony ruled by Europeans. The increasing ambivalence in representations of cultural alterity, which was followed by the evaporation of global civility in the course of the nineteenth century, is rooted in this transformation.

However, when there were only a few *pakeha* Maori traders in the Hokianga 'the manoeuvrable and "double-faced" Maning knew that the power to define boundaries lay elsewhere.'<sup>72</sup> He and the traders who arrived before him had to adapt to Maori social patterns and were drawn into tribal rivalries and infighting. According to Maning,

for a long period before the arrival of the Europeans [...] the natives at last believed that a constant state of warfare was the natural condition of life, and their sentiments, feelings, and maxims became gradually formed on this belief. Nothing was so valuable or respectable as strength and courage, and to acquire property by war and plunder more honourable and also more desirable than by labour. Cannibalism was glorious. The island was a pandemonium. (184)

This state worked in the traders' favour. Tribal rivalries and power struggles provided profitable markets for them and the about seventy Europeans, who lived in the Hokianga at the time of Maning's arrival, were important points

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70 Ibid.: 'Some [goods] were assimilated; others were simply ignored.' Compare also: Calder, Introduction, 4: 'There were about seventy Europeans' in the area where Maning lived 'alongside a Maori population numbering several thousand.'

71 Williams, 'Base and Superstructure,' 1425.

72 Calder, 'Introduction,' 4.

of contact for several thousand Maori warriors.<sup>73</sup> But Maning's record turns his former native interlocutors and peers from customers into 'Savages in the Tropical Seas':<sup>74</sup> seasoning this passage with a reference to cannibalism, he retrospectively shifts the centre of gravity of his early years in New Zealand away from the interactional dynamics of the contact zone to essentialised differences and contorted representations of Europe's others. Instead of a space pregnant with commercial opportunities for young adventurers, New Zealand becomes 'a pandemonium' for the mature Maning, whose textual authority rests on, and coincides with, the West's rising influence and power on a global scale.

In the context of global civility's transformation, then, New Zealand's 'times of constant war' (182) suggest the incommensurability of Maori and settler cultures. Coupled with the natives' emotional brutalisation, 'war and plunder' become the primary means to acquire property. Once again, differential regimes of property-ownership emerge as divisive in Maning's account and corroborate its dichotomous logic. This savage state of affairs must have appeared antithetical to Europeans, for their societies are founded upon the acquisition and preservation of property under the rule of law.<sup>75</sup> But as their numbers gradually increased, the settlers could assert the material consequences of their contractual tradition more forcefully. And the cannibalistic pandemonium evoked by Maning not only places the Maori beyond the reach of civilisation, but also invites civilising missions to draw them into the sphere of western social organisation.<sup>76</sup> Europeans could try to achieve this through agreements, violence or the attractiveness certain goods radiated. However,

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73 Ibid.

74 Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, ed. by Harvey Peter Sucksmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 201.

75 Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, Ch.1: 17-48.

76 In *Old New Zealand* Maning frequently distinguishes between pre-Treaty New Zealand on the one hand, and the country's existence under British rule on the other. However, he never mentions missionary activity in the Antipodes and attributes socio-cultural changes mainly to the influx of new weapons and western goods. But Patrick Brantlinger has drawn attention to the fact that missionaries believed in the necessity of civilising the Maori from the 1790s onwards. Hence, Maning's characterisation of New Zealand as 'a pandemonium' in this particular situation may very well have been influenced by missionary zealots who 'believed they were intervening, not in tropical edens but in some of the darkest, most diabolical places in the world.' Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 142.

within a framework of assumed superiority, which superseded global civility and was consolidated by increasingly sophisticated technology and weaponry, Europeans inevitably changed Maori culture and were even ready to crush native resistance by force.<sup>77</sup>

Unfortunately, Maning does not tell us very much about native resistance in *Old New Zealand*. But, if read in conjunction with and measured against the historical survey of settlement patterns, his sensationalist representation of the old *rangatira*, who adopted him, provides a window into native reactions to the influx of European people, goods and commodities.<sup>78</sup> And since Maning's 'old friend had a great hatred for the musket' (177) and 'had passed his whole life [...] in a scene of battle, murder, and blood-thirsty atrocities of the most horrific description' (179), he simultaneously represents continuity and discontinuity vis-à-vis ongoing changes. In contrast to other warriors, he never relinquished either spear or tomahawk and thus emerges both as cultural residue and specific focus of resistance to cultural transformation.<sup>79</sup> In this regard, the old *rangatira* balances the large-scale changes in Maning's account as well as illustrates that colonisation can proceed 'slowly and unevenly.'<sup>80</sup> Accordingly, cultural changes in the contact zone, such as the appearance and subsequent transformation of global civility, evolve over time and call for careful analyses attentive to spatio-temporal specificities. By following Maning's representation of the Maori warrior, then, we can try to plumb the individual depth rather than the general scope of *pakeha* and Maori interaction.

The trajectory of this encounter moved slowly but surely towards a *pakeha* way of life. Maning's initial exclamation – 'AH! those good old times, when I first came to New Zealand, we shall never see their like again.' (93) – is doubly relevant here. On the one hand, it reminds us of the Treaty's potential disruption of lucrative arrangements between *pakeha* traders and their Maori hosts; on the other, it draws attention to the effects of the settlers' continued presence on individual and collective Maori identities that either changed or

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77 Compare Maning's other, less well-known work 'History of the War in the North' (1862) in Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 17-87.

78 Calder, ed., *Old New Zealand and other Writings*, 208, note no. 9

79 In keeping with the overall pattern of his account, Maning's almost pervasive mockery does not spare the old warrior. The author tells us how the *rangatira* incidentally kills his brother-in-law (178) and his father (178-9), respectively.

80 Edmond, *Preserving the Self*, 14.

vanished altogether. As an eminent warrior, the old *rangatira* seems to have been particularly affected:

[T]he old 'martialist' would draw on the sand the plan of the battle he was criticising and describing; and, in the course of time I began to perceive that, before the introduction of the musket, the art of war had been brought to great perfection by the natives: and that, when large numbers were engaged in a pitched battle, the order of battle resembled, in a most striking manner, some of the most approved orders of battle of the ancients. Since the introduction of firearms the natives have entirely altered their tactics, and adopted a system better adapted to the new weapon and the nature of the country. (177)

Whilst the warrior, to whose family network Maning belonged, was not opposed to western goods as such, he categorically refused to adapt to firearms.<sup>81</sup> But to read him as either anachronistic impersonation or caricature of native warriors would, although his character contains elements of both, be simplistic. He is rather an important bearer of his tribe's collective memory and offers Maning comparative insights into Maori history. Even within the author's European intellectual horizon, elements of which he frequently employs to depreciate his others throughout *Old New Zealand*, the 'great perfection' of war in the pre-contact period as well as its resemblance of ancient 'orders of battle' are valuable and noteworthy pieces of information from within the natives' oral traditions. As time wore on and cross-cultural interaction intensified, however, the Maori were subject to large-scale transformations as both Maning and the *rangatira* relate: the natives experienced, first on their own terms, later on the settlers' ones, that changes in a society's material culture are followed by changes in its social fabric. Hence, Karl Marx's famous and somewhat provocative question – '[I]s Achilles possible with powder and lead?'<sup>82</sup> – not only neatly summarises in general, yet precise, fashion the historical rootedness of socio-economic formations, it also

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81 Compare Maning, 176: According to him, *pakeha* traders were 'in those glorious old times considered to be geese who laid golden eggs.' The warrior Maning describes is not exempt from this general trend.

82 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 'Grundrisse,' in Vincent B. Leitch et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Norton, 2010), 661-662, here 661.



illustrates the modalities of particular exchanges in contact zones like New Zealand.

As trade began to thrive, the old *rangatira* 'was always grumbling that the young men thought of nothing but trading' (180). A fighter dedicated to traditional weapons, who frequently spoke 'of those numerous battles, onslaughts, massacres, or stormings, in which all the active part of his life had been spent' (177), the old warrior clearly belongs to the time prior to the musket's general acceptance. From his complaints, we can infer that he was alienated from his structure of feeling,<sup>83</sup> for it depended on, and was bound up with, differential material conditions. But through his presence in Maning's account, we get a glimpse of how individuals were affected first by the arrival of Europeans and their goods, and subsequently by concerted and institutionalised efforts at colonisation. And the author's representation of him as both remorseless and 'unfeeling' (180) puts him right into the centre of New Zealand's supposedly uncivilised state of nature in pre-contact times as well as heightens the contrast between Maning's target audience and the Maori. This particular perspective, however, allows us to recognise him simultaneously as resilient individual and as member of a society in transformation. Hence, we can see how cultural change, especially in contact situations, restructures individuals and their relationships with one another. General histories predicated upon European agency and native passivity thus fail to account for the complicated and multi-layered texture of cross-cultural encounters. Accordingly, nuanced approaches to the specific forms of interaction, such as Maning's individualised representation of the warrior and the general patterns within which they appear, are neither attempts to deny colonialism's asymmetrical power relations nor are they tantamount to writing revisionist histories. Instead, they try to arrive at thorough and precise historical contextualisations of global civility and its evaporation in the imperial nineteenth century.

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83 Donna Landry, 'Saddle Time,' *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* 46: 3 (2004), 441–458, here 444.



## 8. Epilogue: From Global Civility to Comparative Imperialisms?

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This study has explored the development of a discourse of global civility in selected writings by English travellers to both the Ottoman Empire and the South Pacific. Its insistence on the complexity of cross-cultural encounters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where one looks in vain for the unilateral and clear-cut emanation of power from metropolitan centres in Europe, supplements established post-colonial frameworks. *Representations of Global Civility* thus follows in the wake of scholarship on the Renaissance that opened this era up for outside influences and re-evaluated it in terms of interaction, improvisation and international cultural and commercial traffic. It connects such approaches with eighteenth and nineteenth century travel writing in order to arrive at a thorough and precise historicisation of mutually improving encounters and their changing representations when European powers ceased merely to travel for either curiosity or commercial opportunities. From the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century onwards, Britain emerged as a powerful player in international diplomacy and became a fully-fledged imperial nation. Among the many consequences of this transformation were the increasingly ambivalent representations of cultural difference in English travel accounts of the period, which eventually gave way to a discourse of colonialism.

In addition to providing a counter-narrative to established interpretive patterns of the long eighteenth century, the present study also aims at opening new avenues for enquiry along similar lines. Travel texts, accounts of foreign lands and reports of little known civilisations provide ample opportunity to transpose the journeys of Englishmen to Ottoman lands to a global level and interweave them with analyses of travelogues by those who went to the Persian Empire. For example, the Sherley Brothers went to both realms in the early seventeenth century, but have received only limited critical attention

so far.<sup>1</sup> How did representations of such journeys that circulated in printed form in early modern Britain aid the emergence of a British imperial identity? How do analyses of literary and cultural perspectives on far-flung empires complement our understanding of political conceptualisations of imperial formations? Are there elements of (dis-)continuity that have persisted into the post-colonial and neo-colonial ages of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries? Such questions need to be asked if cross-cultural research is to break new ground in order to leave behind stifling paradigms predicated upon unilateral action and European agency. Since restrictive notions of interaction continue to dominate debates of what globalisation actually is or when it has begun, theoretical innovations will neither gain traction nor contribute to a profound, lasting and desperately needed 'decolonisation of the mind,'<sup>2</sup> in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's words. As a result of colonisation and empire, the centres of contemporary cultural and knowledge production are located in the West and too often perpetuate the sharp distinctions and dichotomous epistemic structures behind the formations they seek to critique. Probably continual calls for critical revaluations of the reductive rigidities inherent in Occidental thought have simply not been sufficient permanently to change concomitant behavioral patterns. It is thus high time to revisit the world's past empires in order to understand why they provided attractive and desirable models for those who promoted them at a given historical moment. Mere acquisitiveness and the hunger for power are accepted political motives, but they have to be supplemented by literary and cultural perspectives in comparative contexts in order to do critical justice to the sometimes straightforward, and sometimes complicated, constellations that govern contact zones in the long eighteenth century and beyond.

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- 1 Compare: Julia Schleck, *Telling True Tales of Islamic Lands: Forms of Mediation in English Travel Writing, 1575-1630* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2011), 61-92; and Anthony Parr, 'Foreign Relations in Jacobean England: The Sherley Brothers and the "Voyage of Persia,"' in Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michele Willems, eds., *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 14-31.
  - 2 Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey, 1986), 4-34.

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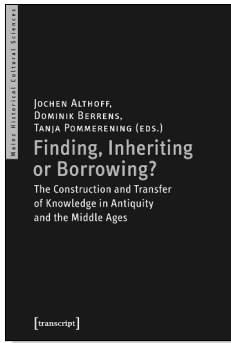
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# Historical Sciences



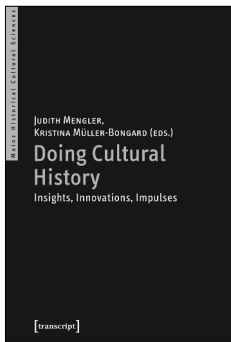
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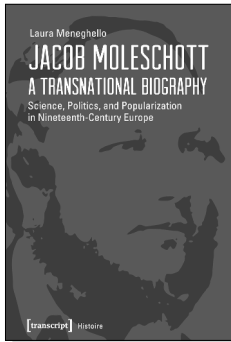


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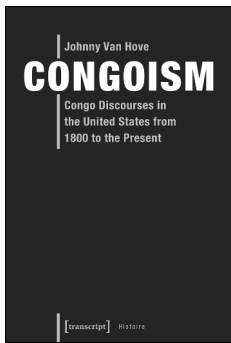
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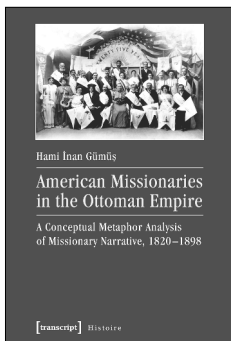
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