

Cultivating Difference in Early Modern Drama and the Literature of Travel

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## ABSTRACT

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This dissertation argues that the early modern discourse of conduct, which produced social difference within English households and communities, took on greater importance in a newly global world. In the conduct-obsessed culture of early modern England, two competing and contradictory beliefs about the nature of social difference emerged. The first of these was an ideology of cultivation, a widespread belief that social identity was malleable, that socio-economic status could be determined by measuring an individual's adherence to accepted codes of conduct. The second belief depended upon the idea that social difference was fixed and naturally determined, and thus that somatic differences such as sex and race were deeply significant. For those bearing stigmatized somatic marks, particularly women and non-Europeans, access to cultivating strategies was systematically circumscribed, and this process of socio-economic differentiation was understood as the natural consequence of bodily difference. This dissertation examines the discourse of conduct at work in both domestic and global contexts through early modern English conduct literature, guides to self-improvement through specific cultivating activities or strategies; through plays that stage cultivation as beneficial to self, community, and nation; and through travel writing, where authors attempt to make sense of unfamiliar customs and behaviors. In these works the social and material benefits of cultivation achieved through practices such as good husbandry, educational

travel, and hunting for sport are affirmed, even as the limited access of some groups to these same cultivating strategies is reiterated.

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For my other, better half.



## Introduction

Now internationally recognized as an artist and political activist, Fred Wilson has created installations that investigate the concept of race as it is perpetuated by the modern museum as institution. In the 1993 exhibit, *Mining the Museum*, Wilson juxtaposed objects from the Maryland Historical Society associated with hunting, such as carved wooden decoys, fowling pieces, and punt guns, with broadsides announcing the reward for the return of runaway slaves.<sup>1</sup> Conflating the hunt for fowl with the hunt for runaway humans, the installation reveals these activities as contemporaneous. Further, Wilson's reordering insists that the spirit of the hunt cannot be disentangled from the spirit of industry that enslaves and enforces hardship and oppression in pursuit of gain.

Wilson makes a similar statement with a simple graphic, "Chesapeake Bay Waterfowling Region" (Figure 1), a map on which three types of locations are marked: names of towns and water bodies, settlements of local indigenous tribes, and popular hunting clubs. In offering only these three types of information, Wilson's piece suggests how readily the map lends itself to the politics of its maker, yielding solely the information that is deemed appropriate, or useful. In "Chesapeake Bay Waterfowling Region" the addition of the names of tribes is deliberately inappropriate, creating "tribe" and "club" as distinct groups, and thus as distinct categories of human societies. They share the same geographic region and perhaps a similar interest in wildlife for sport and sustenance, but they are definitively separated through the mechanism of mapping. Wilson uses the language of cartography to illustrate a moment of discursive, even epistemic, crisis. Chesapeake Bay is claimed by and for both indigenous tribes and

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<sup>1</sup> *Mining the Museum* was presented by The Contemporary and the Maryland Historical Society from April 4, 1992 to February 28, 1993.

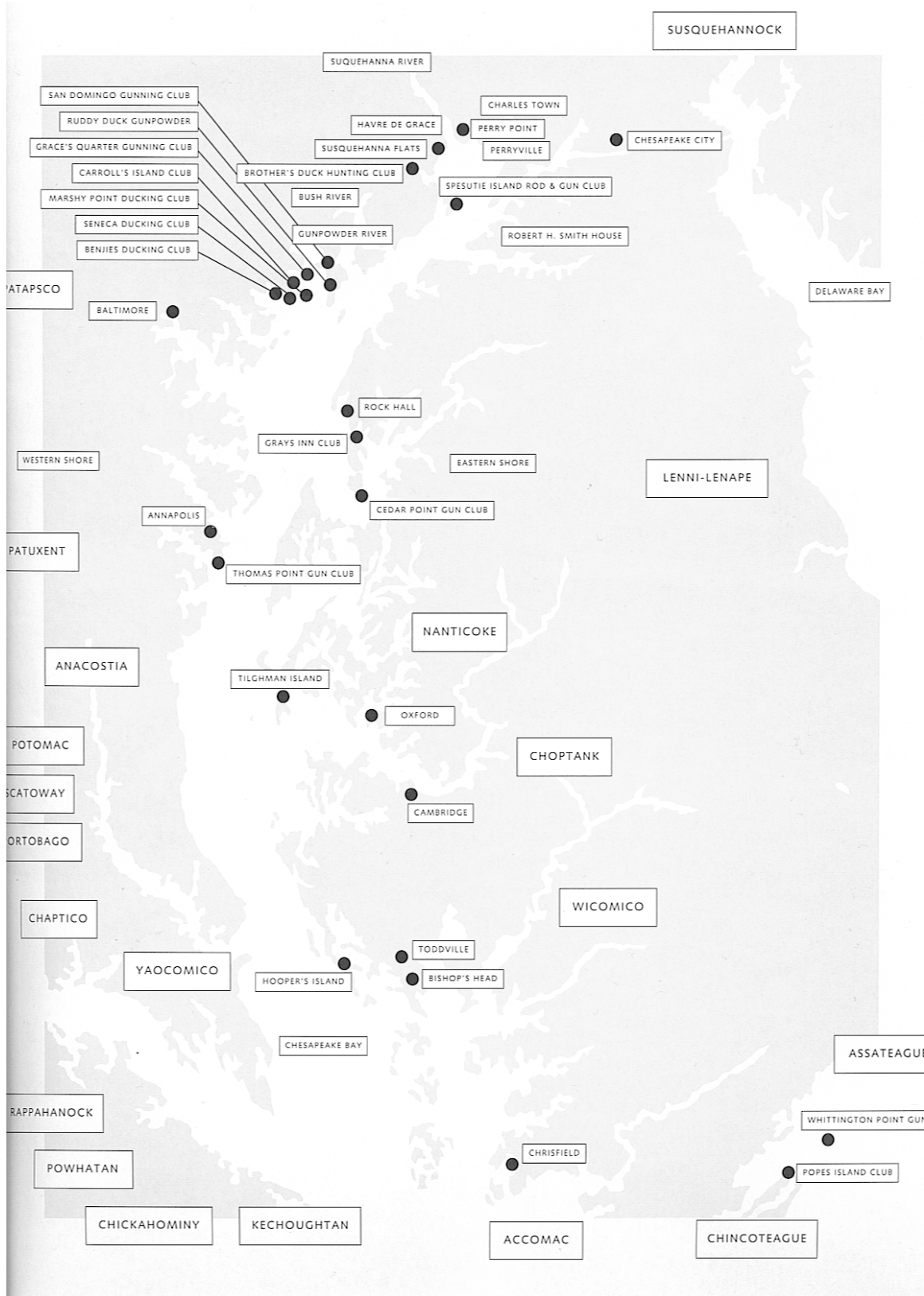


Figure 1: Fred Wilson, "Chesapeake Bay Waterfowling Region," *Mining the Museum*

hunting clubs, groups that hold divergent and competing ideas about the social meanings of the hunting. At this crux, hunting is more than an activity; it is a culturally specific custom connected to larger notions of regional and perhaps racial identity. To acknowledge such notions of identity as contested is to acknowledge the role of custom, or conduct, in the production of social difference. To map contested identities onto Chesapeake Bay, in particular, is to summon up a history of encounter and epistemic conflict stretching back to the earliest dealings between Native American communities and English settlers.

In "Cultivating Difference" I seek out such moments of epistemic conflict, presenting examples of early modern English conduct discourse in crisis. In doing this I have two aims. First, I introduce a new approach to thinking about the early modern English engagement (imaginative and material) with the wider world.<sup>2</sup> Second, I offer a

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<sup>2</sup> The past few decades have seen a steady increase of literary critical scholarship on early modern England's engagement with the global through travel, trade and settlement, in a variety of textual, material and discursive media. "Cosmopolitanism" and "New Globalism" have emerged as useful terms for describing the historical moment of the early modern period as one of intense paradigmatic change for many cultures as a result of unprecedented contact with and interest in the foreign. On early modern cosmopolitanism see Howard's introduction to the recent *Shakespeare Studies* forum "English Cosmopolitanism in the Early Modern Moment." On globalism see especially Singh's *The Global Renaissance*. Scholarly treatments of travel drama (see Jowitt, *Travel*; and Hadfield, *Literature*), and travel writing (see Fuller, *Voyages and Remembering*; and the edited volume *Travel Knowledge* from Kamps and Singh) have brought early modern plays into conversation with a body of travel writing in order to explore connections between English experiences of cross-cultural contact and literary representations of those experiences. Cox remains the most comprehensive bibliography of travel writing before 1800; see Parks *Richard Hakluyt* as well. Studies such as Hall, "Object into object?"; Brotton; and those in Sebek and Deng's recent edited volume examine the changes in English visual and material culture as long-distance trade brought exotic images and luxury goods--particularly textiles, jewels, and spices--to English marketplaces, households and imaginations. Jowitt; Vitkus; Burton and others have focused on the threat and thrill of piracy, armed conflict, and religious conversion in the early modern Mediterranean and in the dramatic sub-genre of Turk plays. Other scholars have focused on specific geographic regions in order to explore cultural contact and cross-pollination between England and Europe and the wider world. Scholars such as Matar and Andrea, for example, have offered in depth studies of the impact and influence of Ottoman empire and culture, while Raman and Singh have focused on Southeast Asia. On the topic of colonialism scholars have offered both studies of colonial discourse broadly understood and focused treatments of colonial discourse and the historical practice of colonization in specific regional and cultural contexts. Thus Knapp; Bach; Netzloff; and Loomba engage with early modern colonialism, writ large, while Maley; Palmer; Hadfield; and Herron have focused on Ireland as a crucible of early modern English ideas about ethnic difference, imperial ambitions and colonial schemes.

critique of the conduct system framed by a new analytic perspective.<sup>3</sup> Instead of focusing on court-centered conduct, male subject formation or even English subject formation, I extend the conversation about conduct to include the wider world with the idea that the English are experiencing that world as a landscape of diverse customs. Many of these customs would have been familiar, many completely alien, but none would have fit neatly into the English conduct system as it was understood, i.e., as a universal and universally applicable system that was, nevertheless, socially constructed and constructed in such a way as to underwrite the existing social hierarchy. It is at these moments where the conduct system fails to accommodate the strangeness and diversity of customs and their meanings that one can see the operations of the domestic conduct system, the means by which it supported social hierarchy at home, and an emerging one abroad.<sup>4</sup>

I argue that when the various forms of early modern conduct discourse are placed within a global context, the instability and ideological nature of that discourse is revealed. Conduct literature in general offered readers instruction in cultivation, a set of strategies for self-improvement with the goal of upward mobility. Although cultivation was

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<sup>3</sup> Whigham's *Ambition and Privilege*, which focuses on the courtier and the use of polite conversation, remains the most seminal criticism devoted to the genre of conduct literature. A significant number of literary critical studies have focused on the relationship between courtesy and poetry, particularly within the context of the Elizabethan court (see Javitch, for example); or on the authors of the major courtesy books such as Castiglione and Guazzo (see Hanning and Rosand eds; Lievsay; and Berger).

<sup>4</sup> My approach might best be referred to as "globalist," an epithet Vitkus's uses to describe studies working toward a comprehensive treatment of early modern English and/or European people's sense of the world as at once contiguous and diverse ("New Globalism" 33). Vitkus cites John Archer, Forman and Fuchs among others, as examples of such globalist scholarship. I would describe my own methodology, however, as most indebted to studies that are globalist in their aims and particular in their focus on the emergence of bodily difference as socially meaningful within the context of the global and, to some extent, constitutive of the idea of the global. For examples of this type of approach, see particularly Floyd-Wilson on geo-humouralism and Traub on cartographic imagination. In these studies, Floyd-Wilson and Traub distinguish the historical phenomenon of socially meaningful bodily difference (e.g. race) from the epistemologies of difference that produced it. They do this by tracing the existence and development of specific discursive arenas that are at work in both domestic and global contexts. I have followed this model in developing a "globalist" approach to the discursive analysis conduct and travel, and colonialism.

understood as universally available and beneficial, in fact, access was systematically circumscribed and ultimately beneficial only to a dominant group of literate and landed men. When the terms of conduct literature are evoked in the context of colonialism, travel, and encounter in particular, the very behavioral codes and practices that made up the idea of conduct are revealed as gendered and racialized, positing separate and less-advantageous activities as appropriate and "natural" for some groups. Cultivation was thus at once a process of improvement and denigration. In this study what I call the "ideology of cultivation" encompasses both processes: the pursuit of personal improvement and the stigmatization of particular kinds of social difference that become somatically marked.<sup>5</sup>

In speaking of an early modern English ideology of cultivation I mean to denote a system of widely held cultural beliefs. Though this system of beliefs seemed to allow equal access to upward mobility, in fact it served the interests of a dominant social group--literate, landed men. Though never wholly uncontested, a hegemonic ideology of cultivation held sway throughout the period under study, maintaining the privileges of landed status--revenues from the estate, cultural capital, leisure time--even as land, the commodity that conferred these privileges, remained difficult to buy or lease. The history of social mobility in England is a history of demographic and geographic change, a change in the status of individuals or of whole groups, of long-term change across one or more generations of a family, and swift change within a single lifetime. Social mobility has been measured in land as well as reputation, in personal wealth, movables,

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<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse's edited volume *The Ideology of Conduct*, which provided a model for the scope of this study. Armstrong and Tennenhouse's collection traces not just the history of conduct but the discourse of conduct as ideology "in its most basic and powerful form, namely, one that culture designates as nature itself" (2).

access to education, political position, favor or patronage, and in other ways. However, the history of social mobility is also the history of an idea, a belief in the possibility of social mobility, the perception that social mobility is occurring or may occur in one's own life or in the lives of others.

In this dissertation, I attend most closely to the idea of social mobility rather than to a historical pattern of social change measured in any material terms. In particular, I have focused on the powerful connection between land and upward social mobility in the early modern English popular imaginary.<sup>6</sup> As Lawrence Stone has discussed at length, owners had varying relationships to their land ranging from the hands-on agricultural work of the genteel husbandman to the absentee landlord collecting rents from tenants while living it up in London's West End.

Never agricultural entrepreneurs on a very large scale, noble-men contracted their activities in the early seventeenth century so that by 1640 the great majority were little more than rentiers, and often absentee rentiers at that. Given the prevailing economic conditions this change may well have produced the optimum financial return, but it certainly had important social consequences. It focused attention upon the ever-sensitive problem of rent and made this the flash-point of conflict in rural

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<sup>6</sup> Historians of social mobility have debated the idea of a rising English middle class in the early modern period, but few would dispute that land was the key factor in social differentiation more broadly. Lawrence Stone argues that a 'middle-class structure' certainly arose in this period, but "the dominant value system remained that of the landed gentleman" (*Crisis* 39). For a useful overview of the historiography of social mobility in England see Mascuch. For an overview of historians evaluating "land hunger" (the price of land compared with the potential rate of return) see Clark. Stone, in the widely-respected *Crisis of the Aristocracy* and in the later article "Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700," gives a thorough account of the representative importance of land--gaining, maintaining or losing land--as a visible marker of social status. In *An Open Elite?*, Stone and Stone suggest that only a very few of the estates that changed hands were actually purchased by middle-class social climbers. Nevertheless, there is a consensus about the significance of land as status or prestige asset. For example see Macfarlane; Habakkuk; Mildred Campbell; and Clay. For a recent quantitative analysis of intergenerational mobility see Clark and Hamilton.

society; it detached the nobility and squirearchy from direct contact with the soil; and it plunged an already leisured class into even greater idleness.

(*Crisis* 303)

While land-ownership indicated an elevated or upwardly mobile social stature, a key marker that functioned to differentiate between class groups was in fact the mark of "idleness." Stone suggests a spectrum of relationships to the land, from the close and labor-intensive agricultural work of the tenant farmer to the country gentleman or courtier who never muddies his boots, to the leisured and cosmopolitan courtier. On this spectrum it is "great idleness," rather than great wealth or a vast estate, that marks the highest social echelon. For early modern people, idleness *per se* was of course a vice more than a virtue, but free time, the prerogative of wealth, was the mark of great social standing. In this system the personal development that a share of "great idleness" allows is held to be inherently worthwhile, producing a well-ordered society and serving as the best defense against corrupting influences.

Historians of manners have linked the emergence of an upwardly mobile middle class and an aristocracy in "crisis" with a growing demand for didactic writing about self-improvement through conduct beginning in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> Building on the work of historians such as Norbert Elias, John Mason, Michael Curtin and more recently, Anna Bryson, literary and cultural critics, Frank Whigham most notably, have emphasized the importance of conduct books--works offering advice about self-improvement through

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<sup>7</sup> Historical studies have centered on what I will refer to as "conduct" under a variety of other headings including manners, etiquette, courtesy, and civility. While these terms are not strictly synonymous now or in the period, the body of scholarly work I reference here is cohesive, the authors participating in an active dialogue about the relationship between affected behaviors as well as social identity. The major historical studies of conduct literature include Bryson; Elias; Kelso; Mason; and Wright "Handbooks to Improvement."

education to genteel or upwardly mobile readers--as both literary texts and repositories for rhetoric about class and gender difference, and early modern notions of the self.<sup>8</sup> Conduct books capitalized on the idea that a person of quality might improve himself (and sometimes herself) intellectually, spiritually, and practically, and that such improvement would be to his (or her) own benefit as well as for the greater good. During the period of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> to mid-17<sup>th</sup> centuries this genre emerged as increasingly popular, increasingly "naturalized"--as translations of continental works gave way to more English national and nationalist attempts--and increasingly specialized. General works that endeavored to educate readers about every conceivable topic from swimming to statesmanship continued to be produced, but alongside these treatises dedicated to a single subject such as dancing, polite conversation, or archery began to appear.<sup>9</sup>

Studies of early modern conduct and conduct literature have established three major ideas. First, there is the simple but important fact that people have culturally specific practices and codes of behavior that are socially meaningful (a phenomenon commonly referred to as "conduct"), and in many ways socially constitutive, and that change over time. Second, after a long hiatus dating back to antiquity, early modern people began to think of themselves again as malleable, believing they could shape their own social identities by engaging in or adopting certain customary practices. The idea of

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<sup>8</sup> Greenblatt's seminal *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* sparked numerous studies of the self and subject formation through various kinds of display, as well as studies of the materiality of display such as Fumerton's *Cultural Aesthetics*.

<sup>9</sup> Noyes provides a useful index of works in this genre. Some of the most popular titles, going through multiple editions from the late sixteenth- to early seventeenth century, included Guazzo's *Civile Conversation* (1581) and Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553) on polite conversation; Tusser's *Fiue hundreth pointes of good hubandrie* (1573) and Markham's *Cheape and Good Husbandry* (1614) on husbandry; Latham's *Latham's falconry* (1614) on hawking; Denny's *The Secret of Angling* (1613) on fishing; Ascham's *Toxophilus* (1544) on archery; Day's *The English Secretarie* (1586) and Fulwood's *The Enimie of Idlenesse* (1568) on letter-writing; and of course the translations of comprehensive Italian courtesy books such as Castiglione's *The Courtyer* (first English translation by Thomas Hoby in 1561) and Della Casa's *Galateo: A treatise of the Maners* (first English translation by Robert Peterson in 1576).



the malleable or mutable self fell in line with widely accepted ideas about the import and effect of sartorial, climatological, humoral, and religious choices or changes. Scholars have turned to conduct literature as a key source for understanding early modern ideas about the significance of dress, education, cuisine, and religious conversion to name just a few markers/makers of social identity. The third major idea that has been established through the study of conduct is that, while early modern people had come to think of themselves as malleable, in fact many were impeded in their pursuit of self-fashioning by larger ideological and economic forces. This idea has been pivotal particularly in studies focusing on women's conduct. Work by scholars such as Wendy Wall, Suzanne Hull, and Ann Rosalind Jones has demonstrated the ways in which increasingly intricate instructions for women's proper behavior resulted in increasingly restricted access to socio-economic freedom or agency.<sup>10</sup>

In general, the potential for social oppression is a central component in ideologies of conduct. The progress of civility or spread of civilization, in Elias's terms, can be measured by the restriction of social power and other benefits to an exclusive group most readily understood as an upper or elite class. For this reason early modern studies of conduct have most often focused on the male courtier and the world of the court; the production of that elite subject, who is literate, landed (genteel or aristocratic) and male, and who is also, in many cases, the author of what Stephen Greenblatt terms "great art" such as lyric poetry or epic and is therefore of great interest to literary historians and

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<sup>10</sup> Ann Rosalind Jones "Nets and Bridles"; and Hull provide a thorough introduction to conduct books for women in the period and includes a useful bibliography. Recent studies include Wall; McBride, ed.; and Dowd and Eckerle, eds. Also notable is St. Clair and Maassen's six-volume anthology of facsimiles of women's conduct literature.

scholars (*Self-Fashioning* 5). By contrast, I have extended my focus to include women, non-elites, and cultural others, and I have done so in a larger, global context.

Over the course of this dissertation I demonstrate the centrality of the work of conduct to the formation of early modern English ideas about the wider world with which England's colonial and commercial ventures brought it into contact. Since "courtesy" is most closely linked to the gestures, dress and speech deemed appropriate for gentlemen, I have used the term "conduct" in order to refer to any broad and amorphous system of active behaviors, both good and bad, including physical movement, personal adornment, and speech. Though conduct systems might be perceived as universal, in fact they were customary, learned and practiced by a given society. Much of early modern English writing about travel and cross-cultural contact is concerned with the description of foreign customs and the reception of English and European customs overseas. Drama and travel literature conveyed this strange and alienating information in terms English readers could understand by invoking the familiar language of conduct literature, drawing upon its descriptions of acceptable behavior and, in turn, upon the idea of behavior as a legible expression of social identity. In the process, the terms of social difference were put under pressure in the face of the diversity of cultural practices in a newly global early modern world. Consequently, while the study of conduct has previously centered on the comprehensive courtesy books in translation popular in the Elizabethan period, such as Thomas Elyot's *Boke of the Governour* (1531) and Thomas Hoby's 1561 translation of Castiglione's *Il cortegiano*, I focus on the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century outpouring of English conduct books devoted to specific cultivating strategies.<sup>11</sup> In "Cultivating Difference" I foreground husbandry, travel and outdoor recreation, moving

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<sup>11</sup> Parenthetical dates after the titles of printed works give the first date of publication.

the study of conduct away from the world of the court, where rhetorical and sartorial display were paramount, out to the English countryside and beyond into the wider world.

By choosing to work with specific cultivating strategies within a wider discursive arena that includes not only conduct literature but drama and travel writing, I am able to press beyond the notion of "showing"--the ostentatious display of behaviors coded as elite or aristocratic in a bid for that status--emphasized as a key factor in the operation of conduct ideology in studies like Norbert Elias's, Anna Bryson's and Frank Whigham's.

The principal strategy of self-manifestation in such a frame is the ostentatious practice of symbolic behavior taken to typify aristocratic being. The gentleman is presumed to act in certain ways; the limiting case would have it that only a gentleman *can* act in those ways. But the symbolic referent here is ascriptive identity, an identity that by definition cannot be achieved by human effort. As a result there arose a basic governing principle of the display of *effortlessness*, Castiglione's *sprezzatura*, designed to imply the natural or given status of one's social identity and to deny any earned character, any labor or arrival from a social elsewhere.... The "natural" self is here recognized, perhaps for the first time, as a product, and soon, with the aid of courtesy books, becomes a commodity. (Whigham 33)

In my investigation I am interested not in "showing" but in "knowing," not in the "ostentatious practice of symbolic behavior" but in the ways in which such symbolic behaviors are "taken to typify" aristocratic or base "being." Exploring the epistemology of difference rather than its visible trappings, I seek a better understanding of the ways in

which early modern English people "know" or recognize difference and the means by which they identify and describe difference for one another. As I show, it is when early modern English people identify and interpret "symbolic behavior" that the changing social functions of difference, the processes of social differentiation and, to some extent, the potential effects of those processes on people's lived experience are revealed. Within the archive of textual, literary, and visual materials I have assembled here I am able to examine the work of conduct at the moment of English expansion. I focus not on English efforts at "effortlessness" (Castiglione's *sprezzatura*) but on the visibly labored efforts of English people to imagine themselves in relation to cultural others often in the absence of material evidence or first-hand experience. This approach allows me to attend not only to the cultivating strategies of husbandry, travel and hunting themselves but also to the ways in which authors struggled to represent the relative success or failure of those who attempted them and to convey the import of these evaluations.

Building on Whigham's crucial insight I move from the idea of "self as commodity" to the necessary evaluation of the processes by which that self is produced, the relative value of people as indicated by the relative value of their various behaviors. In this sense, drama is perhaps the most appropriate genre with which to pursue my critical aims. It is not through the material evidence of past performance or even the text of drama, but through our knowledge of the real but ephemeral experience of an historical dramatic performance--an event that involves playwright, actors, and theater audience--that we are able to theorize the expression, interpretation, reception, and response to ideas that exist or existed within a cultural imaginary that is otherwise inaccessible to us. With the dramatic text as guide, I seek out those places where the

language of the play intersects, converses with, or debates the language of conduct literature and travel writing in order to discover the epistemic means by which early modern English people sought to globalize a local conduct system in order to understand themselves in relation to a quickly diversifying world. Thus, while Whigham leads us to consider the importance of conduct as a material process of ostentatious display undertaken in order to prove "natural" aristocratic qualities, I argue that it may be equally important to consider the emergence of the idea that "natural" qualities provided a clear indication of social identity. Depending upon the social meanings of the "natural" qualities one was determined (by others) to possess, this subjective information could be treated as empirical evidence, an indelible and potentially devastating mark.

In the following chapters I demonstrate that the conduct system was based on more than a binary opposition between civil and uncouth, English and other. In each chapter I bring a dramatic text and related travel writings into dialogue with a genre of conduct literature in order to demonstrate how such works enabled reading and theater-going audiences to imagine the global by adapting local strategies for social stratification to distant locations and foreign people. The selection of these three cultivating strategies is designed to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. The ideology of cultivation called upon early modern people to assign relative value to one another based upon the performance of approved behaviors. One result was epistemological violence by which certain groups came to be characterized--marked--by a deficit of capacity, not only an inability to be better, but also an inability to know better in the first place. I argue that the prevalence of travel produced a crisis of representation for the conduct-obsessed culture of early modern England. When the domestic ideology of cultivation fails to

accommodate exotic peoples, lands, and customs, the meanings of conduct are revealed as constructed.

### **Mutability and Indelible Difference**

Leave of with paine, the blackamore to skowre,  
 With washinge ofte, and wiping more then due:  
 For thou shalt finde, that Nature is of powre,  
 Doe what thou canste, to keepe his former hue. (Whitney 57)

This emblem, taken from Geoffrey Whitney's anthology *A Choice of Emblemes, and Other Devises* (1586), warns against futile efforts, labor in vain. The emblem's accompanying image and the poem's central metaphor refer to scrubbing or washing black skin in an effort to make it lighter as an example of such futile effort. The emblem offers more than a reminder not to waste our time, however. The implicit claim the emblem makes by way of the central metaphor is that while the natural state of the blackamore is undesirable, his blackness is indelible. He *cannot* be improved *and* he is insufficient as he is. This unhappy condition, undesirable blackness, is a stigmatized somatic mark, an arbitrary, bodily sign that has taken on a specific and negative significance. Whitney's emblem is a useful jumping off point for a discussion of the social function of somatic difference, not least because it has been a touchstone for many scholars working on race in the early modern period.<sup>12</sup>

There is no information in Whitney's emblem that explains *why* blackness is undesirable. This information must be inferred by a reader familiar with the specific

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<sup>12</sup> See for example Newman (71-94); Loomba (104-22); Hall (114-15); and Patricia Parker ("Black Hamlet" 132-3). For an extended treatment of the proverb see also Massing; and Prager.

social meanings of blackness at the moment of the emblem's production. In the seminal study *Things of Darkness*, Kim F. Hall connects the trope of dark and light (or black and white) to the formation of English national identity. White and black delineated a spectrum from beautiful to unlovely, from desirable to undesirable and finally from self to other. Hall's study effectively links the practice of aesthetic discrimination between women, the discourse of beauty, with the moment of English economic expansion. The stigmatization of blackness is thus directly related to the need to reestablish not only male but now also *English/European* male hegemony.

This dissertation is not about blackness, however. Rather it is about how a somatic marker *like* indelible blackness signals an indelible social difference, the belief in which perpetuates disadvantage. I am indebted to Collette Guillaumin for her theory of the perceived "indelibility" of the somatic mark.

The characteristics of the mark vary, and its indelibility, as well as its more or less close proximity to/association with the body, is a function of: (1) the assumed permanence of the position that it is a sign of; and (2) the degree of subjection that it symbolizes. (140)

Rather than positing a teleology, a trajectory toward modern racialism, I seek to establish a means of detecting a persistent and particular kind of injustice, the signs of which are as fluid as they are injurious. Within the ideology of cultivation--a set of commonly held beliefs about the benefits of self-improvement--the indelibility of blackness, so commonplace as to be proverbial in early modern England, may be understood as a deficit of capacity to engage in self-improvement. The impossibility of "improving" black skin by making it lighter is linked to the idea that black *people* cannot be improved

and cannot improve themselves. The impossibility of improvement itself becomes an attribute associated with dark-skinned people.

In effect, however, a deficit of capacity for improvement is a deficit of access to "credit," to employ the terms offered by the economic historian Craig Muldrew in *The Economy of Obligation*. According to Muldrew, credit was a crucial commodity in early modern English communities, available only to those recognized for their successful efforts at self-improvement. As he explains, "Credit...consisted of a system of judgements about trustworthiness; and the trustworthiness of neighbours came to be stressed as the paramount communal virtue, just as trust in God was stressed as the central religious duty" (148). A household was dependent on its reputation for its livelihood, and reputation--a measure of conformity to certain behaviors commonly accepted as virtuous--was determined less by one's actions than by one's neighbors and was communicated by means of a common but unstable "language of judgement." Though this system posited the moral equality of all participants--"equality of potential to be trusted"--inequality of wealth, social station and other crucial factors meant that some groups were privileged over others or benefited from others' more tenuous grasp on creditworthiness.

Muldrew's culture of credit depends upon an equality of potential to be trusted, but access to credit-building cultivation processes such as estate management and travel were restricted to certain groups. In Muldrew's model the culture of credit is enabled by a language of judgment, a means of communicating information about individuals' trustworthiness, thus allowing people to make decisions about when and with whom to bind themselves in networks of obligation through social and financial ties. Of course it



is this same language of judgment that produces an inequality of potential to be trusted by adopting different standards (different languages) for different groups (codes of conduct vary for different ages, occupations, genders, classes and cultures). In addition, the virtues the language of judgment is supposed to identify and measure are amorphous and evolving conceptions of good and trustworthy behavior. Finally, in order to make use of a language of judgment, people must interpret arbitrary *signs* as indications of individuals' adherence to these shifting standards.

The credit system privileged proximity, in particular. Muldrew convincingly establishes the pervasiveness of the English culture of credit and suggests that it privileged local relationships over long distance ones. As he explains, those who lived and worked near their families, friends, business associates, and other connections stood to gain from this constant familiarity. For those who lived at a distance or abroad it became that much more difficult to establish trust with potential partners. The broader implications of this advantage fall outside the scope of Muldrew's project, however. Because the culture of credit was based in large part on a shared belief in trust as a tenet of Christian faith, trustworthiness might well be unattainable for those who did not share the same cultural or religious background. It is therefore important to note that in naming "Ethiopes" and "blackamores" Whitney ties a socially-meaningful somatic mark to both a group of people and a geographic location, the amorphous region of North and/or sub-Saharan Africa known to early modern Europeans as a land occupied by dark-skinned people. Building on Muldrew's framework for the production of socio-economic difference, I argue that the culture of credit facilitated both social and *somatic*

differentiation, branding those whose access to crucial socio-economic relationships (whether financial or interpersonal) was curtailed with a bodily sign of their inferiority.

In the culture of credit such wholesale disadvantage belies the promise that virtuous behavior will be rewarded with greater social and economic credit. This phenomenon is at odds with the idea of a communal language of judgment, in which individuals are judged to be base or virtuous only after they have demonstrated such qualities, or have been heard or known to have demonstrated them. This other method, in which individuals and whole groups are judged and found wanting *before* the arbitration the language of judgment represents, is recognizable as prejudice. Prejudice is a double bind, in which certain groups are perceived as "wanting" and are therefore-- notwithstanding any actual virtuous behavior on their part--believed to be not only incapable of the behaviors that might raise them up in society's estimation, but incapable of *knowing* better in the first place. Philosopher Miranda Fricker distinguishes this type of injustice from a more general prejudice like racism, identifying it instead as *epistemic* injustice or inequality.<sup>13</sup>

Any epistemic injustice wrongs someone in their capacity as a subject of knowledge, and thus in a capacity essential to human value. (*Epistemic Injustice* 5)

And further--

The fact that the primary injustice involves an insult to someone in respect of a capacity essential to human value lends even its least harmful instances a symbolic power that adds a layer of harm of its own: the

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<sup>13</sup> For an account of recent trends in feminist philosophy see her "Feminism in Epistemology: Pluralism without Postmodernism" in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy*.

epistemic wrong bears a social *meaning* to the effect that the subject is less than human. (*Epistemic Injustice* 44)

As Fricker notes, epistemic injustice, an injury caused by the ways in which a society interprets difference, has repercussions. The repercussions of societal prejudice triggered, and in a sense validated, by the "natural" marks of somatic difference constitute material differences in the lived experience of individuals.

The basic operation of the ideology of cultivation, barring certain groups from the kinds of conduct that yield tangible benefits (cultural and financial capital), is understood, then, as the consequence of "real" or natural differences between groups. Somatically marked people appear to have *inherently* base qualities. The stigmatized meanings of specific somatic markers appear to be determined *a priori*, by nature, when in fact they have been attached *a fortiori* as social constructs. Far from representing inherent baseness, the stigmatized somatic mark is in fact the mark of continual appropriation of economic and cultural capital from disadvantaged groups--disadvantaged in their level of access to strategies of self-improvement--for the greater benefit of the dominant group.<sup>14</sup>

If Whitney's emblem brands somatically marked and geographically distant groups with a deficit of capacity for self-improvement, Shakespeare's Moor of Venice redoubles the criticism by asserting not only a deficit of capacity to improve but also

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<sup>14</sup> It seems reasonable, here, to relate the ongoing processes of appropriation at the expense of far distant people to the emergence of a capitalist world economy. This phenomenon is presented, most notably, by Wallerstein in *The Modern World-System*. There he argues, "The periphery of a world-economy is that geographical sector of it wherein production is primarily of lower-ranking goods (that is, goods whose labor is less well rewarded) but which is an integral part of the overall system of the division of labor, because the commodities involved are essential for daily use" (301-2). Thus, in my own terms there is an inversely proportionate relationship between distance from the center and capacity for self-improvement. As the distance from the center increases, people's capacity to know themselves, to know the value of their own labor in relation to that of others, decreases. The result is an economic and epistemic division of labor in a capitalist world system that enables the flow of goods and cultural capital continually toward the center. For a concise review of the use of world-systems theory in current early modernist literary critical and cultural studies see Vitkus, "The New Globalism."

culpability for the failure to do so. At a well-known moment of textual crux, Othello likens himself to a base Indian or Judean, who "threw a pearl away richer than all his tribe" (5.2.345-6). Whether the word is Indian or Judean, the location where the action Othello describes as regrettable unfolds at a distance, in a nebulous "Indian" or "Judean" landscape, far from the setting of the play: Venice and Cyprus. The simple rhetorical move links the quality "baseness," which, the example seems to suggest, has to do with ignorance about the relative value of objects, to a group ("tribe") of distant, foreign people.<sup>15</sup> Othello ascribes culpability to the Indian and, by extension, to himself. His censure of the base Indian/Judean's ignorance may thus be understood as an expression of the universality of the ideology of cultivation in which all cultures are measured by the same behavior-based yardstick. To put it another way, however dissimilar in appearance and even custom, those cultures that fall short of the standards familiar to Venetian people are pitiable but still culpable for their failings.

Universal culpability is inherent in the culture of credit: in exchange for the promise of equality of potential to be trusted, economic and social actors return an implicit promise of responsibility for their own actions. All those blessed with the equality of potential to *be trusted* are understood to have agreed to *be trustworthy*. This mutual promise, or contract, did not stop at the borders of the English nation and, as a consequence, the expectation of culpability extended to all people everywhere. Muldrew outlines the framework of this invisible but omnipresent contractual agreement.

Credit made trust the most obvious form of social description, and as many of the writers cited here stressed, equality in exchange was

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<sup>15</sup> For an extended treatment of the idea that indigenous Americans and other base groups lacked the sophistication to distinguish treasures from trifles see for example Korda, "The Tragedy of the Handkerchief" in her *Shakespeare's Domestic Economies*.

necessary for contracts to be just, and contracts would only be kept if justice was present. It was from such equality that the sociability of commerce arose, allowing people to trust one another. Such equality, however, was moral in nature; it was equality of the potential to be trusted, and certainly not an equality of opportunity or wealth. (146)

Moral equality and equality of access to justice enable individuals to enter into contracts (social or economic) by ensuring that all parties have legal recourse in the event of default or deceit. A prior and implicit agreement must precede this one, however. Having been granted nominal moral equality--equality of potential to be trusted--agents in the culture of credit are assumed to have consented to be judged as to their trustworthiness, to be responsible for their behavior. As the culture of credit blankets the globe, *all* people are imagined to be culpable in this way. Thus, the traits and meanings associated with particular behaviors in England are imagined to hold everywhere.

Authors of conduct literature confidently claim the value of given behaviors as universally recognized. Activities that have a particularly strong resonance for early modern English readers often play a role in the evaluation--whether intentional or inadvertent--of the temperament, civility and "civilize-ability" of indigenous people. In this wider discursive field, the meanings of these coded activities become bound up with the trappings of early global capitalism--the clamor for trade in newly available luxury goods, the need for overseas markets for English goods, the division of labor in a global economy. In these global contexts, the ideological underpinnings of conduct--the means by which conduct serves to differentiate groups of English people from one another along arbitrary lines perceived as "natural"--achieve newly oppressive heights, affecting the

lived experience of even greater numbers of ideological subjects. In the process, however, these ideological underpinnings come under greater scrutiny and their operations become more transparent.

Angling, for example, had become a fashionable pastime amongst the better sort by the mid-sixteenth century, though the exercise had only recently been considered rather too pedestrian and labor-intensive for elites.<sup>16</sup> Conduct books such as Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) now offered detailed instructions on fishing right alongside more traditionally accepted forms of recreation for young men of quality. Angling had become ennobled in part by an accompanying philosophy that the sport exemplified the contemplative life, requiring patience, preparedness, and humility of its practitioners. Landed elites went so far as to build and stock fishing ponds on their estates if they did not already possess suitable spots for fishing on their property. Despite the very real importance of commercial fishing for less wealthy English people, conduct literature placed angling firmly outside the petty world of the mercantile.

For the use therof (in its owne true and unabused nature) carrieth in it neither couvetousness, deceipt, nor anger.... In this art of Angling there is no such evill, no such sinnefull violence, for the greatest thing it coveteth is, for much labour a little Fish, hardly so much as will suffice Nature in a reasonable stomacke: for the Angler must intice, not command his reward, and that which is worthy millions to his contentment, another may buy for a groate in the Market. (Markham B4r-v)

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<sup>16</sup> On the history of medieval and early modern angling and an account of the conduct literature see Loges; and Hoffmann.

In Gervase Markham's *The Pleasures of Princes or Good mens Recreations* (1614), angling is neither "delicate" nor "marvelous," but a "civill pastime."<sup>17</sup> To support this idea, Markham measures the value of the fish caught, and thus of the labor expended to catch it, in a new currency: "contentment." Fishing neither for sustenance nor for profit, the contemplative angler has a higher aim. It is this third possibility, fishing for contentment, that effects social differentiation. To pursue the art of angling is to exempt oneself from, to raise oneself above, the base objectives of the working fisherman or the savage in a state of nature. In this formula the base desire for profit is replaced by the honest desire for self-improvement. Covetousness is avoided, he argues, by measuring the market value of labor not by the amount of fish accumulated--"for much labour a little Fish"--but by the amount of contentment gained in obtaining that little fish--"that which is worthy millions to his contentment, another may buy for a groate in the Market." The market value of cultural capital is effectively elided in Markham's encomium. Though he is advertising the moral value of honest labor--happiness can't be bought--the fact is that the *leisure* time required for recreational fishing is not available to everyone equally. Instead, fishing for fun is already a mark of elite status or upward socio-economic mobility.

By the publication of the most famous and popular of fishing conduct books, Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, in 1653 the significance of the difference between a base covetousness and elite contentment in fishing had come to be marked in a very

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<sup>17</sup> *The Pleasures of Princes* is sometimes bound with the 1614 edition of Markham's *The Second Booke of the English Husbandman*.

specific way.<sup>18</sup> Written in the form of a dialogue, the final pages of *The Compleat Angler* find Piscator and Viator, his student, reciting verses in praise of angling to one another.

Here are no false entrapping baits  
 To hasten too too hasty fates;  
 Unless it be  
 the fond credulitie  
 Of silly fish, which, worldling like, still look  
 Upon the bait, but never on the hook;  
 Nor envy, 'nless among  
 The birds, for price of their sweet Song.

Go, let the diving Negro seek  
 For gems hid in some forlorn creek,  
 We all Pearls scorn,  
 Save what the dewy morne  
 Congeals upon each little spire of grasse,  
 Which careless Shepherds beat down as they passe. (Rv)

These lines place the honest angler in direct contrast to another figure: the Negro diving for pearls. In this formulation the speaker dismisses the diving Negro as the victim of an unfortunate obsession. The opposition between angling and diving is all about the relationship of the angler or diver to worldly pursuits. Here, the angler is affiliated with a peaceful, pastoral landscape, and likened to a humble, "careless" shepherd. For him,

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<sup>18</sup> The body of criticism on Walton's *Compleat Angler* is vast, but for a concise treatment see Radcliffe; and Nardo.



there are no "false entrapping baits." The diving negro's desire for pearls, however, is likened to the "worldling like" "silly fish." Desiring the bait, unaware of the hook, both fish and diver are the more pitiable. While angling is futile in the best sense--unconcerned with worldly gain--the labor of pearl-diving is both futile and dangerous. An exercise in worldly covetousness, pearl-diving threatens to "hasten fate" by risking both body and soul. The futility of angling identifies it as a cultivating strategy, the futility of diving identifies it as neither honest labor nor leisure, but instead as a vain and idle pastime.

But what is the significance of the other important difference between diver and angler? The angler is not described in detail, but the diver is identified as a Negro. While the figurative language is simple enough to interpret, the command, "Go, let the diving Negro seek / for gems," is a strange one for contemporary readers because it seems to allude to some commonplace now lost along with all its culturally-specific connotations. In order to for this offhand allusion to make sense, the figure of the Negro diving for pearls would have already had to be a very familiar one which, of course, it was. The poetic motif of the Indian diving for pearls is perhaps most familiar as a possible referent for the base Indian/Judean of Othello's final speech. In fact, the motif was an popular one, even ubiquitous in the drama and poetry of the early modern period. In this epigraph, for instance, taken from Fletcher and Massinger's *The Sea Voyage* (1647), the efforts of the "Negro" diving to the bottom of the sea are compared to those of a merchant willing to travel vast distances to obtain valuable commodities.<sup>19</sup>

*The men bestow jewels on the women.*

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<sup>19</sup> *The Sea Voyage* was first performed in 1622 and first published in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1647.

ALBERT. Here, see the idol of the lapidary.

TIBALT. These pearls for which the slavish negro dives

To the bottom of the sea.

LAMURE. To get which the industrious merchant touches

At either pole. (*The Sea Voyage* 3.363-6)

Here, the pearl diver is called a "Negro," in other citations the diver is an "Indian," a "Moor" or simply a "Slave." Though diving is akin to the recreational sport of angling, its meanings are wholly different for English gentlemen than for "slavish negros." While fishing for fish allows gentlemen practitioners to remove themselves from the market, rising from the worldly to the contemplative, diving for pearls transforms an indeterminate but disenfranchised group of Indians, Moors, Negros and nebulous others into objects for sale--"slaves."

As English interest in exotic luxury goods increased, English literature reflected a preoccupation with the intensive manual labor of exotic peoples required to produce those commodities. Scholars have explored a number of these commodities including sugar and the plantation complex, as well as gold and silver and New World mining. By focusing not on the pearls themselves but on the activity, pearl diving, in early modern English conduct literature, drama, and travel writing, I am able to trace the ways in which the poetic motif of the slave diving for pearls contributes to a common belief in the cultivating powers of activities like fishing for pleasure. Slavishness is recast in the pearl diving motif as a mindless determination to labor but never to own the product of that labor. In this fantasy slavishness becomes almost an admirable quality, a marvelous habit that is imagined to benefit English people by chance rather than by design. This kind of

rhetorical strategy--critique by means of praise--can easily be compared to the rhetorical strategies of conduct literature. There, readers came to expect that in learning the correct method of fishing (or dancing, or fencing, or hunting, and so on) they were also learning to eschew less civilized ways of behaving and, in the process, learning to be better people. Essentially, in a culture where conduct was all too full of import, method *was* meaning. Discussions of all kinds of indigenous fishing methods both strange and mundane appear in New World travel writing.

These descriptions taught early modern English readers about other peoples by teaching them how other people behaved. Authors of New World travel writing, for example, describe in detail the curious and inventive ways in which indigenous people not only traversed their rivers, lakes and oceans but also harnessed their bounty with ingenious fishing techniques that required expert swimming and diving skills. English readers were particularly interested in pearls, luxury items available in large quantities only from distant locations (particularly in the New World and Southeast Asia) and obtainable only by labor-intensive fishing methods.<sup>20</sup> Descriptions of pearl diving provided both the opportunity for English readers, merchants and potential settlers to fantasize about the acquisition of valuable gems in the New World, and the opportunity to censure rival European powers, especially the Spanish, for their methods in achieving that very goal. This passage from Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, translated into English in 1583 as *The Spanish Colonie*, is framed with moralizing commentary.

The tyrannie whiche the Spanishe exercise ouer the Indians, to fishe for Pearles, is one of the cruellest and cursedest thynges that is in the

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<sup>20</sup> For a thorough history of pearls and pearl-diving see Donkin; and Landman, et al.

worlde.... They let them into the sea, three, or foure, or fiue fadome forth downe right vnder water, from the morning vntyll sunnesette, where they are continually flitting without stint, to plucke oysters, in the which are engendred the pearles.... Sometyes they are drowned in the sea, and at their fishing and trauayle of piking of pearles, and neuer rise vp agayne aboue the water.... Let it nowe here be considered, whither in this purchase of Pearles, the commaundements of God, touching the loue of God, and our neyghbours be kept, or not: when they throwe those people into daunger of bodyes and soules. For they slay their neighbours by their couetousnesse. (H4v)

Though the author seems to sympathize with the plight of the enslaved Indians, their excruciating labors only serve to enhance the value and rarity of the pearl as luxury good. European covetousness is associated with the abuse and appropriation of Indians' facility with fishing, swimming and diving. The Indian facility with fishing, swimming and diving, meanwhile, is associated with futile and worldly effort that hurts more than helps the practitioner. The well-trodden motif of the pearl-diving Indian, Moor or slave comes to serve as a short hand for this inverse proportion--value increases not as the amount of labor increases but as the humanity of the laborer decreases. This notion is instrumental to the rhetorical strategies of English conduct books about the art of angling, in which access to recreational fishing as cultivating strategy is effectively limited to elite European men, the only group capable of fishing for pleasure--and thus for self-improvement--rather than for worldly gain.

In the culture of credit, indelible and stigmatized somatic markers are often coupled not only with culpability for moral and other failings, but also with indelible (fixed) spatial or geographic affiliations. During the early modern period the discursive work of dividing up the globe by categorizing its inhabitants into discreet groups identified by particular attributes including climatological, national, religious, and even sartorial differences, as well as somatic ones, was an ongoing practice. Valerie Traub draws attention to such spatial strategies of categorization in her article on race and cartography, "Mapping the Global Body."

With Europeans' increasing experience and expectation of global variation, concepts of nation, region, religion, lineage, genealogy, skin tone, complexion, mode of dress and living all begin to jostle and reassemble. If phenotype is a concept based on visual characteristics then what developed in the early modern period was not a phenotype based on the privileging of skin color, but a strategy of marking differences and similarities through a visual mimesis of nation, religion, lineage, costume, as well as skin color--in a word *habit*. . . . The habits of the populace of continents, countries, and towns were profoundly amenable to geometric rationalization. (59)

Examining the increasingly frequent practice of including human figures on the borders and within the shapes of continents on early modern maps, Traub offers insight into the connections between early modern ideas about the "global" and the emergence of more modern, static typologies of race, gender and sexuality. Though I rely on Traub's useful concept of *habit*, the assignment of persons or peoples to fixed locations and an

accompanying set of attributes, I make a distinction between mutable and indelible attributes. While other attributes may be changed--through relocation, assimilation, conversion or even a simple change of clothes--as with sex, this new kind of somatic marker cannot. It is at the site of this "real" or natural, socially meaningful, stigmatized and *indelible* somatic marker that I locate the emergence of race, or of racialist ideology.

This argument is not designed to discount or discredit the early modern belief that race and sex might be altered or challenged by means of humoral, climatological or sartorial change. Important work by scholars such as Mary Floyd Wilson, Gail Kern Paster, Joseph Roach, Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones, and Daniel Vitkus offer compelling arguments for the widespread belief in the mutability of identity.<sup>21</sup> These scholars and others argue persuasively for pervasive models of both voluntarily and involuntarily mutable identity including climatologically-determined race, the Galenic body and humorally-determined sex, and sartorially determined social identity. However, I want to suggest the existence of a contemporaneous and competing model of social difference. Though static and hierarchical, the ideology of cultivation is understood as egalitarian and universal. In fact, the widespread belief in the possibility, the naturalness of irremovable meanings attached to indelible somatic differences belies the notion of an egalitarian system even as it serves to protect the interests of the dominant group by denying access to cultivation to a growing body of people with the potential to make themselves over into social elites.

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<sup>21</sup> The early modern idea of malleable identity has been an important object of critical inquiry. Studies as diverse as Stallybrass and Jones's *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*; and Vitkus's *Turning Turk* explore the power of dress to alter social as well as national and even religious affiliation. Following Roach's *The Player's Passion*; and Paster's *The Body Embarrassed*, scholars such as Floyd-Wilson and Feerick have traced early modern ideas about climatological and geo-humoral adaptation and their implication for gender, race, national, and ethnic difference.

The very virtues for which a person might be praised also served to circumscribe his or her agency. Such behaviors were outlined, for example, in conduct books for women. For women, conduct books prescribed a life of quiet diligence, obedience, and attention to a litany of unpaid domestic labors, while young men were encouraged to make themselves useful to the wider world by pursuing an education, learning estate management, taking up an occupation, seeking out offices and traveling abroad. Thus in Fletcher's *The Noble Gentleman* (1626) Lord Mount Marine outlines for his servant Jacques his plans to leave the city and to school his ambitious and outgoing wife.<sup>22</sup>

GENTLEMAN. And I will make thy Mistriss,  
 My wife, looke to her landrie and her dayry,  
 That we may have our linnen cleane on Sundayes...  
 I and ere we walke about the grounds  
 Provide our breake-fast,  
 Or she shall smoke, I'le have her a good huswife  
 She shall not make a voyage to her sisters,  
 But she shall live at home,  
 And feed her pullen fat, and see her maides  
 In bed before her, and locke all the doores. (2.2.22-31)

For Lord Mount Marine, a "good huswife" is one who lives at home and does not stray abroad even to visit her sisters. Meanwhile, in Heywood and Rowley's *Fortune by Land and Sea* (1655), though the impoverished gentleman Old Forrest schools his son Frank for carousing all night in taverns with his city gallant friends, he encourages him to join

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<sup>22</sup> There is some debate about the authorship of the play. I have followed Beaurline in tentatively assigning authorship to Fletcher, to whom the play was licensed in 1625/6. For a discussion of the authorship see Beaurline's "Textual Introduction"; as well as Hoy; and Robert Wilson.

his friends in more athletic and outdoor recreations: "any fairer exercise, as practice of known weapons or to back some gallant steed...to dance, leap in the fields, to wrestle, or to try masteries in any noble quality" (*Fortune* 1.1). This neat division was related to the commonplace belief that the natural or biological differences between men and women dictated their separate roles. As Muldrew's analysis reveals, however, the culture of credit created groups distinguishable by their varying levels of access to credit. Thus, for women, to be more trustworthy (chaste, silent, thrifty, industrious at home) was to cut themselves off from the homo-social world of credit where to be more trustworthy (available, communicative, willing to lend and spend, industrious in the market) was in some sense to be more masculine. In this environment sex is a somatic mark easily stigmatized by means of the language of judgment, which offered appropriately socio-economic slurs for women who became gossips, spendthrifts, or strumpets, to name just a few.

The underpinnings of this new and competing model of social difference are somewhat at odds. Social difference is believed to be mutable for those who make the effort to better themselves, even as somatic markers that indicate the presence of immutable differences circumscribe the proffered agency for some groups. A useful iteration of these contradictory and coexistent ideas may be found in Joseph Hall's *Quo Vadis?* (1617), a conduct manual in the *ars apodemica* tradition. In *Quo Vadis?* Hall warns against travel in general, but makes an exception for merchants engaged in long-distance trade since, as he says, "Some commodities GOD hath confined to some countries.... His wise prouidence hath made one Countrey the Granary, another the Celler, another the Orchard, another the Arsenall of their neighbours, yea of the remotest



parts" (2). In the passage below Hall praises merchants for braving the dangers of long distance trade with an analogy praising English huswives for their thrift.<sup>23</sup>

A ship of Merchants that fetches her wares from farre is the good Huswife of the Common-wealth, and if she were so in those blinde voyages of antiquity, which neuer saw needle nor card, how much more thrifty must she needes be in so many helps both of Nature and Art? Either Indies may bee searched for those treasures, which God hath laid vp in them for their far-distant owners; Onley let our Marchants take heed, least they go so far, that they leave God behind them; that whiles they buy all other things good cheape, they make not an ill match for their soules, least they ende their prosperous aduentures in the shipwracke of good Conscience.

(3-4)

The metaphor succeeds because the figures being compared are, at first glance, entirely dissimilar. It takes advantage of a commonplace belief that women stay at home while men travel, an implicit "truth" that enables the use of metonymy: the huswife's short journey to market and back home is like the merchant's long journey to the Indies.

Joseph Hall's metaphor comparing merchants' ships to thrifty huswives hints at not one but two processes of appropriation. Thrift is a virtue expected of English huswives; extravagance would reflect badly on the household as a whole. The suggestion is that the merchant's long journey is also the fulfillment of a duty to behave virtuously. The comparison of the huswives' thrift to that of merchants seeking foreign markets where

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<sup>23</sup> The metaphor is also a biblical allusion--"She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar"--praising the virtuous wife or woman (Proverbs 31:14).

goods are available at low prices elides the merchants' primary aim, however. In fulfilling their duty, the merchants do more than save money, they also profit.

Commodities that may be described as both "treasures" and "cheap goods," are imagined to be found in the distant and amorphous "Indies," inhabited by "far-distant" people who are, presumably, unaware that their "cheap goods" are "treasures" to English merchants. The group "far-distant" people is also amorphous--indeed, early modern English writing about cultural others is characterized by a notorious indeterminacy of terms--however, according to Hall's offhand remark, the credit, the trustworthiness of this group or individual members of this group nevertheless remains determinable. The amorphous but wholly-circumscribed "far-distant" people group is marked as unable to conform to the behaviors commonly accepted as virtuous--they themselves embody the danger that "thrifty" merchants risk when they travel overseas in search of bargains.

The merchants in Hall's metaphor are imagined to be risking their own virtue when they bargain with far distant people. It is assumed that far distant people are untrustworthy to the extent that to be bound to them in a business agreement is to risk an "ill match" or bad bargain for one's soul. Here again, Hall takes advantage of a commonplace belief, in this case the belief that distant places and people represent a risk to a European traveler's credit back home. Hall locates far distant people at a geographic and *moral* distance from the imagined center, which may be England, Europe or Christendom more broadly. This move requires a proportional relationship based on fear more than on fact: the farther away from home merchants travel, the greater risk they face in bargaining with unknown and untrustworthy peoples. The merchant ship, or huswife, meanwhile, is linked to the notion of a stable and distinct English household which may

be penetrated by goods from far-distant places, but which is wholly divorced from the far-distant people involved in their production and sale. While social identity is mutable, spatial affiliation remains fixed--women to the domestic, whether within the borders of the household or the nation, as I argue in Chapter One; and far distant people to the global periphery, as I argue in Chapter Two. Women's access to mobile and interactive strategies for self-improvement, and thus for the accumulation of capital through networking, conducting business outside the home, and so on, is circumscribed in this way.<sup>24</sup>

In Chapter One I show how women and working people are continually barred from certain kinds of cultivation, resulting in their continuing subjugation. This chapter considers conduct and colonial discourse by reading husbandry and huswifery manuals--how-to books about housekeeping, agriculture and estate management--alongside plays like Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607) and Fletcher and Massinger's travel play, *The Sea Voyage* (1647), which link cultivation of self to the cultivation of land in both domestic and exotic settings. This chapter lays out the operations of the ideology of cultivation, the common belief in cultivation as good for everyone, revealing the ways in which women are excluded from the art of estate management though the success of the country estate depended on women's unpaid domestic labor and reproductive capacity. An examination of printed, translated and anthologized accounts of colonizing ventures shows how, in such texts, even as real and imagined colonies are described as English country estates and colonialism as English husbandry undertaken overseas, the importance of huswifery (women's domestic work) in such endeavors is

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<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that, historically, women were more active outside the home, in the market in particular, than prescription allowed. See, for example, Orlin, and historical studies such as those by Hanawalt; Gowing; and Judith Bennett.

downplayed. An extended reading of *The Sea Voyage* examines the failure of this discursive strategy, as the play revises the prevailing mode of colonial discourse by staging huswifery as an essential element of a successful colony.

In Chapter Two I explore the ways in which far distant people, too, are imagined as fixed in space, as essentially removed. I outline the gendered and racialized discourse of travel by reading *ars apodemica* (art of travel) treatises such as Robert Dallington's *A Method for Trauell* (1605), Francis Bacon's "Of Travaile" (1625), Fynes Moryson's "Of Travelling in Generall" (1617), and the compilation *Profitable instructions describing what speciall obseruations are to be taken by trauellers* (1633). These conduct books present travel as an opportunity for some to build--or to lose--credit, promoting travel for young gentlemen, but objecting to the prospect of women's travel. In addition, they warn that travel exposes both Englishmen and Europeans to the customs and influence of base and untrustworthy foreigners and that to do so is to risk loss of wealth, land, and even self. As a group, foreigners are marked in these texts as unable to conform to accepted behaviors and therefore unable to build the credit necessary to participate fully in socio-economic relationships, like marriage or friendship, or transactions, like borrowing and lending. I read Shakespeare's *Othello* as a commentary on the problem of building credit in a multicultural economy, a network in which locals and travellers must trust each other. *Othello* challenges the notion that strangers are essentially untrustworthy by interrogating the conduct-based culture of credit that produced such disparities. A consummate traveler and veteran military leader, Othello is introduced as both foreign and trustworthy. Nevertheless, he suffers a fatal loss of credit over the course of the play.

If travel presented a challenge to the prevailing system, particularly in the form of cultural others, settlement only intensified that challenge. In Chapter Three I trace one specific behavior associated with a social elite, hunting, from the English countryside to the English colonies in the New World. There, as in Fred Wilson's "Chesapeake Bay Fowling Region," the practice of hunting is diversified as distinctions are made between those who hunt for pleasure and those for whom hunting is labor. In *The Civilizing Process*, a foundational work in the study of conduct, Norbert Elias describes colonialism as "the last wave of the continuing civilizing movement" (464). This last wave follows the spread of the behaviors associated with Western "civilization" from the upper to the lower classes at the center and beyond to a geographic periphery. Elias describes an inverse proportion wherein "The contrasts in conduct between the upper and lower groups are reduced with the spread of civilization; the varieties or nuances of civilized conduct are increased" (464).

Chapter Three explores the importance of hunting to "entertainment," the custom of welcoming guests with dramatic performance. I read conduct books on hunting and country house entertainments in order to show how the combined performance of these two activities serves to define the relative social roles of the participants and their respective relationships to the land. Returning from the hunt, guests of country estates might encounter vignettes involving shepherds or gardeners in the green space between wilderness and household. These performances contrast the outdoor recreations of elite landowners with the symbolic labor of agricultural workers. I read the play within Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, an entertainment for the newly wed Duke Theseus and Hippolyta, in this context. I argue that a similar strategy is at work in New

World promotional literature, where authors attempted to entice settlers by describing the expertise of Native American hunters in detail, recasting the untamed landscape as a hunting ground for gentlemen or for those who aspired to that status. Encounters between the groups were often marked by activities described as "entertainments" and thus as completely comprehensible gestures of welcome. Discursive slippage in descriptions of hunting and "entertainment" reveals an implicit debate over the claims of settlers and indigenous groups to the land.

As I show, sport, like other cultivating strategies, is a social and discursive arena in which power relations are negotiated, defined, and redefined. Sport is a language of judgement of sorts, a set of rules and measures, and perhaps most importantly for my purposes, a set of socially meaningful behaviors which can be prescribed or prohibited, enacted or eschewed.<sup>25</sup> Sport is a crucial indicator, a key discriminator. Descriptions of activities rendered in terms of sport necessarily discriminate between those who enjoy leisure and those who are merely idle, those who have access to the material means and education necessary for certain sports and those for whom certain sports are out of reach.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the volatility and changing landscape of social difference in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, one factor of social differentiation remained constant. While "general differences between the lifestyles of aristocrats and

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<sup>25</sup> Semenza has delivered perhaps the most substantial work on sport and early modern English culture, identifying sport as "a phenomenon as central to Renaissance conceptions of order and control as it was to fears of disorder and excess" (23). He outlines the implications for class coding as well as ideas and fears about upward and downward mobility. As he suggests, "defenses of sport" and conduct literature more generally emphasized sporting activities as a means of distinguishing between social groups (43-4). Nevertheless the availability and popularity of many sports (dice, cards, cockfighting, racing, wrestling, and more) threatened to render genteel sportsmen more pedestrian despite or perhaps because of the way in which sporting might lend greater social standing to the upwardly mobile.

nonlanded elites" became less distinct, the significance of land itself as a measure of social standing and influence retained its import as upwardly mobile middling sort folk strove to solidify their new standing by joining the ranks of the landed gentry. Land-ownership is linked to the idleness that ownership affords. This clear view of the relationship between land, labor, and leisure is continually obscured, however, by a dominant value system that favors and flatters the cultivated habits, attributes, and behaviors of the landed gentleman. In this value system, effectively a system of social differentiation, the relative worth of people is determined by measuring the relative worth of their pastimes. Access to the knowledge, space, and equipment required for more sophisticated pastimes, in turn, was regularly restricted through legal, cultural, and other means. In addition, the leisure time necessary to learn and pursue such pastimes usually required an individual to possess a socio-economic advantage to begin with. The significance of husbandry, travel, or hunting for leisure, or indeed of any cultivating strategy, is predicated upon this pre-existing structure of land-based power. Thus the idea that cultivation might reward its practitioners with upward mobility was largely an illusion.

I began this introduction with an image created by Fred Wilson and I would like to conclude with another image, the installation "Metalwork 1793-1880" (Figure 2), which was also part of the *Mining the Museum* exhibit at the Maryland Historical Society. In this evocative display Wilson paired a silver tea set with a set of shackles, allowing viewers to link the open display of wealth to the hidden history of slavery. Historian Lorna Weatherill, who has studied the consumer patterns of English households

in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, notes that as drinking tea became a symbol of social status, demand grew for more and more elaborate serving utensils.

Tea was already familiar to many people of middle rank in the late seventeenth century, and by the mid-eighteenth century to drink tea was an expected part of the behaviour of people of middle rank.... In some households drinking tea became something of a ceremony, with appropriate, and expensive, equipment associated with it. (216)



Figure 2: Fred Wilson, "Metalwork 1793-1880," *Mining the Museum*

The material history of conduct, the performance of social identity, is filled with such items from the costly apparel of the English gentry embellished with silk and pearls, to the great estates of the English countryside. A materialist study may seek to gain access to the systems of oppression that produced such items and fueled the desire for them.



This study, too, is materialist in its aims. What I hope to show, however, is that a materialist study may best be served by the examination not only of historical artifacts or their social lives, but also of the socialization of the people who used them. In more concrete terms, I have sought to study the "ceremony" rather than the "equipment associated with it."

Ideologies of conduct, and ideologies of cultivation in particular, present ceremonies, socially constructed activities steeped in meaning but always ambiguous and evolving, as customary, predetermined, fixed, and naturally-occurring. Wilson reveals the ceremonial activity, the cultivating strategy, of serving tea as the pleasant face of an exploitative system. The luxury of the silver tea service promises to boost social status, but while this promise is made openly, the appropriation of the labor--and with it freedom and humanity--needed to supply both silver and subservience is accomplished clandestinely. This process is hidden not by material forces in the world, but by epistemologies that allow us to disenfranchise by distinguishing people from one another in arbitrary ways that we nevertheless believe to be customary, that is, natural, necessary, or fixed.

However, though the groups represented in "Metalwork"--those offering a well-appointed afternoon tea to their guests, and the unseen shackled laborers who may harvest sugar cane destined for an English pantry--seem to be separated by a vast gulf, in fact they are both bound by the same system. Wilson's pairing calls to mind the horror of repressed memory, our ability to turn a blind eye to injustice and human suffering. In different ways, both teapot and shackles represent restrictions, slavery is the most recognizable and perhaps the most fearful, but ideologies of conduct, too, restrict our

freedom to move, to act, even to think and imagine. All people living in a culture of credit suffer this initial indignity. Wilson's installation presents historical objects but reveals that their associations, one with gentility and fine living, the other with pain and shame, persist into our present moment despite our efforts to correct our ways of thinking, of knowing moral value from material cost. As viewers, as knowers, we are reprimanded for perpetuating our mistakes, but Wilson also promises that any one person's powers of imagination can exceed the restraints of codes of conduct, stripping them of their monolithic and ahistorical authority. The promise of mutability is not in improving the self but in improving society. In this study I have been concerned not with the historical objects themselves--the silver teapot and the absent/present slave's body--or even with the process by which these two disparate items are transformed into commodities in the early modern period. Instead, I have been concerned with the process by which we are compelled to hold tea parties, or to perform any valued behavior--the compulsion that gets the whole ball rolling in the first place.

In Wilson's installation it is the negative space between objects that allows us to envision disparate discursive arenas as overlapping and even mutually constitutive. In my study travel provides this negative space. In the early modern culture of credit the notion of travel becomes almost uncanny, presenting a pernicious challenge to the supposedly universal system of social credit by bringing it into contact with alternate systems of value. Wilson's choice of objects, tea pot and shackles, opens up the discussion in "Metalwork" to issues of both gender and race. In "Cultivating Difference," too, I have drawn textual evidence from genres with a rich critical history in the study of sex and race, conduct literature and travel writing. I have attempted to reorient and

reorganize discussions of social difference in the study of early modern drama by abandoning, temporarily, the history of visible, bodily, and material markers of social difference and oppression, and instead attending to ways of knowing such markers, of believing in their existence and significance in determining relative social identity.

## Chapter One

### New World Georgic: Husbandry, Plantation, and Colonial Huswifery

#### Introduction

Though a "colony" may be briefly defined as "a settlement in a new country" (*OED*) the term describes not only a place, but also a group of people--the settlers and their progeny--and a continuous connection to a parent state. What is implicit and potentially politically charged is the specific relationship between settler and settlement. "Newness," in other words, is relative since new arrivals may simply be displacing inhabitants with previous claims or connections to the country in question. The critical analysis of such slippage has led to pointed definitions of the system of colonialism. Ania Loomba, for example, describes it as "The conquest and control of other people's land and goods" (*Colonialism/Postcolonialism* 2). In this chapter I will suggest another term to complement Loomba's alliteration: *cultivation*.

For English early modern people, colonialism constituted a mastery over "new" lands that was always, at least in part, agricultural. This is especially evident in the linguistic link between the terms "colony" and "planting." In early modern English a "colony" was frequently said to be "planted" (*OED*) and, indeed "colony" might be used interchangeably with the term "plantation" in describing a settlement. Etymology supports this connotation unambiguously--the Latin *colonia*, meant a farm or settlement, and *colonus* a tiller, farmer, cultivator, planter, or settler in a new country. For those in the know, settlement might be categorized as overseas venture but would be distinct from trade, exploration, privateering or other projects. Though the venture might not be

overtly commercial in nature, settlement involved a hands-on role in claiming and cultivating arable land in order to produce viable crops for consumption and/or export.

The texts under study here contributed to contemporary thought and debate about colonialism while simultaneously underwriting a pervasive ideology of cultivation--a strategy for personal and agricultural improvement ostensibly available to all, but in fact restricted to a select few.<sup>1</sup> While cultivation was characterized as good for everyone, close readings of domestic conduct books reveal that the practice of cultivation was reserved for an elite group that was literate, genteel and largely male. Though their participation is required for a successful process of cultivation, women and the laboring classes are often marginalized in this fantasy of universal betterment. This omission allows them to participate in the cultivating strategy of the landed gentlemen but strips them of the even the capacity to participate in their own self-improvement. These groups are figured as objects to be cultivated rather than as authors of cultivation in their own right.

In colonial discourse this ideology of cultivation undergoes a crucial refiguring. In a wide variety of travel literature--including promotional literature, accounts of voyages and discoveries, anthologies, and travel drama--authors assert or critique the essential availability of land and the capacity of husbandry to perfect the self and preserve the nation.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while in domestic texts the success of the estate is attributed

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<sup>1</sup> I have defined cultivation as a strategy of personal or agricultural improvement, but it must be acknowledged that the term "cultivation" begins to be used in the sense in which I employ it--linking agricultural efforts to refinement through education *without* the explicit use of horticultural metaphor--only in the late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century (*OED*). I make no etymological argument for the development of this term here. However, it is this very double meaning of "cultivation," though anachronistic, that makes the word the most apt for my purposes.

<sup>2</sup> For my purposes I will differentiate between travel writing and travel drama, linking the two as genres of "travel literature," a term meant to underscore my treatment of travel writing, in particular, as literary text rather than historical document. Both travel writing and travel drama may be seen to participate in colonial

to the landed gentlemen's mastery of husbandry, without reference to the labor of women and working folk, in the colonial context, in a travel play called *The Sea Voyage*, it is huswifery, women's domestic and reproductive labor, that emerges as essential to the success of the plantation. I open the dissertation with a chapter on husbandry and huswifery in colonial discourse first, in order to demonstrate how systems of conduct disadvantage certain groups and second, in order to situate domestic concerns about the meanings of conduct within a broader, global context.<sup>3</sup>

In the first half of this chapter, I will demonstrate the pervasiveness of the ideology of cultivation by examining conduct books--including travel advice, works of parental advice and husbandry manuals (how-to books on farming and estate management)--in which this ideology is elaborated. I also explore the use of the georgic mode as a didactic tool in a variety of texts including the genre I term georgic drama. I use "georgic" to denote a group of themes familiar to early modern English audiences, such as farming, country life, seasonal change, landscape description, and difficult agricultural labor. As I demonstrate, textual representations of cultivation tend to feature the genteel landowner as a kind of georgic hero with the result that cultivation seems less a physical than an intellectual and imaginative process, continually disassociated from the agricultural labor required for its realization. In plays, the georgic mode is employed in order to promote husbandry as a cultivating strategy.<sup>4</sup> In both husbandry manuals and

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discourse; however, they are distinguishable as generic modes primarily because scholars term only first-hand accounts--first- or second-person narratives written by travelers themselves--as travel writing (Mary Campbell, *Witness* 5).

<sup>3</sup> My treatment of gender in the ideology of cultivation is indebted to two areas of literary criticism in particular: studies of gender and the discourse of "discovery" including those by Montrose; Patricia Parker; Jowitt; and Carey; and studies of gender and the domestic sphere including those by Korda; Wall; and Fumerton.

<sup>4</sup> My term "georgic drama" denotes a group of plays that take up georgic values, characterizing husbandry as heroic and nationalist. I discuss this sub-genre at greater length later in the chapter.

georgic drama the ideology of cultivation effectively re-writes land as available for possession and improvement--outside history and economy. In addition, it equates good husbandry with good citizenship, cloaking any connection between cultivation and the accumulation of capital. Finally, the ideology of cultivation touts the power of husbandry to improve both self and land, conflating one with the other.

An analysis of two examples of georgic drama--*A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607) and *The Elder Brother* (1637)--will demonstrate the common sense notion that self-cultivation and land-cultivation go hand in hand and will reveal the significance of women in this process of personal/agricultural improvement. I then return to conduct books, specifically those works that treat apiculture, in order to elucidate another aspect of the ideology of cultivation--the link between good husbandry and a healthy commonwealth, the belief that cultivation can benefit both self and nation simultaneously.

Ultimately I will argue that English colonial discourse depends upon the imaginative process of transporting a "domestic" ideology of cultivation overseas and that, though conduct books and georgic plays are concerned with domestic rather than foreign matters, these works are closely related to texts that are more readily associated with colonial discourse.<sup>5</sup> In these terms, my roughly defined genre of "georgic drama"

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<sup>5</sup> In positing this argument I am indebted to a wealth of literary criticism and historiography linking early modern English writing about distant lands to an "era of discovery" and to the development of colonialism (e.g. Cawley; and John Parker). These scholarly works sometimes present a problematic teleology, an inexorable trajectory through discovery toward British empire, though more recent studies place a critical distance between literary analysis and "myths of empire," (see Leask) and place the concept of "discovery" under scrutiny (see Patricia Parker; Montrose; and Kamps and Singh). I take up the method of linking English writing to English colonialism, following recent work by Hadfield, Bach, Seed, and Knapp, with two important differences. My assertion is that, in studying early modern English colonialism, period writing about distant lands may be less enlightening than writing about the familiar or "domestic." In addition I suggest that a discussion of colonial *discourse* rather than colonialism resists to some extent a grand narrative of British expansion. A discursive tradition may be followed wherever it leads, through

might well include a travel play such as John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's *The Sea Voyage* (1647), a work I discuss in detail later in the second half of the chapter.<sup>6</sup> In responding to a popular interest in the foreign with imaginary or documentary narratives, travel writing and travel drama engaged English reading and play-going audiences with the global, thereby producing the domestic subjects of an English colonialism. Travel drama transports its audiences in real time to locations otherwise known only through stories, maps, or books. While the authors of first-hand accounts of English travel and plantation draw on a language of good husbandry and estate management in envisioning and promoting colonialism, it is the authors of a fictional account who imagine the conditions necessary for the long-term survival of European colonies overseas. *The Sea Voyage* revises the prevailing mode of colonial discourse by staging huswifery as an essential element of a successful colony.<sup>7</sup>

### **Cultivation and Conduct Literature**

Authors of conduct books frequently employ horticultural or agricultural metaphors for self-cultivation. In these metaphors the careful and constant education of a

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any body of texts, without the necessity of linking that discourse to changing historical practices of colonization.

<sup>6</sup> Fletcher and Massinger's clear engagement with colonialism in *The Sea Voyage* has inspired renewed scholarly interest, most recently Feerick "Divided in Soyle"; Walters; Hattaway; Jowitt "Her Flesh Must Serve You"; Hutner; and Akhimie. This new work complements an extended treatment of *The Sea Voyage* in McMullan's single-author study of Fletcher.

<sup>7</sup> In tracing an early modern English colonial discourse through an analysis of early modern English writing, I am building on scholarly contributions such as Bach's *Colonial Transformations*; Hadfield's *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing*; and Seed's *Ceremonies of Possession*. These scholars and others have suggested that travel writing and travel drama can imaginatively displace domestic issues onto foreign landscapes. Other criticism on travel drama--also termed "geographic drama," "discovery plays," or "colonial plays"--has tended to read the action of plays with exotic settings as allegorically related to English foreign or domestic policy. In these readings, scholars argue that the distant locations of travel plays afford opportunities to discuss current events, or respond to current cultural debates without fear of reprisal, and without the necessity of presenting verifiable facts or eyewitness accounts. See for example Bach; Jowitt, *Travel Drama*; Parr; and Vitkus, *Turning Turk*.



young gentleman is likened to the nurturing of seeds, tending of plants and trees, or tilling of soil.<sup>8</sup> This process of diligent gardening or husbandry will in turn bear the fruit, flowers, or crops that benefit the self--profit, pleasure, advancement--and the common good of household and nation, as we see in the early example of Thomas Elyot's *Boke Named the Governour* (1531):

To the entent that I wyll declare howe suche personages [young gentlemen] may be prepared I will use the policie of a wyse and counnyng gardener who purposynge to haue in his gardeine a fine and precieuse herbe that shulde be to hym and all other repairyng therto excellently comodious or pleasant: he will first serche throughout his gardeyne where he can finde the most melowe and fertile erth and therein wil he put the sede of the herbe to growe and be norished. (B7)

Here, Elyot demands the utmost care in educating the children, and particularly the male children, of gentlefolk. This education will serve to produce the very same "governor" on whom Elyot claims the good of the "public weale" depends. However, the agricultural metaphor describes not a nurturing relationship like that between parent and child, but an exacting one like that between an employee--the gardener--and his task--the cultivation of a "fine and precieuse herbe." The suggestion is that whoever takes up the task of educating young gentlemen should see it as a means to an end--good government, a healthy estate, an ordered household--rather than as an end in itself.

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<sup>8</sup> The prevalence of the agricultural or horticultural metaphor is likely evidence of the influence of classical works on education and conduct that were newly translated and available in print. See, for example, Elyot's 1532 translation of Plutarch's "Education of Children" from *Moralia*: "Lyke as in tyllage fyrste it behoueth that the moule (whiche is to be sown) be good. Secundarily that the husbende or ploughman be experte in sowing. Thirdely that the sede be clene and withoute faulte. So (in bringinge vp of youre children) ye shall applie & resemble to the moule your childrens nature, to the ploughman, their instructour or maister to the sede, Instruction of lernynge & preceptes" (*Education* A4v-B).

Francis Bacon, in his advice on travel written in the form of a letter to Roger Manners, fifth earl of Rutland (1595), invokes the *cultus animi*--the "cultivation" or improvement of the self--in order to underscore a warning that was common in travel advice of the period: travel, while pleasurable, must be undertaken only with the greatest resolve to pursue self-cultivation and the discipline to avoid distraction, with the ultimate goal of conveying vital information about other lands to one's countrymen (often by writing a book about the experience).<sup>9</sup>

Your lordship's purpose is to travel, and your study must be what use to make of your travel. The question is ordinary, and there is to it an ordinary answer; that is, your Lordship shall see the beauty of many cities, know the manners of the people of many countries, and ornaments, and all of them delights; but your Lordship must look further than these; for the greatest ornament is the inward beauty of the mind, and when you have known as great variety of delight as the world will afford, you will confess that the greatest delight is 'sentire te in dies fieri meliorem', to feel that you do every day become more worthy; therefore your Lordship's end and scope should be that which in moral philosophy we call 'cultum animi', the tilling and manuring of your own mind. (Vickers 69)

Unlike Elyot's more straightforward gardener:seed::educator:educated metaphor, Bacon's phrasing, "the tilling and manuring of your own mind," involves a certain slippage--the genteel reader of Bacon's prose is imagined to be both farmer and field. I will return to this tautological relationship between the cultivated and the cultivating gentleman below.

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<sup>9</sup> Carey offers a detailed treatment of the *ars apodemica* tradition in English. Vicker's edition, *Francis Bacon: The Major Works*, provides the full text of "Advice to the Earl of Rutland on his travels" (written 1595 and first published in 1633) with robust notes and commentary.

For now I would suggest that Bacon's phrasing should remind us that a genteel reader would also likely have been a *landed* reader, and the student-landlord would also have been the assumed reader of husbandry manuals (conduct books devoted to the subject of estate management and agriculture).<sup>10</sup>

Agrarian historians and literary critics such as Joan Thirsk, Andrew McRae, Wendy Wall, and Alistair Fowler have chronicled the reappearance of classical works on husbandry in England in the late fifteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Numerous new translations of the classics as well as anthologized and original husbandry manuals soon followed.<sup>12</sup> Both the revived classical and the original husbandry manuals promote the ideal of an aristocratic, georgic hero: a landowning gentleman who is both well-educated and experienced in all the practical arts of husbandry. As these scholars argue, a new specifically English georgic ideal was expressed in husbandry manuals, which hint at the dual modes of cultivation, of self and of land. This suggestion is especially evident in their descriptions of a larger-than-life figure, a land-owning gentleman who is both well-educated and experienced in all the practical arts of husbandry. *Xenophons treatise of*

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<sup>10</sup> I do not mean to assume that all genteel readers were landowners. Suffice it to say that a member of this elite reading audience would almost certainly have been part of a social hierarchy that privileged land-ownership as an all-important symbol of status.

<sup>11</sup> Fussell *Old English Farming Books* provides an exhaustive and heavily annotated bibliography of English husbandry manuals from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

<sup>12</sup> Thirsk has shown that English gentlemen began to take up the physical and intellectual labor of farming their lands after a long period of tenant farming around the same time classical husbandry manuals reappeared. This increased involvement with the land also coincided with an outpouring of new husbandry manuals by English authors. Fowler traces the rise of English georgic (and the decline of the pastoral form) in the sixteenth century, arguing for the influence of a particular strain of classical georgic, one which idealized a country life of rewarding agricultural labor. McRae reads the "discourse of agrarian improvement" as evolving and increasingly oriented toward the upwardly mobile farmer. Wall argues that authors such as Gervase Markham, a popular and prolific writer on agrarian topics, produce an English "national subject" by positing a readership whose success in husbandry depends upon the acquisition and use of "authentic" English agricultural methods. 1992 saw the publication of the seminal collection *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing the Land*, which included essays by Thirsk; Fowler; McRae and others. An interdisciplinary collection, it synthesized the book length works completed by several scholars in as many fields and represents a diachronic approach to the "early modern," spanning the period from the late medieval to the long eighteenth century.

*housholde*, Gentian Hervet's 1532 translation of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (reprinted five times during the sixteenth century), ends with a rather grandiose tribute to the landlord. Preceding the following passage the great man has been likened to a general who earns the admiration and fear of his troops through strength of will rather than strength of arms.

And as for the maister, if he be suche a man that can well punissh the laborers, that do nought, and reward them that do very wel, yet whan he cometh to the workes, if the laboreres do make no shewe of it, I wyll not set greatly by hym: But he the whiche whan they do se hym, they be all moued and styrred up, and have a greatte corage and desire on to do better than another, and a fervente mynde to be prayسد aboue al, I say that man hath som thinge of the disposition to a kynge. And me thynketh it is a very great poynte in all maner of thynges, that be done by the helpe of men, as well as it is in husbandry. And to obteyne hit, verily I wyll not saye, as I have done in husbandrye, that a man shall lerne it, if he ones seeth it, or hereth it told, but I say, he that wyll be able to do it, had need to very wel instructed, and eke to be of a good gentyll nature, and that is moste of all to have a very great grace and gyfte of god. (H7r-v)

Notably, he who inspires agricultural laborers to work harder must be not only a husbandman but also an educated and a "gentyll" man.

Throughout the translation of Xenophon's classical husbandry manual, a casual distinction is made between the male and "gentyll" subject of the proposed project--improvement of self through improvement of land--and the working men and women who support the endeavor. "It is conuenient," Xenophon asserts,

That they...haue men with them to do those warkes that muste be done  
 abrode in the felde. For tyllunge of the grounde, sowynge of the corne  
 setting of trees, & kepyng of beastis at grasse and pasture, be all done  
 abrode. But agayne it is needful, whan those frutes be conueyed in to the  
 house to ouerse & saue them and to do all suche thynges as muste be done  
 at home. (C7v)

In this matter-of-fact way, the labor of working men and women is distinguished from the grand project of the men who, according to their "gentyll" nature, will orchestrate and--it is understood--will profit from the diligent work of others.

In Gervase Markham's *The inrichment of the vveald of Kent* (1625), the author encourages readers to reclaim the wild woodlands of Kent by implementing his recommended innovative agricultural techniques.<sup>13</sup> Markham dedicates this "husbandly collection"--one of a great many by the author--to Sir George Rivers of Chafford, a resident of the shire and evidently a husbandman of sufficient experience as to impress even the worldly Markham: "Beleeue mee (worthy Sir) should this subject wish it selfe a Patron, I doe not thinke, it could wish beyond you; for you are a volumne full of all that of which it intreateth" (A2v). Here, the great man himself embodies both the learning and the proof of its positive effects.

Perhaps an even more evocative example of the elision of cultivation's dual meanings is the following section title from John Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandrye* (1530), printed no less than 14 times from its first appearance in 1530 to its last in 1598

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<sup>13</sup> Markham was a prolific author of both husbandry manuals and books on specialized subjects within husbandry including the care of horses and cattle, gardens and orchards, hunting, fishing and fowling, and even huswifery. Poynter offers the most comprehensive bibliography of Markham's many works. On Markham and the nationalist discourse of husbandry, see Wall "Renaissance National Husbandry." On Markham's *The Inrichment of the Weald of Kent*, see Zell; and Fussell, "Inrichment."

and cited or quoted by numerous other authors well into the seventeenth century: "A short informacyon for a yonge gentyelman that entendeth to thryue."<sup>14</sup> In this context, the intention to "thryue" seems to describe the young gentleman's plans to maintain and enrich his estate by learning the art of husbandry--cultivation of the self. But "thryue" as a verb connotes both the growth of people and the growth of plants so that the gentleman in question may be both the one thriving *and* the one promoting the growth of his estate, measured in terms of thriving crops, pasture land, and cattle of all kinds. This connotation neatly obfuscates the productive and *reproductive* labor of workers and women--to truly "thrive" a young gentleman must also produce an heir. Added to this, a great variety of kinds of work must be left to other members of the household, each with different expertise. Though the young gentleman appears to be the sole subject of "thriving," the sole agent of the cultivated English countryside, the next sections of the *Boke of Husbandrye* concern the "gentyel mans seuant" and the "wyues occupacon."

Here Fitzherbert separates the "labour that longeth to an husbände" from that of "thy wyues thy children & thy seruantes." With regard to the work of wyues he has a good deal to say though he presents the information with a certain coy dissembling.

For there is an olde common sayenge that seldom doth the husbände thryue without the leue of his wife. By this sayenge it should seme that there be other occupacyons & labours [that] be most conuenient for [the] wyues to do. And how be it that I have not the experience of al theyr occupacyons & warkes as I haue of husbandry. Yet a lytel wyll I speke

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<sup>14</sup> The first, unabashed recommendation to the young gentleman: "I Aduyse hym to get a copy of this present booke and to rede it frome the begynnyng to the endyng" (N2v).

what they oughte to do though I tell them not how they sholde do and exercise theyr labours & occupacyons. (N4)

The adage cited by Fitzherbert alludes to both the productive and reproductive capabilities of wives. There is thriving, Fitzherbert reminds his young gentleman reader, and then there is *thriving*. The following section is in fact far less titillating, enumerating the many duties of the farmwife (from sweeping to feeding the chickens), but Fitzherbert's disclaimer betrays some confusion about his intended audience. Admitting he has no real experience with such tasks, he will not presume to "tell them"--the wives themselves--how to do their work, but he will "speke"--to the husbandman, it is presumed--about what wives ought to do.

The authors of husbandry manuals generally presume a male reader and pin the success or failure of the country estate upon the work of the husbandman who is also the landowner (rather than a laborer or tenant farmer). Discussion of huswifery is often relegated to a smaller section within the husbandry manual or moved altogether to a separate huswifery manual; huswifery manuals were far less common than the staple husbandry manuals.<sup>15</sup> The good huswife is in many ways overshadowed by the larger-than-life figure of the gentleman farmer, to whom the husbandry manuals assign the major agricultural and intellectual labor of estate management. The huswife, in turn, is a helpmate who orders the house, which is a repository for the gains (in foodstuffs,

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<sup>15</sup> Of Markham's numerous works on estate management, only a handful mention or offer an extended treatment of huswifery. His short preface to "The English Hous-Wife", the second part of *Countrey Contentments* (1615) contains a disclaimer similar to Fitzherbert's: "Thou may say (gentle Reader) what hath this man to doe with Hus-wifery, he is now out of his element...I shall desire thee therefore to understand, that this is no collection of his whose name is prefixed to this worke, but an approved Manuscript which he happily light on, belonging sometime to an honorable Personage of this kingdome, who was singular amongst those of her ranke for many of the qualities her set forth" (Q1v). Best's recent edition of *The English Housewife* provides a useful commentary, notes, and glossary of terms. On huswifery manuals, see Kelso; Curtin; and Hull (31-70).

movables, crops, monies, livestock, and even children) the husbandman brings in. The huswife is understood to be the one who saves, orders, inventories, mends and tends, but does not herself produce the wherewithal of the household except by maintaining it through thrift and industry. As the quotation from Fitzherbert shows, however, there is some acknowledgement of huswifely contribution here, for, "seldom doth the husbände thryue without the leue of his wife," as the "olde common sayenge" goes.

Husbandry manuals explicitly downplay but implicitly acknowledge the importance of women's work and their reproductive capacity. This is often accomplished by means of a spatial logic--women's work is crucial to the estate as enterprise, but is restricted spatially to the interior space of the household. Gervase Markham's "The English Hous-Wife" (1615), which follows his lengthy discussion of the pastimes of the English husbandman, begins by allowing that it is "meete that we descend in as orderly a method [having already discussed husbandry] as we can to the office of our English Hous-wife, who is the mother and mistris of the family" (*Coutrey contentments* R).<sup>16</sup> Markham's aesthetically symmetrical household, in which the man is "father and master" and the woman "mother and mistris," is also unequivocally hierarchical--huswifery is a topic of discussion that falls under the larger umbrella of husbandry and to which "we descend" in an "orderly method," that is, "in order" of decreasing importance.

The symmetry of Markham's household is not one of equal importance but of rhetorical balance--the husbandman's "office and imploiments are euer for the most part abroad or remoued from the house as in the fielde or yard," while the huswife "hath her most generall imploiments within the house"--and spatial parity (R). In *Xenophons*

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<sup>16</sup> "The English Hous-Wife" first appeared in Markham's *Coutrey contentments* in 1615 (it is preceded by *The Husbandmans Recreations*, in which Markham discusses sports and pastimes suitable for country gentlemen). It appeared again, independently, as *Coutrey contentments, or The English husvvife* in 1623.



*treatise of housholde*, the prescribed location for the litany of huswifely duties--"within the house"--becomes a refrain.

It is needful, whan those frutes be conueyed in to the house to ouerse & saue them and to do all suche thynges as muste be done at home. Babis and yonge chyldren muste be broughte vvppe within the house. Breadde muste be baked and the meate sodde & dressed within the house. Allso spynnyng cardynge and weauynge muste be done within the house. (C7v-C8)

Huswifery is both crucial to the financial and moral success of the household and entirely circumscribed. As a result the huswife's access to the self-improving strategy of husbandry or estate management is entirely circumscribed as well. This spatial and ideological perimeter is understood as the natural consequence of the differences between men and women: "God hath caused nature to shewe playnlye, that a woman is borne to take hede of all suche thinges, as muste be done at home" (*Xenophons* C8). The huswife's confinement is as natural as that of a "maistres bee" who "bydeth alwaye in the hyue" (*Xenophons* D). The implication is that the entire household depends upon the huswife, that in doing her work she does herself good and, at the same time, does the household good. Importantly, however, the household depends not only upon the huswife's works, but also upon her stasis within both the spatial boundaries of the household and the social boundaries of prescribed gender roles.

Discussions of huswifery do not employ the apparatus common in discussions of husbandry--thriving intellectually and financially by learning the art of estate management--but rather emphasize huswifery as the natural occupation of women.

Nevertheless, Markham and others wrestle with a popular belief in the equal division of-- or at least the equal responsibility for the success of--domestic labor broadly conceived. In the process of transporting a domestic strategy of cultivation and its hierarchical division of gender roles overseas, colonial discourse will confront the obfuscation of the value of women's domestic labor and reproductive capacity to the success of the country estate and thus of the colonial plantation. In the idyllic world of the husbandry manuals and, as I will show, of georgic drama, however, "young gentlemen who intendeth to thryve" are the sole agents, the husbandman-heroes, of the cultivated English countryside.

### **Georgic Drama**

Critics such as John Chalker, Andrew McRae, Alistair Fowler, Annabel Paterson, and Anthony Low have weighed in on the development of the georgic in English literature and specifically in English verse. Chalker's earlier study traces georgic poetry through the Augustan period, when the influence of Virgil's *Georgics* was at a peak and the form became eminently popular. More recent studies refute the literary histories of Chalker and others, which cite Virgil's *Georgics* as the sole literary precursor for georgic poetry and footnote the early modern period as one in which no or very few georgic poems were produced. McRae, Fowler and Low offer much broader and more convincing definitions of an early modern English georgic mode--with identifiable images, values and themes--that appears in diverse genres and recalls not one but any number of classical georgic texts and traditions. The georgic mode is most often defined as didactic, written with the intention of teaching or praising an art or craft and thus

employing much greater specificity and detail than the pastoral mode with its shepherds wandering at their leisure through idyllic green spaces.<sup>17</sup> McRae and Low underscore the georgic mode as one suited to social commentary and connected to the social, political and economic discourse of early modern England.

Though more recent studies of the georgic mode have identified a previously overlooked canon of early modern georgic literatures, overwhelmingly the focus has been on poetry, with little attention paid to drama or prose.<sup>18</sup> In addition, these studies cleave to a limited generative matrix for an early modern English georgic in which country is opposed to city and the only major influences are classical texts. In this section, by no means a survey of all possible examples, I demonstrate both the significance of the georgic mode to the ideology of cultivation and argue for the presence of an identifiable early modern English georgic drama. Later in the chapter, I will argue that the heavily didactic and descriptive georgic mode, with its focus on agriculture and agricultural labor, found a new vehicle in travel writing and travel drama as well.

So common that they might be called stock characters, "yonge gentlemen that entendeth to thryue" appear again and again in early modern English drama. These landed gentlemen, often just coming of age and thus coming into money and into control of their estates, encounter difficulty with regard to their "intentions." Most often, the young man misinterprets, naively or rebelliously, what the appropriate intentions should be, with the result that the gentleman's estate (houses, lands and people) is placed in

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<sup>17</sup> Fowler; Low; and Paterson treat the relationship between georgic and pastoral modes and suggest that the two are mutually constitutive in the early modern period.

<sup>18</sup> The most significant exception is McRae who, in *God Speed the Plough*, establishes English husbandry manuals as a major source of "georgic ideals," and offers an extended treatment of Jacobean city comedy. He argues that commodification of the land was enacted on early modern stages as a challenge to "rural values." McRae reads city comedies by Middleton, among others, which include satirical representations of rustics--figures once associated with honesty and humility--who come to town only to be exposed as idiotic or unscrupulous.

jeopardy. In city comedies he is a gull just begging to be taken advantage of. In the city, the country gentleman, whether naïve or dissolute, is quickly divested of his dignity, his ready money, and finally his land.<sup>19</sup> For the gentleman the return is a short-lived but glorious experience of the pleasures of city life--drinking, gambling, sex, fashionable dress and entertainment of all kinds.

In drama set outside the metropolis, the beleaguered country lord is less a comic figure than a tragic and heroic one. In these plays the problematic disassociation of genteel pleasures from the agricultural production that afforded them is confronted. In the countryside moderation is the order of the day, and those habits enjoyed to excess by the city gallant are juxtaposed with the honest work of the humble husbandman. This order is exhibited most clearly in plays such as Thomas Heywood's domestic tragedy *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607) and John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's comedy *The Elder Brother* (1637).<sup>20</sup>

In these plays and others, eldest sons, though designated as heirs to great estates, are nevertheless perpetually in danger of losing their inheritances. Heywood's Sir Charles Mountford combines his love of hawking and hunting with his love of gambling to disastrous ends when a heated argument ends with Sir Charles killing two of his

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<sup>19</sup> In city comedies, country gull's like Master Stephen in Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, and Dungworth in Nabbes's *Covent Garden* are easy marks for shrewd lawyers, mooching gallants, and prostitutes.

<sup>20</sup> Begun by Fletcher in 1624/5, *The Elder Brother* was completed by Massinger around 1637, first performed in 1635 and first published in 1637. Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* was first performed in 1603 and first published in 1607. Since the late 1980s and 1990s *A Woman Killed with Kindness* has received renewed critical attention. In particular, the play's focus on the censure of unchaste and adulterous women has prompted scholars to reexamine the play using feminist approaches. For example, see Bromley; Panek; Hopkins; Gutierrez; and Mukherji. My own study focuses instead on the "subplot" of the play, the return of a prodigal gentleman from recklessness to responsibility in the form of good husbandry.

opponent's retainers.<sup>21</sup> He is acquitted of the crime, narrowly escaping execution, but only after having spent nearly all his fortune (including lands) on his defense. Fletcher and Massinger's French landowner Brisac has two sons but plans to disinherit the titular elder brother, Charles, to solidify a marriage with a neighboring landowner's daughter. In this case it is not sporting but reading that is pursued to excess; Charles is such a bookworm that his father doubts he will ever be capable or even interested in managing the estate.

In due course both Heywood's Charles Mountford and Fletcher and Massinger's Charles Brisac come to appreciate estate management once they are threatened with the loss of that privilege. More to the point, in each play the double effect of cultivation (of the self and of the land) is demonstrated. Each gentleman's personal cultivation--recreation in the case of Mountford or education in the case of Brisac--is eventually made to complement the cultivation of his lands. In addition, each gentleman's education in estate management includes an education in the management of wives or dependent women (a sister in Mountford's case). A double language of "maintenance" underwrites this link. Estates maintain their lords and their lords' families--as in the passage below--but lords also maintain their estates and, more particularly, maintain wives and women.

SIR CHARLES. O sir, they have undone me.

Two thousand and five hundred pound a year

My father at his death possess'd me of,

All which the envious Acton made me spend,

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<sup>21</sup> Sir Charles's story is a side-plot to the domestic tragedy underway in the home of a neighboring landowner. His suffering may be read as a foil for the trials faced by John Frankfort, whose demonstrably excellent husbandry (he has several mansions) is undermined by the adultery of his wife and the abuse of his hospitality.

And notwithstanding all this large expense,  
 I had much ado to gain my liberty;  
 And I have now only a house of pleasure,  
 With some five hundred pounds, reserv'd  
 Both to maintain me and my loving sister. (5.40-48)

Lamenting the loss of his annual income, Sir Charles Mountford finds that there was much more at stake in his immoderate gamble of two hundred pounds (he bets that his hawks and dogs will beat out those of Sir Francis Acton's for the first kill of the hunt) than he could ever have imagined. It is only after his acquittal that we hear mention of the elder Sir Charles, Mountford's father, and of the legacy that has been nearly completely lost.

As the action unfolds, interested locals learn that the unfortunate Sir Charles has been "enforced to follow husbandry" on the single manor he has retained, but this change in status proves to be beneficial to the sportsman-turned-husbandman. Though he is described by gossipers as "a plain countryman, / reform'd in all things" (5.8-9), and pitied for this turn of events, Sir Charles proves to be an able husbandman, and by his hard work he regains an admirable sense of pride in himself and in his land.

SHAFTON. Good morrow, good morrow, Sir Charles; what, with your  
 sister  
 Plying your husbandry?...  
 You have a pretty house here, and a garden,  
 And goodly ground about it. Since it lies  
 So near a lordship that I lately bought,

I would fain buy it of you. I will give you--

SIR CHARLES. O pardon me; this house successively

Hath 'long'd to me and my progenitors

Three hundred year. My great-great-grandfather,

He in whom first our gentle style began,

Dwelt here, and in this ground increas'd this molehill

Unto that mountain which my father left me.

Where he first of all our house begun,

I now the last will end and keep this house,

This virgin title never yet deflower'd

By any unthrift of the Mountfords' line.

In brief, I will not sell it for more gold

Than you could hide or pave the ground withal. (7.9-26)

If there is a moral to this story--and surely there is--it is embodied in the epithet Sir Charles gives his humble plot, "this virgin title." Sir Charles has described earlier, in Act 5, this piece of property in somewhat disparaging terms as a "house of pleasure," suggesting a cottage or hunting lodge, but also a brothel or amorous retreat. His trials bring him to a new appreciation of that same property, and he later describes the house and the land as the beginning of the great fortune he has enjoyed. The location is now revered as a "virgin title," its honor and, strangely, its chastity restored. Despite Sir Charles's profligacy, this miraculous little house and its grounds have remained untainted by such "unthrift." "Unthrift" might well be glossed here in terms of Fitzherbert's "gentrylman that entendeth to thryue"--Sir Charles has endangered his estate by preferring

gaming to husbandry, and by neglecting the maintenance of his land and his dependent sister. Now that he has reclaimed these responsibilities he vows to "keep" (maintain) his land and rebuffs Shafton's offer to buy it.<sup>22</sup>

With the mere trappings of gentility--sporting and gambling--stripped away, the true relationship between gentility and land is laid bare. When confronted with the possibility that even this last "virgin title" will be taken from him by force Sir Charles cries out in frustration:

SIR CHARLES. Alas, alas! 'Tis all trouble hath left me  
 To cherish me and my poor sister's life.  
 If this were sold, our means should then be quite  
 Raz'd from the bead-roll of gentility. (7.34-37)

Asserting his claims to and his dependence on the land, he recounts his hard labor and the labor his sister has endured so that they might make the most of the small inheritance left to them.

SIR CHARLES. I have so bent my thoughts to husbandry  
 That I protest I scarcely can remember  
 What a new fashion is, how silk or satin  
 Feels in my hand; why, the pride is grown to us  
 A mere, mere stranger. I have quite forgot  
 The names of all that ever waited on me;  
 I cannot name ye any of my hounds,  
 Once from whose echoing mouths I heard all the music

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<sup>22</sup> Charles eventually also takes up the "management" of his dependent sister, offering her to Sir Francis, who eventually marries her.



That e'er my heart desired. What should I say?

To keep this place I have chang'd myself away. (7.47-56)

As Sir Charles's speech continues it becomes obvious that the excesses of his former life have abated in direct proportion to his increasing labors as a sober husbandman. He has even forgotten the names of his hunting hounds. Also forgotten are the names of his servants: their labor is conveniently elided, and it is Charles who serves now as the tiller of his own soil. In the country society evoked by Heywood, husbandry is the last refinement required to make a true gentleman of Sir Charles.

Sir Charles's story of reformation through husbandry can be seen repeatedly in georgic drama, plays of diverse genres but similar settings.<sup>23</sup> In Fletcher and Massinger's *The Elder Brother* the cultivation of self and land is the central plot, as the bookish Charles Brisac undergoes a powerful transformation from ascetic scholar to vigorous husbandman in a single day. Brisac, a wealthy French gentleman, has spared no expense to "shape [his two sons] to that course each was addicted," with the result that Charles, the eldest, has pursued scholarship to the exclusion of all other duties and pastimes while Eustace has become a foppish courtier. The play opens with a conversation between a neighboring gentleman and his daughter about her marriage prospects. An heiress herself, Angellina is a fine catch and may take her pick of the most eligible gentlemen in the neighborhood; these seem to be the Brisac sons.

ANGELLINA. Sir, I know them

By publique fame, though yet I never saw them;

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<sup>23</sup> Full-length treatments appear in Heywood and Rowley's *Fortune By Land and Sea* (1655) and Fletcher's *The Noble Gentlemen* and *Wit without Money*, 1639. The georgic hero appears as a side plot in Act 4 Scene 10 of *2 Henry IV*, in which the rebel Jack Cade is discovered and finally slain by Alexander Iden, "squire of Kent." Iden's soliloquy, an ode to English husbandry, sets him up as the foil for Cade's radical communism. A recent RSC performance (2006) replaced Iden's sword with a pitchfork.

And that oppos'd antipathy betweene  
 Their various dispositions, renders them  
 The generall discourse and argument;  
 One part inclining to the Scholar Charles,  
 The other side preferring Eustace, as  
 A man compleat in Courtship. (1.1.69-76)

When asked whether she would she prefer to marry a scholar or a courtier, she chooses neither, demanding instead the combination of such "gawdy nothings" with "something to make a substance...a full estate" (1.1.114-23) and articulating a vision of an ideal gentleman that is sustained throughout the play.

Though other characters affirm that the perfect husband and landowner must be "active," the plot demonstrates that "active" is far too vague a term. "Active" gentlemen, as it turns out, may also be adulterous, corrupt, or frivolous. Angellina's standards are higher. For her, a gentleman's worth may be measured only by his ability to "maintain" a full estate--lands, house, and family. She stipulates that any husband of hers must not only possess an estate currently--"in esse" rather than "in posse"--but must be able and willing to keep and sustain it in the long term.

Charles is the elder brother and therefore the heir to the Brisac estate, but his skills as a husbandman are in doubt.

BRISAC. I will not trust my land to one so sotted,  
 So growne like a disease unto his studie,  
 He that will fling off all occasions  
 And cares, to make him understand what state is,

And how to governe it, must by that reason,  
 Be flung himselfe aside from managing...  
 Unlesse Charles had a soule to understand it,  
 Can he manage sixe thousand Crownes a yeere  
 Out of the metaphysicks? or can all  
 His learn'd Astronomy looke to my Vineyards?  
 Can the drunken old Poets make up my Vines?  
 (I know they can drinke'm) or your excellent humanists  
 Sell 'm the Merchants for my best advantage?  
 Can History cut my hay, or get my Come in?  
 And can Geometrie vent it in the market? (2.1.78-98)

Charles rallies against these charges; demonstrating that his scholarship is not so impractical as his father suggests--

CHARLES. I may doe this  
 From what I've read Sir; for what concernes tillage?  
 Who better can deliver it than Virgil  
 In his Georgicks? and to cure your heards,  
 His Bucolicks is a masterpeece (1.2.130-134)

--Charles proffers his own vision of husbandry as the subject of great art. Virgil's *Georgics* "delivers" with the sense of both oratory and practical expediency, while *Bucolics* is a literary "masterpiece" that also offers sound veterinary advice.

Nevertheless, the seriousness of Charles's distraction is confirmed when Brisac asks whether Charles at least plans to marry and produce an heir: "The children Sir, / Which I

will leave to all posterity, / Begot and brought up by my painefull studies, / Shall be my living issue" (1.2.175-178). In the course of these opening scenes, Charles's devotion to the "constant pleasures" of reading begins to look like pride, while his disdain for the concerns of estate management, which he calls "uncertain vanities," begins to look like folly. Though his aims are admirable, Charles is a caricature of a rational man. He tells his father confidently, "Be it your care / T'augment your heape of wealth; it shall be mine / T'encrease in knowledge" (1.2.201-203). Eventually, Charles's faulty assumption--that these two kinds of cultivation are unconnected--is revealed to him.

Charles's preoccupation with scholarship is defended only by his faithful servant Andrew and by Brisac's own elder brother, Miramont. When Brisac plots to disinherit Charles in favor of his younger son, the showy courtier Eustace, Miramont determines to make Charles heir to his own estate instead. Miramont and Andrew's loyalty is validated when late in Act 3 Charles suddenly transforms from a bookworm to a butterfly, as it were, upon first seeing Angellina--"I study now to be a man, I've found it. / Before, what man was, was but my Argument" (3.5.54-55). He playfully employs a metaphor of scholarship as if to demonstrate how he has moved beyond asceticism; he now "studies" to *be* a man, no longer merely philosophizing about the *nature* of man, "what man is."

Though a notary has prepared a contract transferring Charles's inheritance to Eustace, Charles's apathy has unexpectedly turned to keen interest and he refuses to sign.

CHARLES. I will not seale, Sir,

I am your eldest, and Ile keepe my birthright,

For heaven forbid I should become example;

Had y' onely shew'd me Land, I had deliver'd it,

And been a proud man to have parted with it;  
 Tis dirt, and labour...  
 But you have open'd to me such a treasure,  
 I finde my minde free, heaven direct my fortune...  
 Such an inimitable peece of beauty,  
 That I have studied long, and now found onely,  
 That Ile part sooner with my soule of reason...  
 Than yeeld one foot of Land, if she be ty'd to't. (3.5.34-59)

Charles's revelation involves an abstraction--the land Charles refers to may be his land, or Angellina's, or both, or land in general--and a conflation--of Angellina, the "inimitable peece of beauty" and the land. The lines, "Had y' onely shew'd me Land...But you have open'd to me such a treasure," echo the language of husbandry manuals in which "treasure" is said to be "shown," "opened" or "discovered" when the diligent husbandmen learns about and takes full advantage of all that his lands have to offer by means of a survey, for example, or through particular improvements.<sup>24</sup> A metaphor involving land and treasure is thus already in play and is appropriated here to refer to women--and to Angellina in particular--as a kind of natural resource.

The passage is a key one in which Charles is seen to appreciate Angellina as an object worthy of study--the land is connected to her, indelibly, and thus the land is something to be valued and retained. The effect on him is miraculous. For my purposes, the analogy between lady and land demonstrates the dual meanings of cultivation with a

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<sup>24</sup> Gabriel Plattes's *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* (1639) offers an example of such language "surely it is a wonderfull delectation to see that the earths fatnesse (being the Treasure, and indeed the Fountaine of all Treasure and Riches in the World,) may be transformed into what forme the Workman listeth: This treasure is discovered more at large in the Chapter concerning the fertilizing of Land" (A4v).

new emphasis on a woman as the intermediary between self-improvement and land-improvement.

Though Charles's logic seems roundabout, it is not as awkward as it appears. To unpack his reasoning I might turn back to his exclamation, "I study now to be a man" (3.5.54). When he studied the *nature* of man, among other subjects, Charles deemed the difference between an active and a contemplative life merely academic.<sup>25</sup> Now engaged in studying to *be* a man, he finds that action is called for, but also that action and contemplation may not be so dissimilar:

CHARLES. Now I perceive what 'tis that woes a woman,  
 And what maintaines her when shee's woo'd. Ile stop here.  
 A wilfull poverty nere made a beauty,  
 Nor want of meanes maintain'd it vertuously:  
 Though land and monies be no happinesse,  
 Yet they are counted good Additions.  
 That use Ile make, He that neglects a blessing,  
 Though he want present knowledge how to use it,  
 Neglects himselfe... (3.5.100-110)

Here the language of maintenance (first introduced by Angellina at 1.1) returns. Charles now sees that the maintenance of a woman is one and the same with the maintenance of an estate--"land and monies." Like the verb "to thrive" (discussed above), the verb "to

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<sup>25</sup> One imagines the straight-faced delivery of these comical lines where Brisac and Lewis attempt to tease Charles, who has his nose back in a book only a moment after dismounting a horse:

LEWIS. What at his booke already?  
 BRISAC. Fye, fye, Charles,  
 No houre of interruption?  
 CHARLES. Plato differs  
 From Socrates in this. (1.2.115-117)

maintain" is both personal and horticultural in Charles's speech. Waxing poetic, he underscores his equation of the lady and the land with the lyrical remark, "Now I know my Land, and now I love too" (3.5.126), finally merging the contemplative "I know" and the active "I love," suggesting his intention to keep and to maintain both Angellina and their combined lands.

Charles's rehabilitation is not yet quite complete, however. He comes to understand how to maintain himself, his lands and his family, but he does not yet understand that good husbandry is also crucial to the larger community, and to the nation. In the conduct books, educators, parents and guides expound upon the benefits of self-cultivation through learning and practice, and of agricultural improvement through the application of hard work and the most up-to-date techniques. In georgic drama gaming and other vices lead to penury while good husbandry earns its practitioners a good reputation and a good living. To underscore the importance of cultivation, the authors of these texts persistently invoke the "commonwealth" as the ultimate beneficiary of their readers' efforts. Citing classical authors and employing the now familiar agricultural metaphor, James Cleland links the education of young noblemen to the fate of the commonwealth in *The instruction of a young noble-man* (1612).

[Solon and Lycurgus] wel considered, how the Institution of youth imported, and how neerely it concerned a wel gouerned Common-weale.

For it is the spring, not autumnne, which maketh a good harvest (C3)

Such references to the "commonwealth"--meaning, variously, the people, the country, or the crown--suggest and often explicitly warn that to neglect the good work of cultivation is to undermine society. To follow the advice or heed the admonitions iterated in the

conduct books or narrated in georgic drama, on the other hand, is to do one's part in producing a well-ordered society.

These basic tenets of the ideology of cultivation had become "common sense" for English early modern people. It is possible to demonstrate to some extent the power and pervasiveness of the belief that cultivation promoted both self and society by tracing a popular metaphor through the textual genres I have been discussing here. Though most often used as a metaphor for society, and particularly English society, descriptions of the "commonwealth of bees" were employed as analogies for industrious and patriotic human behavior.<sup>26</sup>

Book IV of Virgil's *Georgics* is dedicated to the praise and description of "The Race of Bees."<sup>27</sup> In his verses on the nature of bees, Virgil emphasizes their loyalty to the collective well-being, their industry, and their farsightedness: "Bees only live in common-wealths... / And mindfull of ensuing winter, they / Labour in summer, and in publike lay / Vp their provision" (May, *Virgil's Georgiks Englished* 119). The virtues of bees are deemed appropriate as well for Dorothy Leigh's three sons, the dedicatees of her 1616 conduct book *The mothers blessing*.<sup>28</sup> In the prefatory poem, "Counsell to my Children," she likens her sons to a "labourous Bee" whose work preserves both country and self.

But this I much and oft desire,

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<sup>26</sup> For extended treatments of the "commonwealth of bees" metaphor, see Raylor; Merrick; Gurr; and Thomas (62-3). Kupperman, "Beehive," considers the impact of the study of bee government on English ideas about colonization.

<sup>27</sup> The poems appeared in English in 1589 and again in 1628.

<sup>28</sup> Popular reading in the period, twenty-three editions of *The mothers blessing* were published between 1616 and 1674. There has been a surge of new criticism on Leigh, *The mothers blessing*, and the genre of "mothers' manuals," advice books written by mothers and often figured as legacies that will provide for their children after their deaths. For example, see Craig; Sylvia Brown; Poole; Gray; Lloyd Davis; and Snook.



that you would doe for mee,  
 To gather hony of each flowre,  
 as doth the labourous Bee...  
 Where she findes it, there she workes,  
 and gets the wholsome food,  
 And beares it home, and layes it vp,  
 to doe her Country good,  
 And for to serue her selfe at need  
 when winter doth begin:  
 VWhen storm and tempest is without,  
 then she doth find within. (A8r-v)

Leigh's good wishes for her sons are as much about their spiritual as their material well-being.<sup>29</sup> Most important in this mother-to-son life-lesson is the juxtaposition of the bee's two loyalties--to herself and to her country--and the lack of tension between them. According to Leigh's analogy, having bolstered herself by laboring to secure "wholesome food"--good works as well as profit--the bee has in fact served both self and country.

The example of the commonwealth of bees presents an analogy for the structure of a human society in which good government depends upon the actions of individuals, an analogy in which acting in the interest of the state and acting in one's own best interest are rendered as similar and even simultaneous accomplishments. In the ideology of cultivation, self and state are often conflated and become inextricably linked at the site of a central unit--the household. At the center of this moral and material economy is

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<sup>29</sup> Leigh's poem also demonstrates the widespread confusion over the gender of bees (misunderstood until well into the eighteenth century), bidding her sons to compare their own behavior with that of a female bee. For more on changing ideas about the gender of bees, see Prete.

"home"--all the fruits of the bee's labors are made safe when she "bears them home and lays them up."

As in human society the commonwealth of bees operates on an agricultural calendar in which the common goal of individual households as well as of the commonwealth is a good harvest in fall. Leigh's poem reiterates Virgil's praise of the bees that labor in summer so that they may survive in winter. The virtues of industry and foresight are coupled here in a way that is central to the ideology of cultivation--cultivation promises a personal gain that is not simply good for the self, but universally good.

It is no coincidence that the metaphor of the commonwealth of bees became so popular in this period. The authors of husbandry manuals devoted significant space, and sometimes entire books, to the subject of apiculture.<sup>30</sup> Beekeeping was considered a pleasant pursuit as well as a profitable one, as Edmund Southerne points out in his *Treatise Concerning the Right Use and Ordering of Bees* (1593).

As for the profite that may arise yearly, being both lawfull and honest by Bees, it is more then by any other kind of chaffaire [trade] within the realme of England: for if you lay out ten pence for two hiues about the beginning of Iune, & put therein two swarmes, they can be no lesse worth then ten shillings, and your hiues againe before Bartholomewtide following. (A4r-v)

Far less costly than sugar, honey was a valuable commodity with multiple uses as a sweetener, an ingredient in home remedies and a preservative. Yet the authors of

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<sup>30</sup> For a succinct history of English beekeeping, see Walker and Crane. Harding offers an exhaustive bibliography of books on apiculture, with useful notes on printed books including a short list of early (pre-1500) manuscripts.

apicultural books slip back and forth between the practical and the rhetorical in discussing bees. Added to the front matter of the third edition of Charles Butler's *The feminine monarchie: or the historie of bees* (1634), a short prefatory poem by the author praises not only the "wit and industry" of bees but also the humans wise enough to comprehend the efficacy of those virtues.

These curious buildings fraught with richest treasure,  
 Not without Cause, to some do Wonders seem:  
 But they, with greater Cause, those Wonders' Causes,  
 [Bee's WIT and INDUSTRY] may Wonders deem  
 These do make those no Wonders in respect:  
 For what will not INDUSTRIOUS WIT effect? (¶1v)<sup>31</sup>

The poem, like many other prefatory or commendatory verses in bee books of the period, invites readers to appreciate and to imitate the virtues of bees. Husbandry manuals and bee books promote apiculture as an important and profitable branch of husbandry, but they also appropriate the example of the bees' own husbandry--their management of their hives and of all the flowers, plants and trees within their reach--to promote ingenuity and industry more broadly. Butler's poem, which couples industry with wit, is describing the cultivated cultivator that the husbandman heroes of *The Elder Brother* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness* aspire to become. Thus, when bookish Charles Brisac cites the verses on bees from Virgil's "Georgicks," we understand that his appreciation for Virgil's description indicates that Charles himself has the potential for both wit *and* industry.

CHARLES. For what concernes tillage?

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<sup>31</sup> In the 1634 edition Butler employed a phonetic spelling of English, which he had proposed in *The English Grammar* (1633). I have standardized the text of the poem here for simplicity's sake.

Who better can deliver it than Virgil  
 In his Georgicks? and to cure your heards,  
 His Bucolicks is a masterpeece; but when  
 He does describe the Commonwealth of Bees,  
 Their industry and knowledge of the hearbs,  
 From which they gather honey, with their care  
 To place it with decorum in the Hive,  
 Their government among themselves, their order  
 In going forth and comming loaden home,  
 Their obedience to their King, and his towards  
 To such as labour, with his punishments  
 Onely inflicted on the slothfull Drone,  
 I'm ravished with it, and there reape my harvest,  
 And there receive the gaine my Cattell bring me,  
 And there finde wax and honey.

BRISAC. And grow rich

In your imagination, heyday, heyday,

Georgicks, and Bucolicks, and Bees! Art mad? (1.2.131-147)

Though his father expresses disgust at the uselessness of this citation, Charles has actually displayed a nuanced understanding of both the rhetorical and the practical meanings of Virgil's "Commonwealth of Bees." In effect, Charles's unpacking of the analogy before an audience undoubtedly familiar with either the exact passages of Virgil or the numerous popular reiterations of the metaphor demonstrates his potential as a

proper husband and husbandman. Not only does Charles understand Virgil's vision of a peaceful and productive commonwealth, but his reaction to it is more emotional than intellectual--he is "ravished with it."

Though Charles repeatedly eschews the way "sordid and dunghill mindes compos'd of earth / in that grosse Element fixe all their happinesse" (1.2.187-8), it is Virgil's pastoral and georgic poetry that drive him to distraction. He describes these works as a notably replete farm--with crops, as well as cattle and bees--from which he may derive a "harvest." Charles's affinity for the values expressed in Virgil's lines on the commonwealth of bees reveals the possibility that his self-cultivation through reading may eventually make him the ideal husbandman and thus a productive member of society.

The texts I introduce and discuss in this chapter delineate a system of beliefs that is hegemonic in function, constructing cultivation as a universal good while protecting the interests of an elite, land-owning class. The ideology of cultivation works to obscure the relationship between "cultivation" and the accumulation of capital and cultural capital. In a land-based hierarchy improvements to the land will ultimately benefit only the landowner by increasing the value (exchange value and annual income) of the land. Improving the landowner him or herself serves to secure the status of members of this elite group and to defend against the loss of land. Thus Francis Bacon's agricultural metaphor of *cultus animi* designates the gentleman as both the ground to be improved and the improver, modeling the erasure of labor relations in the ideological re-imagining of agricultural work as "cultivation."

Ultimately, the ideology of cultivation displaces the benefits of "cultivation"--such as good government, productive lands and households, and the strength of the nation--onto the "commonwealth," overwriting the gains enjoyed by any individual or group. In effect the ideology of cultivation obscures the various relationships social groups have to the land by suggesting that a relationship to the land (e.g. as owners, managers, laborers, renters) is distinct from a relationship to "cultivation." In short, cultivation is presented as a dynamic strategy of emancipatory "goodness," while the land-based hierarchy it underwrites is in fact static and exploitative.

The labor of women, their productive and reproductive capacity, is written out of the cultivation-as-improvement model. The centrality of huswifery and the production of heirs to the success of the country estate is effectively distanced from cultivating discourse. In husbandry manuals the work of huswifery is recommended as suitable and expected conduct for the "mother and mistress" of the household, while, at the same time, that work is defined as restricted to the domestic space. Husbandry manuals including Xenophon and Markham employ specific and even colloquial terms in describing the work of the huswife as indoor work, the counterpart of the husbandman's outdoor work. While the work of the husbandman gains him not only self-improvement but financial and cultural capital, the work of the huswife is appropriated into the larger project of estate management. Ostensibly, estate management benefits everyone. However, as I have suggested, in effect it benefits a few.

This discrepancy, which is visible as a socio-economic disadvantage for some groups, and for women in particular, is generally invisible--accepted as the natural consequence of biological differences between men and women. As I will discuss below,

however, it is a discrepancy that depends upon a spatial logic in which women and households are static. Men move in the world as husbandmen while huswives stay "within the house." The huswife's stasis is prescribed, her movement disparaged or forbidden, as in *Xenophons treatise of housholde*: "For it is more honestie for a woman to kepe her house, than to walke aboute" (D). For a man, as I discussed above, to "keep" house is to maintain the estate by working abroad on the land; for a woman to "keep" house is to keep inside the borders of the household, to remain within it and thus within her purview at all times.

In the following sections I examine a slippage as potent as that inherent in the *cultus animi*. In tying the huswife so firmly to the interior of the household, and removing the possibility of her moving beyond its borders, the conduct literature on estate management imagines the household itself as immovable. In practice, however, estates could and did move. Even the commonwealth of bees metaphor takes this fact into account. Charles Butler, in *The feminine monarchie* (1623), includes the score and lyrics to the song the queen bee sings when she "goes forth" to establish a new colony, a new hive-household.

When so increased is this Nation,  
 That their owne limits cannot them suffice;  
 To seeke new Cities, for new habitation  
 They send abroad their num'rous Colonies...  
 That with hir traine hir fortune she may seeke:  
 And this she sings in measures mournfull sweete. (K4v)

Early modern English colonial discourse, too, moved households and estates abroad, resituating English husbandry in order to assimilate or "English" new lands. In the process, huswifery is revealed not only as central to the project of estate management, but also as a self-improving strategy independent from the art of husbandry.

### **Cultivation and Colonial Discourse**

Husbandry manuals were not solely concerned with English farms. The classical sources casually discuss what must have seemed commonplace to Roman readers, advice about how to choose a location for or evaluate the location of a new estate, which might be subject to a variety of climates throughout the empire, or how to transition from soldier to farmer and subdue the land after subduing its original residents. The first century writer Columella broaches these subjects repeatedly in *De Re Rustica*, especially praising the examples of Gaius Fabricius and Curius Dentatus, consuls responsible for great victories as well as for "tilling the captured land which they had received in the distribution of seven *iugera* to a man, with an energy not inferior to the bravery in arms with which they had gained it" (1: Preface.13-14).

Among the authors of the new, English husbandry manuals, Gervase Markham was particularly concerned or interested in the promotion of English agriculture on foreign soil. In the dedicatory epistle to *Hungers preuention* (1621) addressed "To all the most worthy and noble Lords, Knights, Gentlemen and Merchants, Counsellors, and Aduenturers for the blessed Plantation of VIRGINIA" Markham writes of his hope that the book will be of some use to those settling in Virginia.



To the Treasurie of that action of Plantation, loe, I bring this my poore mite, and offer it to your seruice, which if you shall please to accept, I doubt not but the benefit shall returne to those in your employment a reuenue worthy their practise; and my selfe rest euer ready to doe you and my Countrey Seruice. (A4v)

Markham's numerous works on husbandry are in fact listed in catalogs of the personal libraries of early settlers along with many other husbandry manuals and conduct books, including Charles Estienne's *Maison Rustique, or the countrie ferme* (1616).<sup>32</sup> But Markham did not simply speculate about the value of his expertise to would-be settlers. He invoked such planters as expert and exemplary husbandmen:

It is a Maxime held in Plantations, that no land is habitable, which hath not Wood & Water, they two being as it were the only nerues & strength of a mans safe and wholesome liuing, and I haue heard many wise Gentlemen, exercised, and ingaged, in the most noble and euer laudable workes of our new Plantations, both of Virginia and the Summer-Ilands affirme, that they had rather, for a generall profit, haue a fertile wholesome land, with much wood, then (wanting wood) with a Mine of gold: so infinite great is

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<sup>32</sup> For a recent overview of conduct books in the English Atlantic see Mylander. A series of articles entitled "Libraries in Colonial Virginia" published 1894-1900 in *William & Mary Quarterly* reproduced the catalogues of early American colonial libraries such as those of the Carter family. In addition, Thirsk cites Poynter when she mentions the presence of Markham's works on 'all kinds of English husbandry and huswifery' on the ship *Supply*, which during a 1620 Atlantic crossing, carried food and equipment to the colonies (306; and Poynter 12). For more exhaustive inventories and analysis of early seventeenth century colonial libraries see especially Louis Wright "The 'Gentleman's Library' in Early Virginia" and "The Purposeful Reading of Our Colonial Ancestors"; T.G. Wright; Dexter; and Tuttle. Most pertinent to this study is the frequent appearance of works on husbandry and surveying by Markham and others, including Mascall; Estienne; Norden; and Standish (Dexter 137-8, 143, 144; Tuttle 271; T.G. Wright 29, 53-4, 260-1; "Purposeful Reading" 91; "Gentleman's Library" 12-13, 42). Conduct books were also popular, especially titles such as James I's *Basilkon Doron* (T.G. Wright 266; "Purposeful Reading" 101; "Gentleman's Library" 44), Guazzo's *Civil Conversations* ("Purposeful Reading" 100), and Pierre de la Primaudaye's *The French Academy* (Dexter 145; T.G. Wright 27, 31, 261, "Purposeful Reading" 91-2).

the vse of Timber (whose particulars I néede not rehearse) and so insufferable is the want, when we are any way pinched with the same. And hence it springeth that our olde auncestors (whose vertues would God we would in some small measure imitate) when they found any hard and barraine earth, such as was vnapt for grasse, or at least such as bare but grasse that would kéepe life, not comfort life, they presently plowed it vp, and sowed thereon Acornes, Ashkeyes, Maple knots, Béech apples, Hawes, Slowes, Nuts, Bullis, and all other séeds of trees in innumerable quantity, as may appeare by the Forrests of Del la mere, Sherwood, Kings wood, and many other within this kingdome of huge great spaciousnes and compasse. (*Seconde Booke H-Hv*)

This passage presents the New World husbandmen as men of sense and experience, and, having praised them for enduring the trial by fire that is husbandry in an entirely new landscape, Markham, in the next breath, claims an even greater authority for the New World husbandmen by juxtaposing them with the ancient, original planters of England's now flourishing countryside.

If Markham was particularly concerned with transporting his "authentically" English agriculture overseas, he was interested as well in reaffirming the connections between the "workes of our new Plantations" and farming at home. From Markham's perspective, or at least in terms of his pro-English farming rhetoric, a "mine of Gold" was no prize compared to the reward of planting a new England.

The authors of travel writing and promotional literature, too, offered an overly optimistic vision of New World husbandry in which difficult agricultural work was

watered down with leisure activities. They hoped to entice gentlemen to immigrate by advertising the availability of popular country sports such as hunting, hawking and fishing, together, of course, with the possibility of gaining or increasing an estate of one's own. At the same time they warned that idle people were unwelcome and unlikely to survive. They promised on the one hand that the land itself would *make* husbandmen of all comers while they warned, on the other hand, that only those already skilled would be successful. To make matters more confusing, those activities advertised as leisure--hunting, fishing, fowling--were the same labor-intensive tasks necessary merely for survival, and they were often required, not optional. These writers were attentive to details about local forms of husbandry and huswifery, but, in an effort to represent land as essentially available to be claimed and cultivated, they frequently present fantastically empty landscapes--landscapes that are both uninhabited and overflowing with natural bounty. I will call this sleight of hand "marvelous husbandry," versions of which may be found throughout travel literature. The voyagers of travel writing and travel drama either encounter marvelous husbandry--the sudden appearance of cultivated fields or country estates--or concoct their own in flights of fancy, imagining flourishing plantations where there are none. In colonial discourse such marvelous husbandry is both promoted and critiqued. Aided by the vision of an evacuated paradise it is easy to imagine the idyllic pursuit of old world georgic values--agricultural know-how, hard labor, and a happy life in the countryside--in strange countries.

### **Marvelous Husbandry**

The barren landscape that suddenly appears not only habitable but also farmable is a fantasy that recurs frequently in early modern travel writing. Land is at once claimed and virginal--free for the taking, awaiting only proper maintenance--in descriptions of marvelous husbandry and naturally occurring master-less estates like the idyllic prospect Sir Walter Raleigh claimed to have seen in Guiana with his own eyes.<sup>33</sup>

On both sides of this riuer, we passed the most beautifull country that euer mine eies beheld: and whereas all that we had seene before was nothing but woods, prickles, bushes, and thornes, heere we beheld plaines of twentie miles in length, the grasse short and greene, and in diuers parts groues of trees by themselves, as if they had been by all the arte and labour in the world so made of purpose: and stil as we rowed, the Deere came downe feeding by the waters side, as if they had beene vsed to a keepers cal. (*The discoverie of the large, rich, and bevtiful empire of Guiana* G4v)

Raleigh's 1596 account evokes a new world country estate through descriptions of a landscape ready-made to host an English lord or in need of one to claim it as his own seat. Raleigh's description of a park with a river running through it figures the explorers as rangers or landlords overseeing game. The use of the country estate metaphor puts the landscape well within the grasp of the intended reader; indeed, it calls out for proper care--not a wild place but one wanting a willing master and a plan for cultivation.

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<sup>33</sup> The Hakluyt Society has recently published Lorimer's new, authoritative edition of *Discoverie of Guiana*, edited by Joyce Lorimer. Many of the major literary critical work on English colonialism in the Americas takes up *Discoverie of Guiana* as a key literary text and historical document, see Hamlin; Read; West; Fuller, "Raleigh's Fugitive Gold"; and Montrose, "The Work of Gender." More recent studies include Holmes; Eastley; and McInnes.

While Raleigh's description of marvelous husbandry represents the colonial dream of a Golden Age in a new land where plenty appears despite the absence of labor, other writers were more pragmatic. In his promotional tract *A description of New England* (1616), John Smith cajoles and chastises his readers by turns, summoning them or those they have charge of to the plantations in Virginia and New England without delay. There, a little imagination and a lot of hard work might yield not an illusory but a very tangible estate.

You fathers that are either so foolishly fond, or so miserably couetous, or so willfully ignorant, or so negligently carelesse, as that you will rather maintaine your children in idle wantonness, till they growe your masters...though they spend you here one, two, or three hundred pound a yeer; you would grudge to giue halfe so much in aduenture with them, to obtaine an estate, which in a small time but with a little assistance of your prouidence, might bee better then your owne. (F2r-v)

According to Smith and Raleigh, claiming and cultivating even the most remote lands may prove to be the best investment you've ever made. Though these authors' visions of country estates are in many ways absurdly unrealistic, their fantasies are underwritten by common sense notions of home and family as the heart of a commonwealth and of planting with the goal of improvement.

Smith's slick line--savvy fathers will settle New World estates on their sons--depends upon a cultural convention: landed men will leave those lands to their eldest sons. The possibility of this traditional scenario is never in doubt. Indeed, the passage might be said to reflect a note of sentimentality about primogeniture, the transfer of an

estate from father to eldest son. With just such sentiments, the enterprise of colonization is often described--quite literally--as a patriarchal process, as Francis Bacon's "Of Plantations" (1625) suggests. When Bacon praises colonization efforts as being "amongst the most ancient, primitive, and heroical works," he invokes classical figures such as Aeneas. He mixes metaphors, however, when he describes plantations.

When the world was young it begat more children; but now it is old it begets fewer: for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms. (*Essayes* 106)

And, just a sentence later:

Planting of countries is like planting of woods you must make account to leese almost twenty years' profit, and expect your recompense in the end. (*Essayes* 106)

Old world kingdoms are the parents of new plantations, but the planters themselves are imagined not as the biological parents of future planters, but as gentlemen planning long-term investments in timber on their lands. Such rhetorical moves elide the importance of women's work and their reproductive capacity. They deemphasize women's crucial role in birthing and parenting children (heirs) and in supporting the long-term goals of estate management by maintaining the household in the short term through an unending series of domestic tasks. At the same time, the metaphor of "birthing" colonies refers implicitly to women's bodies and reproductive roles.<sup>34</sup>

In the process of transporting a domestic strategy of cultivation overseas, colonial discourse thus confronts the importance of women's domestic labor and reproductive

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<sup>34</sup> On the frequent allegorical and metaphorical use of women's bodies in the promotion of colonization, Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies* 126-54; and Montrose, "Work of Gender."

capacity to the success of the country estate and, by extension, of the colonial plantation. Charles Leigh's unsuccessful colonizing expedition to Guiana of 1604 encountered numerous obstacles, not least of which was his crew's refusal to clear land in preparation for settlement: "I purposed to plant...but my men discomforted with the sight of the Woodes which they were to fell, grew generally discontented, and omitted no practices to overthrow the voyage" (Purchas 16: 317-18).<sup>35</sup> Writing plaintively to his brother back in England about his need for more weavers in order to take the best advantage of the cotton crop--the indigenous women are too busy with their own work to help--Leigh inadvertently calls attention to the necessity of huswifery to colonial venture.

I pray you sir send me more Weavers, for I know not how to get any thing spunne for them, for the women here are put to that extreame labour, that they have no time to spinne for they onely fetch water, cut wood to burne, and bring it home upon their backes, they gather all their rootes and bring them out of their Gardens, they make all their Bread which is verie laboursome, they dressed all the victuals, make all the drinke, attend upon the men while they are at meate, and besides, they dresse up their houses in their kinde, and nurse their owne children: so as they are always toiled with labour, and have little or no time to spinne. (16: 321)

Leigh quickly moves on to a discussion of other profitable commodities, impressing upon his brother (an investor in the colony) the great promise of the chosen location. The tasks performed by indigenous women, described here as obstacles to the success of the plantation, are the same tasks keeping Leigh and his men fed, clothed and housed--Leigh

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<sup>35</sup> Leigh's letter was printed in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* in 1625. For more on Leigh's role in the English attempts to establish colonies in Guiana see Williamson; and Harlow.

had formed alliances with smaller tribes, receiving housing and victuals from local women in exchange for protecting their tribes against the aggressive Caribs (16: 325). Moreover, these tasks are recognizable as the very arts of huswifery enumerated and praised in huswifery manuals: cookery, brewing, spinning, nursing, etc.<sup>36</sup>

Like Leigh's, the colonial visions of travel writing, in which country estates appear on barren islands and uninhabited coasts, are often the more fantastic because they are entirely homo-social.<sup>37</sup> Travelers appropriate women's domestic labor by erasing it entirely or by rewriting their need for indigenous women's domestic service as criticism of indigenous men's idleness. At least one travel play, however, is able to reintroduce huswifery--husbandry's companion art--into colonial discourse.

Fletcher and Massinger's play, *The Sea Voyage*, begins with a group of travelers facing imminent shipwreck and with both crew and passengers clutching the slim hope that the sight of land--"My life now for the land! 'Tis high and rocky, / and full of perils"--promises salvation (1.1.146-7). Two men on shore are watching as the ship nears the land and the cheering passengers safely disembark. One offers the bleak comment, "Alas poor wretches, / Had they once experience of this island, / They'd turn their tunes to wailings" (1.2.20-2). The value of even "high and rocky" land, it seems, has risen for those facing death by drowning. For the men on shore, Sebastian and Nicusa, shipwrecked many years before, the "high and rocky" land is worthless. Desolate and wild, the desert island is as much a deathtrap as a ship in a violent storm: "they leap from one calamity to another" (1.2.18). What is implicit here is the value of land that is neither

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<sup>36</sup> In Markham's *English huswifery*, for example.

<sup>37</sup> This is perhaps attributable in large part to the simple fact that very few women traveled beyond Europe before the late seventeenth century; the vast majority of travelers and settlers before 1650 were men. On the arrival of women in the English colonies, see Ransome, "Wives for Virginia" and "Village Tensions in Early Virginia."



"high and rocky" nor "calamitous"; land that not only saves the day but is also capable of supporting human life; land good for planting crops, for grazing livestock, for converting to parks, orchards, gardens, for living on and working with. As is eventually revealed, Sebastian and Nicusa lost just such a paradise when pirates attacked their "plantations in the happy islands" and forced them to escape by sea (5.2.88). In comparison to this lost, fertile island, viable for cultivation and thus for colonization, their current island home seems "wretched," offering "nothing but rocks and barrenness" (1.2.64, 1.2.24). Here the authors of *The Sea Voyage* engage in a practice common in travel writing from this period, describing the relative viability of newly discovered or encountered lands for cultivation.

*The Sea Voyage* treats English audiences to a spectacle in which those who plough the land (Portuguese colonists) triumph despite the violent power of those who "plough the seas" (French pirates). Pirates "reap" harvests and "rape" women, disrupting the productive and reproductive work of the colony as a self-supporting and renewable agricultural community. When the Portuguese colonists are scattered, the men, trapped on a barren island, cannot farm, while the women, trapped on a bounteous island, cannot have children (they have eschewed the company of men and are now living as Amazons). The eventual triumph of colonists over pirates is signaled not by a return to husbandry and the agricultural work of planting, but by the resurrection of huswifery and thus of the reproductive (renewable) household. The comedy ends with wives restored to husbands, marriageable daughters matched, and Amazons turned to pious huswives skilled in cookery and physic. This surprising turn is in direct contrast to the common practice in

first-hand accounts of travel and plantation, which most often present a homo-social world in which the role of women is either deemphasized or occluded altogether.

### **Travel, Drama and Domesticity**

Like Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, widely recognized as a referent for Fletcher and Massinger, *The Sea Voyage* begins with a violent shipwreck that strands a motley collection of travelers. Several passengers and one woman, Aminta, a prisoner of the French pirate Albert, find themselves on the beach of a desert island. At the start of the play we learn that Aminta's hatred for her captor, Albert, has since turned to love, while Albert has turned over a new leaf and given up piracy. The travelers soon encounter two Portuguese men, themselves castaways from a previous shipwreck. These men, Sebastian and Nicusa, explain that the island offers no sustenance whatsoever but is loaded with heaps of golden treasure. Greed prompts a sudden mutiny and, in the confusion, Sebastian and Nicusa steal away with the ship, stranding the French group in their stead. As the plot unfolds, the presence of a second, fertile island nearby is revealed. The island is inhabited by seeming Amazons, a commonwealth of chaste huntresses led by their governess, Rosellia, but the women of the fertile island are actually the long-lost wives of the Portuguese castaways--the two groups were separated at sea. If we read the twin islands allegorically as the male and female aspects of plantation--the feminine is bountiful but uncultivated, the male wealthy but idle--the path to resolution is, I think, meant to be obvious. By reuniting the two aspects, the family and community the Portuguese characters have lost will be restored.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Critics have offered various readings of this plot device. My reading is indebted here to Miner, Jowitt and others who underscore the importance of the two-island setting, emphasizing, especially, the division

Through the arrival of Raymond, the vengeful brother of Aminta, in a second ship, the two groups finally encounter one another, the Portuguese families are reunited and the connections between all present become clear. The Fortunate Islands feature prominently as the place to which almost every character in the play seems to have some connection.<sup>39</sup> In due course we learn that it was two French pirates, coincidentally the fathers of Raymond and Albert, who drove this very group of Portuguese families from their home, a Portuguese colony.

RAYMOND. When first [our fathers] forced the industrious Portugals

From their plantations in the happy islands...

When by lawless rapine

They reaped the harvest which their labours sowed,

And not content to force 'em from their dwelling

But laid for 'em at sea, to ravish from 'em

The last remainder of their wealth...

Then did they turn those swords they oft had bloodied

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of the original castaways into all-male and all-female groups. Miner argues that the groupings represent a household in disorder, while Jowitt reads the division along gender lines as allowing a conflation of the sexual and commercial "appetites" in the would-be colonizer (Miner 91; Jowitt, "Her Flesh Must Serve You" 97).

<sup>39</sup> The Fortunate Islands are sometimes called the Happy or Blessed Islands. Anthony Parr, the play's most recent editor, favors the idea that Franville's lament at 3.1.88-90, "True we were bound, ye all know, / For happy places and most fertile islands / Where we had constant promises of all things," suggests the Canary Islands may have been the French party's destination as well. At times a blend of myth and reality, in contemporary geography the Fortunate Islands might have referred to the Canary Islands in the mid-Atlantic or to various locations in the New World. Parr suggests the islands may recall any number of regions with varied colonial histories--the Guinea coast, a Brazilian cove, one of the several Atlantic island chains (22, 25). On the Fortunate Islands, see also Crosby 71, 79-103; Wallace 203-5; and Josephine Bennett 122-3. Crosby and Wallace cite the use of the term "The Fortunate Islands" to label the islands now called the Canaries on fourteenth century maps, and the adoption of the epithet by classical and medieval geographers to describe these fantastically fertile islands West of Saharan Africa. Bennett discusses an alternate strain in which England, situated *divisus ab orbe*, is itself associated with the Fortunate Islands. Bennett treats this association as largely poetic, acknowledging the longstanding identification of the Canaries as the Fortunate Islands. I am particularly grateful to Claire Jowitt for discussing with me her recent work-in-progress, in which she discusses *The Sea Voyage* within the historical context of the sixteenth-century Portuguese settlement of Brazil.

With innocent gore upon their wretched selves  
 And paid the forfeit of their cruelty  
 Shown to Sebastian and his colony  
 By being fatal enemies to each other.  
 Thence grew Aminta's rape, and my desire  
 To be revenged. And now observe the issue (5.2.83-109)

By introducing the Fortunate Islands as part of both the Portuguese and the French back-story, the collaborators allude to a history that may properly be called "colonial."<sup>40</sup>

Indeed, Raymond specifically identifies the lost home of the Portuguese castaways as a "colony" and as a "plantation." There is no doubt that the lost colony was a settlement venture based on agricultural production, and it is significant that Raymond describes the French attack on the "industrious" Portuguese in terms of the theft of a crop--"When by lawless rapine / They [the French pirates] reaped the harvest which their [the Portuguese colonists'] labours sowed" (5.2.92-3).

In defining colonization as plantation, *The Sea Voyage* also relies upon the conflation--common, as I have shown, in travel writing--of colony and country estate. Fletcher and Massinger's play stages the loss of a productive colony (for colony, read estate) not through prodigality but through "rapine" by pirates. In *The Sea Voyage* pirates, privateers, and venturers are censured as ones who "plough the ocean" instead of the land, with the result that the good husbandry of innocent and industrious planters is interrupted and the planters themselves are made forcibly idle. Members of the French cohort are identified near the end of the play as the descendants of the original pirate

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<sup>40</sup> The position of the Fortunate Islands as, to some extent, outside history or, at least, within multiple colonial histories, affords the opportunity for abstraction. Colonialism in *The Sea Voyage* is thus as much English as Portuguese since it is unmoored from any single nation's historical practice.

transgressors, but they are associated with the undermining of industrious agricultural labor and the loss of lands throughout. Sebastian mocks them in Act 1, pointing out the island's treasures to them even as he knows his words will throw the Frenchmen into chaos.

SEBASTIAN. Look, ye that plough the seas for wealth and pleasures,  
That outrun day and night with your ambitions,  
Look on those heaps. (1.3.160-3)

The sheer amount, the "heaps," of treasure might well imply that the Portuguese were engaged in pursuits other than agriculture before the French attack, but no other colonial activities are described. Instead the colonists repeatedly wax nostalgic about their specifically agricultural industry. Meanwhile, not only the crew but also the passengers of Albert's ship are compared unfavorably with good husbandmen. Two of the passengers, Franville and Lamure, are false planters--caricatures of idle, rather than responsible, landed men. Franville, a hapless and overdressed lordling, has sold his lands to become an adventurer. Lamure, a confessed usurer banished from his home country, plans to use his ill-gotten gains to purchase new lands of his own elsewhere. Facing shipwreck, Albert's crew makes a last-ditch effort to save the ship by heaving all the cargo overboard. Franville--landlord turned pirate--and Lamure--ex-usurer and would-be landlord--object weakly as their belongings are cast unceremoniously into the sea.

FRANVILLE. Will ye throw away my lordship that I sold,  
Put into clothes and necessities  
To go to sea with?

TIBALT. Over with it. I love to see a lordship sink!

Sir, you left no wood upon't to buoy it up;  
 You might ha' saved it else. (1.1.131-3)

LAMURE. Must my goods over too?

Why, honest master, here lies all my money,  
 The money I ha' racked by usury  
 To buy new lands and lordships in new countries  
 'Cause I was banished from mine own. I ha' been  
 This twenty years a-raising it...

TIBALT. Away with it lustily, sailors.

It was some pawn that he has got unjustly. (1.1.115-28)

Tibalt, Albert's witty right-hand man, teases Franville for his shoddy estate management, suggesting that if only he had left some "wood upon't"--kept from deforesting his estate by selling off all the lumber--then the land itself, which exists now in the form of trunks of clothes, might not have been lost altogether. Tibalt is even less subtle in mocking Lamure, reminding everyone that the usurer's fortune has been "racked" not by his effort but by his extortion of others.

The barren island is itself a caricature, its barrenness hyperbolic. Sarcastic descriptions of its hellish landscape invoke the fertile country estate as its opposite--Raymond is ironic when he calls it a "fruitful farm." To Sebastian it is the "seat" of "wildness," to others a barren "heap," a "grave." Despite the piles of gold everywhere, without seasons, animals, or any growing things, the barren island has absolutely no potential as a colony.

SEBASTIAN. Here's nothing but rocks and barrennes,  
 Hunger and cold to eat. Here's no vineyards...  
 Nature that made those remedies  
 Dares not come here, nor look on our distresses,  
 For fear she turn wild like the place and barren...  
 Curse on those French pirates that displanted us!  
 That flung us from that happiness we found there,  
 Constrained us to sea, to save our lives,  
 Honours and our riches,  
 With all we had, our kinsmen and our jewels,  
 In hope to finde some place free from such robbers.  
 Where a mighty storm severed our barks. (1.2.24-43)

Sebastian and Nicusa describe the barren island to the newcomers in terms of its extraordinary lack. "Here's nothing," Sebastian laments. Here, "wild" must be understood as "resistant to agriculture" and therefore nearly uninhabitable, certainly inhospitable (*OED*). Impossibly, not even Nature is present since the island would rob Nature herself of life and fertility (1.2.29-31). Sebastian curses the French pirates responsible for "displant[ing]" his people, employing a verb used from the late sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries to refer to uprooting both plants and people from a settled spot--the verb may or may not include the sense of resettling them elsewhere (*OED*). There is thus an implicit comparison of the lost plantation, a fertile plot, with their current location, a *dis-* or *un-*plantation where nothing grows that can truly sustain human life or civilization beyond a bare subsistence.

Sebastian completes the image of an un-plantation in 1.3 and, as the French castaways listen, they soon begin to realize the seriousness of their predicament.

ALBERT. Is there no meat above?

SEBASTIAN. Nor meat nor quiet;

No summer here to promise any thing;

Nor autumn, to make full the reaper's hands.

The earth, obdurate to the tears of heaven,

Let's nothing shoot but poisoned weeds.

No rivers, nor no pleasant groves; no beasts.

All that were made for man's use fly this desert;

No airy fowl dares make his flight over it,

It is so ominous.

Serpents and ugly things, the shames of nature,

Roots of malignant tastes, foul standing waters.

Sometimes we find a fulsome sea-root

And that's a delicate! A rat sometimes,

And that we hunt like princes in their pleasure.

And when we take a toad, we make a banquet. (1.3.133-47)

Sebastian describes the seasons of planting and harvesting, spring and autumn, as empty and ineffectual. He enumerates the simple pleasures of rural life that are missing from the barren island--water, woods, animals, birds--and evokes a grotesque revision of that pleasant country life in which rats and toads are game worthy of a royal hunting party.



On the fertile island, close by but shrouded in mists and separated from the barren island by a deep, perilous river, the Portuguese women live as castaways as well.<sup>41</sup> They are hunters too, but their lifestyle has been altogether different. Rosellia, leader of the women, recounts the story.

ROSELLIA. When we were forced  
 From that sweet air we breathed in by their rapine,  
 And sought a place of being...  
 the two ships that brought us  
 To seek new fortunes in an unknown world  
 Were severed. The one bore all the able men,  
 Our treasure and our jewels. In the other,  
 We women were embarked, and fell upon  
 After long tossing in the troubled main  
 This pleasant island. (5.4.25-36)

The Portuguese women have followed in the footsteps of the fertile island's original--now absent--inhabitants and have become mock-Amazon. Their island abounds with plants, trees and game but the fertile island is a kind of un-plantation as well. It is a specifically pastoral (rather than a georgic) paradise, an inexplicably bounteous and unchanging green world in which denizens seem to exist outside time--shepherds wander at their leisure or, in this case, Amazons hunt game endlessly. In no way is Rosellia's commonwealth reflective of georgic values--agricultural know-how, difficult labor, and a happy life in the cultivated countryside. The Amazon enclave is no more a plantation than Diana's

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<sup>41</sup> Some body of water that is difficult to cross separates the islands but it is unclear whether this means a river or a stretch of open sea.

moonlit grove. The cracks in their utopian vision of a women's commonwealth are apparent even before the arrival of Albert and the other French castaways.

HIPPOLITA. For my part, I confess it. I was not made  
 For this single life, nor do I love hunting so  
 But that I had rather be the chase myself! (2.2.33-5)

With Hippolita's wistful admission, the mock-Amazonians are revealed as the comic counterparts to Sebastian and Nicusa, threadbare gentlemen drowning in treasure but dining on stinky tubers. The troop of chaste Amazon huntresses wandering their plentiful woods and pursuing game like Diana's nymphs are in fact sexually frustrated and bored with their life of leisure. Further, as I will argue below, they have no way of reproducing themselves or their commonwealth; their island is as "barren" as its counterpart.

The "Gouvernesse" Rosellia stubbornly teaches that maintaining the flawed commonwealth is the only way forward. Her title--the feminine form of "governor"--suggests both a leader of a colony and a caretaker and instructor for genteel children. Like Prospero in *The Tempest*, Rosellia believes she can both wreak her revenge on the pirates who destroyed her home and family and also responsibly tutor the women under her care. The result of this dual mandate, however, has been a perversion of the "governess" role.

ROSELLIA. Have I not taught thee  
 The falsehood and the perjuries of men? . . .  
 Have we, Clarinda,  
 Since thy father's wrack, sought liberty  
 To lose it un-compelled? Did fortune guide--

Or rather destiny--our bark, to which  
 We could appoint no port, to this blest place,  
 Inhabited heretofore by warlike women  
 That kept men in subjection? Did we then,  
 By their example, after we had lost  
 All we could love in man, here plant ourselves,  
 With execrable oaths never to look  
 On man but as a monster? (2.2.186-202)

Rosellia has "taught" her daughter Clarinda that all hope of companionate marriage or partnership with men was lost with the Portuguese colony. This tutelage revises the usual role of mothers and governesses in educating young women and preparing them for lives as wives, mistresses, and mothers themselves. Rosellia's prescription for the wholesale disavowal of men, family and women's traditional roles has resulted only in a colony doomed to failure. Though the women have "planted" themselves on the fertile island, they live without hope of progeny, tender feeling or sexual satisfaction. As Rosellia points out, the mock- Amazons have had one powerful tutor in particular.

ROSELLIA. Necessity

Taught us those arts not usual to our sex;  
 And the fertile earth yielding abundance to us  
 We did resolve, thus shaped like Amazons,  
 To end our lives. (5.4.41-5)

Though Anthony Parr glosses the "arts not usual to our sex" as husbandry, I read this role reversal as referring to their new oxymoronic guise as warlike women (26). They have

become expert huntresses, tracking and killing game for their sustenance and as their only pastime and pleasure. The earth here "yeelds its abundance" without cultivation by providing a kind of prelapsarian banquet of fresh fruit and free-range animals.

As a plantation the commonwealth is a failure because, though blessed with bounty, it will never prosper through successive generations. The women's choice to eschew men--even if they should encounter any--and thus husbands and children reads as utter folly. Having lost their first homes and families, the women have elected to allow their new community to die as well. This ominous decision echoes throughout the play and begins to sound like a cultish suicide pact. Rosellia alleges, "we did resolve thus shaped like Amazons / To end our lives," but by this time we have already learned that not all the "Amazons" are happy with this arrangement. The uncomfortable finality of the chaste commonwealth is acknowledged by Crocale, who admits that while they "live secure" from the kind of rape that destroyed their home, that security comes with a heavy price.

CROCALE. This place yields

Not fauns nor satyrs, or more lustful men.

Here we live secure,

And have among ourselves a commonwealth

Which in ourselves begun, with us must end. (2.2.14-18)

For Clarinda, the decision of the older Amazons has meant that the thrill of the chase is all she knows. Raised from a young age as an Amazon, Clarinda's recuperation is in many ways the focus of the play. At her first entrance, she pursues a stag tirelessly, "As if she were made of air and fire and had / No part of earth in her" (2.2.12-13). Fearless,

strong and free, Clarinda has never seen a man in her adult life, and, "scarce rememb'ring that she had a father," she has no lingering desire to be a wife or mother. She has neither known nor learned what family and household are. The product of Rosellia's pain and grief, Clarinda's education has not included the arts of huswifery--cookery, physic, Christian piety and charity. Clarinda instead spends her days hunting deer and facing down angry boars and lionesses. By the end of *The Sea Voyage*, however, she has become a wife, and her husband, Raymond, is not her own choice but is selected by her restored father Sebastian.

Clarinda's seemingly permanent withdrawal from the marriage market is overdetermined: not only chaste but also segregated from men, not only fatherless but not even remembering her own father or any other man, not only unschooled in huswifery but schooled instead in martial arts. Moments after Clarinda's first entrance she catches her first glimpse of a man and develops a sudden desire she cannot describe. Albert has swum over from the barren isle, searching for some food to bring back to Aminta, and washed up exhausted on the shore. More than a sexual attraction, Clarinda has a kind of epiphany, as she waxes philosophical and then passionate upon first seeing Albert.<sup>42</sup>

CLARINDA. What a brave shape

It has in death! How excellent would it

Appear had it life. Why should it be

Infectious? I have heard my mother say

I had a father, and was not he a man?...

And without such

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<sup>42</sup> Clarinda's exclamation, "What a brave shape / It has in death!" (2.2.110-1), upon first seeing Albert, echoes Miranda's, "It carries a brave form" (1.2.412), upon first seeing Ferdinand in *The Tempest*.

It is impossible we could have been ...  
 Nor can you or I have any hope to be  
 A mother without the help of men...  
 Which of you then most barbarous, that knew  
 You from a man had being and owe to it  
 The name of parent, durst presume to kill  
 The likeness of that thing by which you are? (2.2.110-24)

Clarinda's revelation--the connection between fathers and husbands--leads her to extrapolate that if fathers are essentially good and are to be thanked for giving us life, then men must be afforded the same respect. She also calls into question the Amazonian pact to eschew men and merely live until they die. She calls motherhood a "hope" and anyone who uses violence against men "barbarous." Clarinda's sudden compassion for the opposite sex takes everyone, even Clarinda herself, by surprise. As Crocale points out "'Tis strange to see her moved thus," but, she suggests, "instinct" can guide even a virgin who has known no men: "touches have titillations and inform her" (2.2.180). Kept in ignorance by her "governess," Clarinda finds that she is drawn by some inner knowledge to minister to Albert in a particularly wifely way: she offers him physic.

In spite of herself, it seems, Rosellia has passed on some of her skill in huswifery--tending to the sick with herbal remedies--to Clarinda, who recognizes that Albert needs medical attention and, more importantly, identifies physic as her "office" and later as "pious work."<sup>43</sup> Hippolita tries to warn Clarinda away from Albert by claiming that the body on the beach is "infectious" (2.2.107). Clarinda's interest is piqued instead. Then,

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<sup>43</sup> Markham lists physic as one of the principal virtues of the housewife and devotes the first section of *The English huswifery* to "House-hold Phisicke" (B2v).

seeing that Albert is wounded she becomes incensed, demanding that the other women show some compassion.

CLARINDA. Where's pity?

Where's soft compassion? Cruel and ungrateful!

Did providence offer to your charity

But one poor subject to express it on,

And in't to show our wants too, and could you

So carelessly neglect it?...

So, bend his body softly; rub his temples;

Nay, that shall be my office. How the red

Steals into his pale lips! Run and fetch

The simples with which my mother healed my arm

When last I was wounded by the boar. (2.2.135-47)

Two very disparate worlds collide when Clarinda calls for "simples" she can administer to Albert but reveals that they were last used to heal her own injury, sustained during a boar hunt. Clarinda is oblivious to what is essentially a reinstatement of traditional gender roles, seeing only that she is capable, willing, and even eager to change her very nature: "I could resign my essence to live ever thus" (2.2.156). When Clarinda realizes that Albert's wounds have already been bound--and with another woman's hair--she is overcome with jealousy. Though she knows nothing of love, courtship or marriage, Clarinda intuits that a woman's administering physic to a man is an intimate act and guesses that she may have a rival. Nevertheless, she embraces a new directive and one

that she prescribes for all women--charity--come what may for, as she says, "Charity ever / Finds in the act, reward, and needs no trumpet / In the receiver" (2.2.174-6).

Having mastered physic, Clarinda next takes her mother to task for denouncing motherhood. In Clarinda's judgment the iron law of the chaste commonwealth to live apart from men is merely "obstinate abstinence" (2.2.207-8). Her sudden transformation has made Clarinda not only a model huswife but a spokesperson as well. She identifies Rosellia's decision to reject all men as the result of distemper--"You are angry, mother, and ye are old too, / Forgetting what men are. But we shall temper ye" (4.2.28-9)--and claims for herself a newly gendered acuity.

CLARINDA. I see about him -- women have subtle eyes

And look narrowly, or I am much abused --

Many fair promises; nay, beyond those,

Too, many shadowed virtues. (4.2.88-91)

Clarinda now perceives what was once a mystery to her, that women are capable of seeing and encouraging the best in men. Moreover, this role is appealing and seems natural to her. She assumes that the power of perception--"subtle eyes"--she has now mastered is simply an innate ability of her sex.

In Act 5, though the Portuguese women maintain that they are Amazons, they serve up a huge feast, preparing everything from fresh baked bread and wine to "suckets and sweet dishes," delicacies reserved for the most expensive banquets and known only--according to Markham--to the "compleat Hous-wife (*English husvwife* Q).<sup>44</sup> Though

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<sup>44</sup> "The English Hous-wife" gives the recipe for suckets in the section entitled "Of banquetting stuffe and conceited dishes": "Albeit they are not of general vse, yet their true times they are so needfull for adoration, that whosoeuer is ignorant therein, is lame, and but the half part of a compleat Hous-wife" (*English husvwife* Q).



Rosellia maintains that the banquet is a clever trick to lull the men they hold captive into revealing their secrets, the image of Amazons baking, brewing and preparing canapés has already undermined her authority and their legitimacy as "warlike women." The huswifely art of cookery thus re-enters the mock-Amazons' repertoire. In her grief and anger Rosellia abandoned even her religion (Markham begins "The English Hous-wife" by insisting that first and foremost the good huswife must be of an "vpright and sincere religion") (*English husvwife* Bv). Knowing that the Amazon's male prisoners are the descendents of the pirates who destroyed her family and colony, she plans to conduct a ceremony--a violent inversion of a marriage rite--in which she will sacrifice the prisoners, eat them, and wear their blood on the anniversary of her wedding to Sebastian "some five days hence" (4.2.7).<sup>45</sup> At the climax, Albert and Raymond are led to the sacrificial altar accompanied by "horrid music" and Rosellia reveals all (5.4). She relates the story of the French pirates' attack on the Portuguese colony, condemning Albert and Raymond for their part in the crime despite their claims to innocence. Instead of a pagan rite, however, there is a reunion when Sebastian reappears just in time to keep his wife from losing her Christianity for good.

The pair's reunion is figured as an affirmation of the institution of marriage, a kind of renewal of vows with the Portuguese colonists' lost wealth (the useless heaps of gold and jewels on the barren island) imagined as a "jointure." Sebastian's presence and his words seem to restore Rosellia to herself. Though many other characters have described her as "strict" and decidedly "old," Sebastian hails Rosellia as a perfect wife, mother, and a beauty ravished by time.

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<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of gender with regard to the larger theme of eating (including cannibalism) and appetite in the play see Walters.

SEBASTIAN. Looking on this building,  
 This ruined building of a heavenly form  
 In my Rosellia, I must remember,  
 I am Sebastian. (5.4.74-7)

Sebastian's metaphor, likening Rosellia to a "building," recalls the association between huswives and the architectural structure of the household itself. Rosellia does not look like an Amazon or warlike woman to Sebastian. Instead she resembles a house that, though "ruined," may yet be repaired and kept by a good husband.

Crucially, it is in seeing Rosellia that Sebastian remembers himself and becomes again a husband, father, and lord. The play ends with Sebastian calling for all to return to their "several homes"--and this may mean the twin islands of the play, the lost Portuguese colony and/or the various countries of origin, Portugal and France. In effect, however, the destroyed "homes" have already been rebuilt. The male and female aspects of the lost Portuguese colony have been reunited. Rosellia yields up her power of governance at Sebastian's request--"If she be mine / Rossellia can deny Sebastian nothing...She does give up / Herself, her power and joys and all to you, / To be discharged of 'em as too burdensome" (5.4.94-8)--and Sebastian arranges marriages for all parties, Aminta to Albert and Clarinda to Raymond. In the final moments of *The Sea Voyage* a sudden flurry of marriage matches accompanies the formal transfer of power from matriarch to patriarch and the restoration of the traditional household. Past wrongs are righted and posterity ensured with the promise of productive (and reproductive) family units.

## **Conclusion**

The crucial events of *The Sea Voyage* are the loss of land and the loss of family. The play suggests that huswifery--domestic and reproductive labor--is crucial to a successful colony. This insistence on the importance of huswifery seems to contradict the common practice in both husbandry manuals and travel writing, which present a homo-social world in which women's work and reproductive capacity are marginalized or obfuscated. As I have shown, while a variety of texts participating in colonial discourse skirt discussion of women's contribution to colonial efforts, Fletcher and Massinger's travel play features good huswifery as essential to successful cultivation overseas. *The Sea Voyage's* strangely specific opposition between Amazons and huswives is in fact related to new connections between colonial plantation and country estate. Their sexual desires mastered, their powers of social and self-government surrendered, and their freedom of choice curtailed, the Amazons of *The Sea Voyage* are converted into huswives. It is this conversion that allows a lost colony--read: lost estate--to thrive again.

I will end with a quotation from Thomas Carew's court masque *Coelum Britannicum* (1634) that invokes a common, and often comic, association between Amazons and bad "house-keeping."

MERCURY. Edicts are made for the restoring of decayed housekeeping, prohibiting the repayre of Families to the Metropolis, but this did endanger an Amazonian mutiny, till the females put on a more masculine resolution of soliciting businesses in their owne persons, and leaving their husbands at home for stallions of hospitality. (B4v)<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The passage pokes fun at Charles I's numerous proclamations forbidding gentry to take up continual residence in London and ordering them to return to the countryside where they could better tend to the business of their estates.

I draw attention to Carew's quick wit to demonstrate, first, the usefulness of "Amazonian," an adjective that effectively prepares the audience for the veiled social critique to follow, and, second, the layered meaning implicit in the term. "Amazonian" here describes not only the absence or transformation of women's accepted roles-- "females put on a more masculine resolution"--but also the specific disruption of "house-keeping." In addition, the choice "Amazonian" locates the disrupted household beyond London, and even beyond the English countryside, in the exotic space outside the known and familiar, Western world.<sup>47</sup>

Amazons and huswives are made into polar opposites both connotatively and spatially. This is accomplished through a complex associative logic in which behavior may be evaluated not only on a scale from creditable to unacceptable, but also from familiar to alien. And strange behavior, like strange people, may be understood as non-native, un-English. This spatial relation between bad behavior and foreignness places cultural others at a distinct disadvantage. In Shakespeare's *Othello*, which I will treat in Chapter Two, Othello bets his reputation as a trustworthy soldier on his own good judgment and flawless record of past performance.

OTHELLO. When light-winged toys  
 Of feathered Cupid seel with wanton dullness  
 My speculative and officed instrument,  
 That my disports corrupt and taint my business,  
 Let housewives make a skillet of my helm. (1.3.269-73)

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<sup>47</sup> This association is made in *The Noble Gentleman* (1626) as well. The city gallant, Longovile, says of Madame Mount Marine, "I much admire the fierce masculine spirit, / Of this dread Amazon," referring to her determination to maintain her costly and dissolute lifestyle in town despite her husband's wish to return to a quiet country life (4.2.1-2).

If he is wrong in this assessment, Othello attests, he will hang up his hat, letting others use it as nothing more than a kitchen utensil. Implicitly, Othello's promise places the itinerant soldier's life in spatial and connotative opposition to the stationary life of the huswife. Unfortunately, it is not the soldier's trustworthiness that will be in doubt in *Othello*, but the stranger's. In Shakespeare's Venice, the behavior of strangers who travel into Europe, penetrating the borders of communities and households, bears intense scrutiny. When this distrust proves to be prejudicial and ultimately insurmountable, the reliability (and universality) of the conduct system itself becomes suspect.

## Chapter Two

### "Manifest me rightly": *Othello*, Travel and the Epistemology of Credit

#### Introduction

In some ways this chapter represents a thematic departure from the rest of the dissertation: Chapters One and Three dwell on land, on country estates, good husbandry, colonial plantations and other georgic fantasies. In Shakespeare's *Othello*, I find a play that is emphatically un-georgic. "Zounds!" Iago shouts out into the night under Brabantio's window, "Even now, very now, an old black ram / Is tuppung your white ewe!" (1.1.84-8). "My house is not a grange," is Brabantio's curmudgeonly reply.

*Othello* is an urban play, and Venice is a city among cities, a hub of global trade, located in the heart of the Mediterranean's clash of cultures, nations, and religion. It is because of this urban, worldly location, however, that I am able to examine, once again, the ways in which a global context placed English ideas about social differentiation under pressure. The plot of the play advances almost in response to the mere presence of three characters who, together, make a sort of perfect storm in a culture of credit. Othello is an honest traveler, Iago is a trusted schemer, and Desdemona is a subversive daughter and submissive wife: contradictions all.

This chapter also represents my own contribution both to the study of race in the early modern period and to *Othello*. Criticism on *Othello* and criticism on race in the early modern period are intertwined and for good reason.<sup>1</sup> *Othello* is both historical

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<sup>1</sup> Criticism on *Othello* and race is extensive enough that the term, "race," is somewhat reductive. Scholars have drawn attention to the play's explicit and implicit references to skin color and other somatic markers associated with racial, religious, and ethnic groups; see, for example, Hall, "*Othello*"; Skura, "Reading"; and Bartels, *Black Face* 147-81; Lupton focuses on circumcision. Paster, *Humoring*; and Floyd-Wilson

document and literary text, and as such it represents an opportunity to examine contemporary attitudes toward cultural, religious, national, and ethnic difference in an effort to historicize "race" in a pre-modern world. In addition, it represents the opportunity to theorize all kinds of social difference, to examine powerful and pervasive ideologies. *Othello* has come to represent a threshold, an access point, to all that is anomalous and compelling about the nature and function of race in early modern England as well as in contemporary society. For my purposes, however, *Othello* is a play about travel; it considers the fate of a traveler who simply seeks to gain and maintain good credit, and who submits wholeheartedly to the local conduct system with its arbitrary rules over behavior and its intolerance for foreign customs.<sup>2</sup> In the face of such earnest conformity, the limitations of the conduct system are made suddenly clear, because while travel is an acknowledged cultivating strategy, travelers cannot be trusted.

Travel, an accepted strategy for self-improvement, became increasingly necessary in an age of capitalist expansion. In a newly global world, travel was considered advantageous to the elite European man, who traveled in order to become better educated and more experienced, to develop social connections and earn respect for his achievements upon returning home. This belief in the benefits of travel is reiterated in conduct literature, inspiring the emergence of a subgenre of *ars apodemica* (art of travel) treatises. I contend that travel, however, challenged the prevalent system of social differentiation, which depended upon the evaluation of behaviors according to

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(132-60) offer compelling readings of geo-humoural ethnic difference. Others have drawn attention to the stage history of the play and the theatrical production of dark skin using various cosmetic and prosthetic techniques; see, for example, Vaughan, *Performing* 93-106; Callaghan "*Othello*"; and Hornback. Still others have placed the play within the larger context of early modern English ideas about sub-Saharan Africa, a place inhabited by dark-skinned people; see, for example, Bartels, "*Othello*"; Burton "'Most Wily Bird,'" and Patricia Parker, "Fantasies."

<sup>2</sup> Collington offers an extended treatment of *Othello*'s travels, reading *Othello*'s stories in the context of early modern travel writing and focusing on the common use of fabrication and exaggeration in that genre.

universally accepted codes of conduct. The practice of travel exposed the existence of alternate systems of value that undermined the belief in universal standards of behavior. Travel discourse refigures this ideological threat as a physical and moral one that imperils the traveler him or herself rather than an entire conduct system. In plays, when Europeans travel they grapple with both its considerable physical and moral risks. Those risks are represented and often embodied by the strangers they encounter, whose customs and actions may be overtly or insidiously menacing, strangers whose difference is often marked somatically. Those encountered through travel are, moreover, viewed as essentially static, synonymous with the locations Europeans travel to and return from. When strangers do travel they present an epistemological challenge to the spatial logic of the early modern English conduct system.

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the prevalent early modern system of social differentiation, dependent upon the evaluation of conduct, is directly related to economic historian Craig Muldrew's notion of a culture of credit, in which good conduct allows people to build bonds of trust that in turn yield economic opportunity. In the culture of credit ties between households--through commerce as well as marriage, child-rearing, and friendship--were initiated and maintained by means of continuous contact. The trustworthiness of travelers, however, was difficult to substantiate because such ties were seldom present. Travel thus presented a growing problem to the system of credit as English people became increasingly involved with distant places both physically--through trade, diplomacy, travel for education, exploration, colonialism, piracy--and



imaginatively--through reading, play-going, and travel writing about exotic distant locations.<sup>3</sup>

Literary treatments take advantage of the cognitive dissonance that travel represents, questioning the socio-economic significance of somatic difference--particularly sex and race difference--and the socio-economic disparity that ensues from such categorizations by staging essentially static figures such as women and strangers on the move. Shakespeare's *Othello*, as I will show, challenges the notion that strangers are essentially base by interrogating the conduct-based culture of credit that produces such disparities. In *Othello*, travel's incredibility is quantifiable; it has real socio-economic value. The Moor of Venice is an asset to the state because his "travailous history" has made him into expert military personnel. He is also valued in an unofficial capacity for the entertainment his colorful past offers to avid listeners. Othello--identified as a black "Moor"--is introduced as both black and trustworthy, but suffers a fatal loss of credit over the course of the play.

Before turning to the play, however, I will begin by situating travel as a cultivating process that excludes women and "far-distant" or exotic people by assigning potent, stigmatized meaning to the somatic marks sex and race. Reading the rhetorical strategies of *ars apodemica* treatises, I show how access to travel as cultivating conduct was limited to elite European men.<sup>4</sup> I first look to legal restrictions on women's travel, portrayals of women travelers in Renaissance drama, and the gendered language of *ars apodemica* treatises to demonstrate how women's travel is figured as a disastrous or fatal

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<sup>3</sup> Hadfield, "Benefits" offers a recent review of negative attitudes toward physical travel; Ord offers a book-length treatment of the debate. For a comprehensive look at English travel and travel writing in the early modern period see Stoye; Brennan; Quadflieg; Korte; Mary Campbell *Witness*; Adams; and Sell.

<sup>4</sup> On the *ars apodemica* tradition in England and Europe, see Carey; and Stagl.

fall from grace. Finally, I turn to the telling treatment of "far-distant" people in both plays and treatises, where such people are figured as essentially static. As I show, travel renders members of both of these groups--women and far-distant people--uncultivable, transforming them instead into objects for sale.

### **Most Unfit for this Course: Travel and Trust**

Travel discourse presents travel as a cultivating process with the power to increase one's potential to be trusted, to increase one's value in the culture of credit.<sup>5</sup> The epistle to the reader in *Profitable Instructions* (1633), a compilation of three works of *ars apodemica*, describes the improvements achieved through travel in terms of the pursuit of perfection: "The best scholler is fittest for a Traueller, as being able to make the most useful obseruation: Experience added to learning, makes a perfect Man" (A2-A3v).

Travel writers and the authors of treatises attempting to demonstrate that travel is beneficial and edifying dwell on the subject of the returned traveler's behavior. Generally these texts emphasize the importance of demonstrating all the outward signs that travel has successfully added something to a man's worth: he has kept a journal, he has kept up a correspondence with a network of contacts overseas, and he has learned foreign languages. The terms of the trustworthiness gained through travel were very specific however, and were predicated upon the traveler's eventual return and re-assimilation into English culture. Francis Bacon's advice from the essay "Of Travaile" is perhaps the most famous of these admonishments.

When a *Travailer* returneth home, let him not leave the Countries, where he hath *Travailed*, altogether behinde him; But maintaine a

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<sup>5</sup> On the history of educational travel, see Warneke, *Images*; Chaney; and Parks, "Travel."

Correspondence, by letters, with those of his Acquaintance, which are of most Worth. And let his *Travaile* appeare rather in his Discourse, then in his Apparell, or Gesture: And in his Discourse, let him be rather advised in his Answers, then forwards to tell Stories: And let it appeare, that he doth not change his Country Manners, for those of Forraigne Parts; But onely, prick in some Flowers, of that he hath Learned abroad, into the Customes of his owne Country. (Kiernan 58)

Returned travelers were not to become overly garrulous especially on the topic of their travel; they were not to be outlandishly dressed; they were not to adopt foreign customs; and, above all, they were not to convert to other religions, for these signs would indicate decreased trustworthiness.

Rather, travel should make a man more trustworthy by exposing him to a world of difference: different customs and behaviors. Through travel men were thought to acquire what Philip Sidney calls "the mixed & correlatiue knowledge of things," an ability to make sense and use of the differences between varying practices, customs, and behaviors (*Profitable Instructions* 84).<sup>6</sup> Travelers were imagined to be cultivating not aesthetic but moral discernment, which had practical applications as explained in *A direction for trauailers* (1592).

I know nothing more auailable to the attaining of true wisdom and sound discretion, then the sight, consideration and knowledge, of sundry rites, maners, pollycies and governments, especialllye if you marke them diligentlie, compare them together perfectlie, and applie them to your

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<sup>6</sup> In the letter to his brother Robert, the first Earl of Leicester printed in 1633 as part of the compilation *Profitable instructions describing what speciall obseruations are to be taken by trauellers*. The date and

purpose effectually, which of all loves I desire your honour to do. It is enough that you see strange ordinances in other landes, but you must see into them, and marke the reason and groundes of them. Thinke it not sufficient to seeke into forren estates and customes, vnlesse you search also into the vse and abuse of them. (Lipsius Bv)

Travel tested a man's virtue by exposing him to a world of both good and bad behaviors. A fit traveler would learn to distinguish between the two, to identify the good behaviors worthy of emulation and to eschew the bad ones.<sup>7</sup> Essentially travel enabled one to be judged a better person and it enabled one to become a better judge of others. Authors of *ars apodemica* treatises and travel writers emphasize the importance of judgment in a traveler, cautioning that travel might impair the judgment of the weak-willed. Travel was therefore to be undertaken with great seriousness and sense of purpose: "He therefore that intends to *Trauell*...must determine, that the end of his *Trauell* is his ripening in knowledge, and the end of his knowledge is the seruice of his countrie, which of right challengeth, the better part of vs" (*A Method for Trauell* B).

One might travel for pleasure or for profit (a common refrain), but in the end there is little distinction between the two since an approved traveler stands to gain either financially or by increasing his social credit.<sup>8</sup> Ostensibly exposure to other countries and customs would make one a kind of intelligencer, enabling him to deliver invaluable information about how other nations' military strength, commerce, etc. matched up

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authorship of the three letters in *Profitable Instructions* have been debated, see Hammer.

<sup>7</sup> "When when you see infinite variety of behauior and manners of men, you must choose and imitate the best" (*Profitable Instructions* 46).

<sup>8</sup> The conflation of financial and social profit is more often implied than stated as in Moryson's "Instructions": "Since we permit Merchants and Mariners...to take long voyages for gaine, neither can Gentlemen more inrich themselues, then by the knowledge of military and politicall affaires" (Ddd6v).

against England's own. The expectation was that the benefit of this intelligence might be to your own pocket book as well, though this too served the interests of the commonwealth by enriching English families and estates instead of foreign ones.

But how did travel cultivate? Travelers are imagined to be moving through a field of edifying exempla, gaining worldly knowledge through exposure to the sights and sounds of an unfamiliar world. Travelers are encouraged in *ars apodemica* treatises to take note, to get to know, to view, and to move on. Travelers are instructed to take it all in, but admonished not to trust and not to linger. In effect, travel discourse produces travelers as people who are constantly in motion, constantly observing, and constantly gaining by those observations, while at the same time depicting the world and all its other inhabitants as static edifying objects.

If travel is a commodity available for consumption by elites, then the people and places they visit are its component parts, all for sale. This construction of travel did not, of course, represent the historical practice of travel. Many people of both genders, from many places, were on the move for a wide variety of purposes and toward a wide variety of destinations. Nevertheless, travel as cultivating process depended upon the myth of the traveler as the sole mover in a static world. Henry Peacham advertises travel as a kind of one-stop shopping for future leaders.

For if it be the common law of nature that the learned should have rule over and instruct the ignorant, the experienced the unexperienced, what concerneth more nobility, taking place above other, than to be learned and wise, and where may wisdom be had but from many men and in many places? (*Compleat Gentleman* 159-60)

Peacham's complete gentleman is a traveler not by inclination but by a kind of inductive reasoning, and his odd logic underscores the hierarchical nature of the culture of credit--leaders must become learned because leaders are learned by definition. The idea of travel as education or cultivation produced the traveler as an expert evaluator and thus as someone to be valued, trusted himself. At the same time, the discourse of travel maintained that travel as cultivating commodity was restricted to an elite group, genteel and male.

Women, for example, are explicitly excluded from travel as a cultivating process. Travel does not make women more trustworthy or valuable people. Instead travel is a black mark on a woman's reputation; travel is even seen as antithetical to chastity. In the *ars apodemica* tradition, staying put is often characterized as feminine or is associated with the sphere of women (e.g. courtship, marriage, nursing, child-rearing, the domestic space of hearth and home). Women who do travel (and, it should be noted, foreign women) instead become static objects encountered in that field of static edifying objects. Traveling women are seen as available for purchase, as prostitutes or through the metaphor of prostitution. Their very bodies become the outward signs of trustworthiness or untrustworthiness evaluated by a (gendered) language of judgment. Fynes Moryson, an avid traveler and author of the lengthy *An itinerary...containing his ten yeeres travel* (1617), likens the returned traveler's relation of his experiences to the work of an "Orator or Poet," if he is judicious and discreet in his discourse. However, he goes on to compare the difficulty of this feat--discreetly describing ones own adventures--to the "art" of "stale Harlots," who must "make their putrified wares saleable" (Ggg6).<sup>9</sup> There is a connection between the fragile credit of the returned traveler--travel presents a continuous risk

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<sup>9</sup> For more on Moryson's attitude toward women on the move see Gabbard.

because it may just as easily serve as a mark of untrustworthiness--and the always-fragile credit of women.

For women, travel discourse produces a stigmatized meaning for the indelible mark of sex. Travel offers the opportunity to improve oneself by being (correctly) influenced by other cultures, by learning to distinguish model behaviors from disreputable ones. Strangely, for women it is their very sensitivity and susceptibility to such influence, that *ars apodemica authors* and others assert in cautioning against women's travel. The socially constructed stigma that is a deficit of capacity for self-improvement through travel confines women to the domestic sphere, a restriction viewed as the natural result of biological difference. The notion that the appropriate location for women is always within the borders of household and nation becomes merely common sense, and women's access to travel as cultivating process is effectively circumscribed.

From the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century, continental travel became increasingly available for consumption (roads safer, accommodations more comfortable, countries and cities more hospitable toward tourists), as travel itself gained value both as an important form of vocational education or cultural refinement and as a luxury commodity, a pleasurable pastime. At the same time, already strict restrictions on travel increased, and it became more difficult to obtain written permission (travel licenses) to leave England and travel overseas.<sup>10</sup> Statutes and proclamations enacted and issued in the period repeatedly caution all would-be travelers not employed in certain sea-going trades not to attempt to leave the country without a license and particularly to avoid those countries with which England was at odds. *A Proclamation touching Passengers*, issued in 1606, exempts just "Saylers or Shipboyes or Apprentice or Factor of some Merchant in

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<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth look at the use of travel licenses, see Warneke, "Coastal."

trade of Merchandize." The proclamation clarifies an earlier statute (I James I, c. 4, s. 7) specifically prohibiting women and children from "passing over the seas without licence," directing those few women and children who "have from time to time just and necessary causes and occasions to go and passe over the Seas" to seek a license from officers stationed in certain ports.

The statute describes in detail the punishment for those in violation of the law. Interestingly, the punishment falls not on the passengers themselves but on the officer who "shall willingly or negligently suffer any such to pass," the owner of the ship who "shall wittingly or willingly carry any such over the seas," and the master or mariner of the ship as well. The offending officer would lose his office and all his goods, the ship's owner would lose both the vessel and all the tackle, and the master or mariner would not only lose his goods but also be imprisoned for a full year. Even more interestingly, the statute--of which the restriction on women and children's travel is only a small part--is designed to enforce existing laws that restrict the rights, freedoms and movements of Catholics in England, particularly recusants. The structure of the statute implies that women are like children, specifically in the respect that women and children are vulnerable, are particularly susceptible to conversion and particularly at risk when they are outside the borders of England. The fact that the penalty for women's travel without "just and necessary cause" and thus without a license falls not upon the travelers but upon the facilitators of travel, all men, underscores the notion that women are not, cannot be responsible for the movement even of their own person. Instead, just as parents are responsible for the movements of their children, all men are responsible for the movements of women or rather for circumscribing those movements. The emphasis of



both statute and proclamation is on the preservation of a paternal and national control over the movements of children and women who, as a group, are figured as childlike.<sup>11</sup>

The short list of exempted occupations--sailors, factors, merchants as well as, of course, diplomats, and ambassadors--were those same offices and occupations that enabled men to access the world themselves, even entering those cities, countries and regions that presented the greatest imagined risk of danger or conversion (Italy, the Levant, etc.). Added to the list of accepted "passengers" were young gentlemen of leisure who traveled to the continent with tutors or small entourages to learn languages and sought-after skills such as fencing or dancing, acquire networks of contacts, immerse themselves in the art and architecture of other cultures, enjoy entertainments including wine and foreign women, and view for themselves all the strange, rare, and wonderful sights the world had to offer. And of course, among the young gentlemen were those whose adherence to Catholicism made life in England the more difficult and a few years spent on the Continent even more appealing. The period from the mid-sixteenth century

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<sup>11</sup> Despite the pervasive censure of women's travel and the legal restrictions on their movements, however, women did travel. Recent studies by Games; Fumerton; and McRae offer some useful new readings of sources for the study of women's travel, though Games observes that "There is insufficient evidence to speculate in any systematic way on the experience of women travelers in this period. While many women journeyed to the continent, particularly young Catholic women whose families sent them to study in convents, few journeyed as recreational travelers" (Games 37). Fumerton takes up the case of working class women's movements within the borders of England. Their movements seem almost to be criminalized, accounts of their movements found in legal documents such as depositions are often tantamount to admissions of vagrancy and destitution, conditions sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly equated with prostitution. McRae demonstrates the ways in which, with the development of domestic tourism in England, travel becomes a sign of class. He treats another manuscript source, Celia Fiennes's travel journals, looking particularly at the ideology at work in Fiennes account: Fiennes attributes both the ability to travel and to appreciate the variety of the regions explored to people of great wealth and high status, redefining less fortunate people as essentially static. Also, see Ransome, "Wives" and "Village Tensions," on the arrival of women in the New World colonies in the early 1620s. *Proclamation touching Passengers* does not specify what might constitute "just and necessary causes and occasions" for a woman to "go and passe over the Seas," but we can reconstruct a short list of reasons for travel to the Continent from the sources available to us documenting women's travel outside England. Aristocratic and even middling sort women seem to have traveled to preserve their health and for the purposes of marriage. They were placed in foreign courts or sent to seminaries to be educated and, perhaps most commonly, accompanied husbands who were either inclined to travel or called upon to travel as diplomats or ambassadors. See Howarth for a discussion of Countess Arundel's collecting in Italy.

on saw an outpouring of guidebooks and *ars apodemica* treatises aimed at these travelers, along with printed relations of voyages and travels through Europe designed for a more general readership. In these printed descriptions and discussions, travel is always figured as a masculine pursuit undertaken in anticipation of the social advancement travel might earn one at a later date. This potential gain outweighed the dangers associated with travel.

For men the threats associated with travel were (generally) loss of innocence, loss of estate, and loss of religion. Many authors advocated travel only for certain individuals and under certain conditions, strongly cautioning all readers against travel's ill effects and opposing any idea of travel for some groups. Travel could make or break a person depending upon the strength of his morals, faith and good judgment. Women, as the discussion of statutes restricting their movements shows, were already assumed to be incapable of good judgment regarding travel, and vulnerable to conversion and temptation. Thus, in works of travel advice women are excluded from travel both explicitly and implicitly. Many authors state unequivocally that women should not travel under any circumstances. Fynes Moryson makes clear on the first page of "Of Travelling in Generall"<sup>12</sup> that "women for suspition of chastity are most unfit for this course" (Ddd6), while Thomas Palmer offers a table of the kinds and objectives of travel and travelers in *An essay of the meanes hovv to make our trauailes* (1606)--women appear on a list of those who are "inhibited" (prohibited) from travel along with "Infantes, Decrepite Persons, Fooles, Madmen, and Lunatickes."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In Chap 1, Book 1, Part III of Moryson's *Itinerary* (1617) devoted to general travel advice.

<sup>13</sup> This information is included in a chart inserted just after Palmer's dedicatory epistle.

Most often, in *ars apodemica* treatises the threat travel poses to women is less often a loss of religion than a loss of chastity. As women travel beyond borders the borders of their own bodies become permeable, passable, unchaste. Authors frequently employ gendered metaphors in describing men's travel as a movement away from the domestic, a sphere associated with wives, mistresses, mothers, and nurses. Another common gesture characterizes women's travel as the loss of feminine virtues or as the loss of chastity. *Ars apodemica* authors frequently hold up the example of Ulysses as the quintessential traveler, commonly quoting a favorite Homeric phrase "Qui multos hominum mores cognovit et urbes" [For he knew many men's manners and saw many cities].<sup>14</sup> In this saying, "*Mores*," as Sir Philip Sidney explains, does not mean "how to looke, or put off ones Cap with a new found grace.... But *mores* hee takes for that from whence Morall Philosophy is so called; the certaintnesse of true discerning of mens mindes both in vertue, passion, and vices" (*Profitable Instructions* 87-8). This common interpretation suggests that, for men, to know many customs and cities was to be edified and to strengthen one's knowledge of right and wrong.<sup>15</sup> For women the commonplace was quite opposite. Fynes Moryson offers a different classical example:

Thou wilt say, he hath lived well who hath spent his time retyred from the world.... This may be true in women; and thus among many Roman Gentlemen, when one praised Fulvia, another Claudia, a third with good judgement preferred a Senators unknowne wife to both these, and many

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<sup>14</sup> For more on the pervasive interest in this phrase and the changing interpretations of it see McCain.

<sup>15</sup> See also, for example, the "Preface to Readers" in Richard Lassels's *Voyage of Italy* (1670) in which he enumerates the benefits of travel: "Traveling brings a man a world of particular profit. It contents the minde with the rare discourses we heare from learned men, as the Queen of Saba was ravished at the wisdom of Salomon. It makes a wiseman much the wiser by making him see the good and the bad in others" (a6v-a7).

other severally commended, because she was no lesse good and faire, yet was knowne to few or none...but it is the part of an industrious man, to acct their affaires in the world, tho sluggards lie by the fire. (Eeev)

In defining travel as appropriate to men, more appropriate even than a contemplative, country life, Moryson also defines domesticity as appropriate to women. Travelers are improved the more they, like Ulysses, come to "know" many cities and customs by visiting them. Women, though, are less estimable the more they themselves are "known," an adjective that implicitly links social acquaintance with sexual intimacy. Moreover, the assumption in this formulation is that women will not themselves "know" many cities and customs since they would inevitably become "known" in the process.

The threat travel presents to women's chastity, and the link between women's chastity and domesticity (immobility) is reiterated everywhere in the *ars apodemica* treatises.<sup>16</sup> The theme is taken up in popular culture, as well, where the rhetoric is such that the threat seems almost direct, as if travel itself were a sexual transgressor, panderer, or an illicit act for women.<sup>17</sup> In Thomas Middleton's *Women, Beware Women* (1623), for example, Bianca, a Venetian woman, accompanies her new husband back to his home in Florence.<sup>18</sup> Bianca is described as a "stranger" by several characters, and her beauty

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<sup>16</sup> Joseph Hall, for example, repeatedly couches his warnings against travel in terms of women's unhealthy and willful desires for that which is beyond reach, out of doors, exotic or strange: "It is the affectation of too-early ripenesse that makes them prodigall of their childrens safety and hopes; for, that they may be wise betimes, they send them forth to the world in the minority both of age and iudgement, like as fond Mothers vse to send forth their daughters on frosting, early in cold mornings (though into the midst of a vaporous and foggy ayre) and whiles they striue for a colour, loose their health; If they were not blinded with ouer-weening and desire, they could not but see that their unsetlednesse carries in it manifest perill of mis-carriage" (*Quo Vadis?* 6).

<sup>17</sup> For an extended treatment of women's travel in English literature see Lawrence.

<sup>18</sup> On the import of the Italian settings in *Women, Beware Women* see Bruzzi and Bromham.

attracts the wrong kind of attention in Florence.<sup>19</sup> Despite her husband's determination to "keep choice treasures in obscurest places" and hide away Bianca "under [the] plain roof" of his home, his "gem...of that great value" is spotted and instantly coveted by the Duke (1.1.164-2). In less than a day from her arrival the "stranger" is offered a tour of local sights including a palace, galleries, and a "monument" by the baud, Livia: "Show her the monument too--and that's a thing / everyone sees not" (2.2.276-7)." But of course the tour is a plot. Bianca is first shown through a gallery of nude paintings and then finally cornered and forced to submit to the sexual advances of the Duke, eventually becoming his mistress.<sup>20</sup> In these kinds of narratives women's travel is transformative, but it converts women into edifying objects, the very sort of examples of immoral behavior Ulysses's travels teach him to discern. To put it more succinctly: men sight-see, women become sights to be seen. As Bianca points out with bitter irony, traveling women are lost, converted into "monuments," signposts for future travelers:

MOTHER. You have not seen all since, sure?

BIANCA. That have I, mother,

The monument and all. I'm so beholding

To this kind, honest, courteous gentleman

You'd little think it, mother; showed me all,

Had me from place to place, so fashionably.

The kindness of some people, how't exceeds!

Faith, I have seen that I little thought to see

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<sup>19</sup> Bianca's transgressive travel can be compared profitably with her husband, Leantio's. Bianca leaves Venice without her parents' consent and her arrival in Florence is a complete surprise to her mother-in-law. Leantio, however, is identified as a factor, a man who travels on business on a regular basis.

<sup>20</sup> Dawson; and Catherine MacGregor offer thorough readings of the rape scene and the theme of rape running through the play. For more recent commentary on the rape, see Detmer-Goebel.

I'th' morning when I rose.

MOTHER. Nay, so I told you

Before you saw't, it would prove worth your sight. (2.2.449-57)

Bianca's innuendo is lost only on her mother-in-law. Bianca has "seen all" and in the process lost her innocence, her honor and her chastity. She claims to have seen the "monument," but in fact she has simply adopted Livia's euphemism for the Duke's seduction. Her mother-in-law's naïvete about the dangers of "sight-seeing" for women underscores the moral lesson for an audience shocked and fascinated by the rapidity of Bianca's fall from grace.

Similarly, Desdemona experiences a fall from grace that is related to her decision to travel in defiance of accepted conventions and expectations. In *Othello*, Desdemona is presented as yearning to participate in travel even though it is a masculine pursuit--

OTHELLO. She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished

That heaven had made her such a man...

She loved me for the dangers I had passed

And I loved her that she did pity them. (1.3.163-9)

--and willfully traveling when the opportunity presents itself, despite her father's objections. In due course, however, Desdemona, too, is made an edifying example and is transformed to "monumental alabaster" (5.2.5). The somatic mark sex renders Desdemona a static fixture, even as she moves away first from her father's house and then from Venice to Cyprus. At the same time, the somatic mark race renders her husband, the Moor Othello, a professed traveler, fixed in space as well. Once Othello's murder of Desdemona and Iago's plots are revealed, Lodovico commands that Othello shall "forsake

this room and go with us," while Iago "shall close prisoner rest," suggesting that Iago will be immobilized, while Othello will travel again (5.2.328-33). He never leaves the bedroom or Cyprus, however; his travel is ended before the close of 5.2. Othello imagines Desdemona's white skin as a memorial to her lost virtue, but he too is transformed into an epitaph--"Set you down this"--upon a monument, an "object," so monstrous that it "poisons sight."

In the closing moments of *Othello*, the Venetian nobles, soldiers and domestics, all witnesses to a violent conclusion, are in a panic. The tension is palpable as Gratiano, Montano and later Lodovico, the ranking Venetians, attempt to restore order and prevent further violence. Othello himself, by contrast, is calm, speaking with a slow and even tone. He reassures Gratiano that he will not resist arrest, that he intends no more harm, and that, in short, he will not attempt to flee. In these lines, Othello characterizes himself as a traveler at the end of a voyage. He will not flee because he has nowhere else to go.

OTHELLO. Be not afraid, though you do see me weaponed:

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt

And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Do you go back dismayed? 'tis a lost fear:

Man but a rush against Othello's breast

And he retires. Where should Othello go? (5.2.264-9)

In this address to Gratiano, Othello seems to return to the lucid and forthright speech he uses to reassure the Venetian court of his seriousness of purpose in Act 1: "Heaven defend your good souls that you think / I will your serious and great business scant / When she is with me" (1.3.267-9). Though Othello sounds reasonable here, the lines

contain the threat of danger, of violence. "Be not afraid," he commands, but with a naked sword in his hand; and his talk of journeys ending bodes ill. The use of nautical terminology--"sea-mark of my utmost sail"--also recalls the wordy but down-to-earth soldier-courtier of Acts 1 and 2. Othello first greets Desdemona on Cyprus with a similar extended metaphor.

OTHELLO. It gives me wonder great as my content  
 To see you here before me! O my soul's joy,  
 If after every tempest come such calms  
 May the winds blow till they have wakened death,  
 And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,  
 Olympus-high, and duck again as low  
 As hell's from heaven. (2.1.181-7)

The repeated comparison of Othello's experiences to those of a sailor or a ship at sea is in some ways more literal than figurative--Othello *is* a sea-farer. Othello is an admitted wanderer, with a "travailous history," meaning meandering, but also difficult and painful. He is also an *accused* wanderer, an "erring barbarian" a "stranger, of here and everywhere." That he can be both an admitted and accused traveler as well as a beloved husband and trusted vassal should come as no surprise given the vexed meanings of travel in this period. What is unexpected is Othello's claim that his journey is at an end not because--or not solely because--his life is at an end, but because he has nowhere left to go: he *cannot* travel anymore. Why should he begin, suddenly, to think of himself as tied to any particular location? His history has been one of movement, his occupation even more so.



Tellingly, the moment at which Othello achieves spatial fixity not in his place of origin (Iago suggests Mauretania) but in the sphere of Venice--his adopted home and the home of his wife, Desdemona--is the moment at which Othello himself is lost.

LODOVICO. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

OTHELLO. That's he that was Othello? here I am. (5.2.280-1)

When Othello declares that he is now permanently fixed in one spot, "here," he also performs a curious division. He begins to refer to himself in the third person, responding to Lodovico's query by identifying himself as both Othello and not Othello. At once disembodied and present, the man who has been accused of being "of here and everywhere" declares himself to be, definitively and now permanently, "here." What I aim to suggest is that there is a connection between Othello's fixity, in a sense his assimilation, and his loss of self. It will be my contention that this connection relates to the production of stigmatized racial difference; that far-distant people cannot become unmoored from their places of origin (however vaguely defined that place may be) and transfer allegiance to a new location. Far-distant people cannot attain the access to credit that proximity, familiarity brings. Instead, far-distant people who travel--as they are represented in drama, for instance--are imagined to run the risk of a total and fatal loss of credit. Their access to credit goes from circumscribed to nonexistent the closer (spatially, and socially through ties of marriage and friendship) they come. Close up, far-distant people appear unstable, unpredictable, untrustworthy. That Othello's loss of self is also predicated upon a loss of good judgment and good fortune--"This rash and most unfortunate man"--is no accident.

For the remainder of this chapter I will consider the way in which *Othello* wrestles with the gendered and, as I will argue, racialized discourse of travel prevalent in the period and its implications for the culture of credit. In this discourse travel is characterized as a masculine pursuit associated with the weighty concerns of war, trade, politics and religion, and legitimate travelers are presumed to be European gentlemen. Women and cultural others, by contrast, are characterized as static, as fixedly domestic (referring to the borders of both nation and household) and fixedly foreign. In *Othello*, these basic categories prove insufficient and the genre of tragedy offers a critique of the reputation-based credit system, recasting the "language of judgment" as instead a "curse of service," an abusive and derogatory language with the potential to tear apart social and economic relationships just as easily as it builds them. In *Othello*, travel is revealed as that cultivating activity that makes racially marked men trusted but never trustworthy. Trustworthiness is predicated upon spatial proximity, while the indelible race mark signifies persistent (indelible) distance. The play exploits the loophole in the credit system that is racist ideology, in which far-distant people like Othello may be both trusted and untrustworthy.

### **Chains of Obligation, Curse of Service**

As discussed above, the culture of credit privileged proximity and familiarity as the firmest ground for establishing trust, which in turn allowed people to enter into socio-economic relationships of mutual obligation. Though pervasive, this system encountered difficulties with the expansion of long distance trade and, with it, the necessity of trusting

individuals from well outside the sphere of the familial or familiar. *Othello* stages the problem of operating a culture of credit in a multicultural economy.

The Venice of *Othello* is a cosmopolitan crossroads where some measure of trust *must* be established, even for a stranger, if that person has an acknowledged and valuable expertise, a good track-record of service and loyalty to the locality or its denizens, as well as the recommendation and approval of local people who already possess great social credit. Having been inducted into the Venetian culture of credit in this way, Othello appears in Act 1 already connected to several other characters by "chains of obligation": he owes his service to the state, while Iago, Cassio and others owe theirs to him. Yet, rather than gaining security from these bonds, Othello is quickly shown to be more vulnerable than any other character, even his subordinates. When Othello breaks with Iago (though the betrayal is unbeknownst to him) by promoting Cassio over him, Iago soon retaliates by impugning Othello's reputation with Brabantio, a senior Venetian statesman and Othello's would-be father-in-law. Iago is successful in destroying Othello's personal, familial ties within Venetian society. However, while Brabantio is quick to reject Othello, cutting ties with him and hauling him before an impromptu tribunal, Iago's first ploy is not enough to ruin Othello's credit in Venice altogether. For that, he must first undermine Othello's expertise in the eyes of those who have maintained and supported his official ties, his service, to the Venetian leadership.

Iago's plot depends upon flaws inherent in a culture of credit: the idea that reputation is the same as experience, that rumor is the same as fault. Iago relies upon innuendo, the suggestion of a fall from virtue, to ruin first Cassio, then Desdemona and finally Othello. On Desdemona and Othello the effect is devastating: a fatal loss of

credit. Desdemona's attempts to aid Cassio as he seeks to repair his reputation taint her own. Othello mistreats Desdemona, believing her to be unfaithful, his husbandly obligations to her dissolved, his own credit impugned by her bad behavior. It is Othello's wrongful mistreatment of his wife, however, that undermines his social credit. His expertise, track-record, and recommendation all finally erode when he seems, through Iago's machinations, to be acting irrationally. When asked, Iago implies he has no confidence in Othello's competence as either husband or governor, a rumor that compels others to reevaluate their trust in Othello. And of course, inconveniently for Othello, the Turks never appear so that he never has the chance to demonstrate the skills for which he has been so highly valued.

Iago is the rumor-monger who corrupts the culture of credit by supplying false information and manipulating its participants, controlling their access not to credit itself but to the virtuous behavior that establishes credit. He is also the voice of the play's critique of the culture of credit, which he claims values the "flag and sign of love" over truth by relying on outward signs. He is conscious of and vocal about the flawed nature of the credit system. As he explains, "There's no remedy, 'tis the curse of service," comparing the system that privileges appearances over first hand knowledge to a sickness without a cure or a crime with out legal redress (1.1.34). For Iago, "service" is a synonym for credit; the term describes the social hierarchy inherent in a system that demands selflessness of all adherents while at the same time pitting them against one another in a competition for advancement and personal gain.<sup>21</sup> And Iago will prove the credit system to be flawed by taking advantage of this very loophole. Responding to Iago's rancor towards Othello, Roderigo suggests, "I would not follow him then" (1.1.40).

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<sup>21</sup> For more on paradigms of service and subjection, see Neill, "His Master's Ass."

Iago scoffs at the idea pronouncing, instead, "I follow him to serve my turn upon him," suggesting that to serve is merely to gratify selfish rather than selfless interests, whether someone else's or one's own (1.1.41). Iago's plot will entail a careful inversion of the system of credit in which service undermines rather than shores up the social hierarchy. As the play demonstrates, displays of seeming fault or seeming virtue are false indicators of relative trustworthiness. Willing subordinates place an unfounded trust in the judgment of their superiors, believing that their good works will be rewarded accordingly. Elites place their trust in "servants," believing that their loyalty will secure the well-being and social advantage of both master and willing subordinate. Rather than protecting themselves, all parties are in fact exposing themselves to the pitfall of misplaced trust by ignoring the possibility of false indicators.

Blackness is identified as one of these false indicators. Iago and Roderigo's racial slurs in 1.1, along with Brabantio's incredulity at Desdemona's choice of Othello, suggest blackness presents an insurmountable barrier to the formation of familial bonds--connections greatly to be desired for the establishment of trust and thus credit. Othello and even the Duke himself imply that blackness is in some sense opposed to virtue ("Haply for I am black and..."; "If virtue no delighted beauty lack / Your son-in-law is far more fair than black"). But why should this be so? Much is made of Desdemona's decision to reject all her Venetian suitors in favor of Othello; even more damning are her decision to elope without her father's consent and her decision to accompany Othello to Cyprus. Nevertheless, the play seems to valorize Desdemona's ability to distinguish true virtue from the outward signs of it ("curled darlings"). In this tragedy, however, Desdemona's right-thinking leaves her more vulnerable to Iago's plot, because she

believes that others will be as judicious as she in placing their trust. Desdemona discards blackness as well as "curled" courtliness as useful indicators of virtue, evaluating their usefulness in deciding where to trust, to love. Others, Othello included, are not so circumspect. Blackness is often contrasted with civility (courtliness, manners) in the play. Iago manages to deride both.

Civility is an affectation Iago complains about repeatedly, calling courtliness itself a false indicator of virtue. He objects early on to the whole project of civility, of preferring elegance to experience. Beginning with a derisive account of the favoritism that privileges Cassio's "prattle" over Iago's "practice," he delivers a kind of anatomy of credit in Act 1, opening up its inner workings and exposing them to a horrified audience. In doubting the system of credit, or, to use his terms, the system of "service," Iago confirms his role as the villain of the play. At the same time that he speaks to an audience of one--Roderigo--Iago captivates the whole play-going audience with his methodical denunciation of the dual bonds of love and service--of social and economic interests--as a fallacy. He points to the dubious policy of accepting a second-hand recommendation of a person's loyalty and hard work over a first-hand experience of it.

IAGO. Tis the curse of service:

Preferment goes by letter and affection

And not by old gradation, where each second

Stood heir to th' first. (1.1.34-7)

Ostensibly, Iago is dissatisfied with Othello's choice of Cassio over himself for the office of lieutenant. What Iago expresses, however, is a much broader critique of credit and of the language of judgment in particular. As he sees it, the system of "preferment" or

promotion has undergone a change for the worse. Iago claims that the "old" system was one of "gradation," in which seniority was the most important criterion for promotion. He compares this system to that of primogeniture, as if to underscore that that system was the more traditional, natural, and legally sound one. Iago claims to have seniority under the old rules, citing his years of service--including military action, "at Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds" (1.1.28). Under the new rules "letter and affection"-- recommendation by consequential people and personal familiarity--sway decisions regarding promotions.

IAGO. Three great ones of the city,  
 In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,  
 Off-capped to him, and by the faith of man  
 I know my price, I am worth no worse a place. (1.1.7-10)

Iago explains that he has made an effort to abide by this new custom as well. This attempt has not served him well, however, and despite the fact that he served for years under Othello, who with "his eyes had seen the proof" of Iago's active duty as a soldier, despite the fact that somehow Iago has also managed to secure the recommendation of "three great" Venetians and, perhaps most importantly, despite the fact that Iago himself knows and is sure of his own value, the job has gone to another man.

Cassio's "preferment"--the word encompasses both a financial and a personal elevation, the strengthening of a familiar bond between employer/superior and employee (OED)--rankles because Iago sees that the system of credit, of preferment by "letter and affection," places him at a distinct disadvantage. Cassio is not a veteran soldier, cannot claim the intimate relationship of battle comrades with Othello that Iago can. Moreover,

Cassio is a "Florentine," a stranger. What then does Cassio have that Iago does not? As we later learn Cassio has helped Othello to win Desdemona's love, and perhaps it is this bond rather than soldierly camaraderie that has inspired Othello to promote him over Iago. Perhaps, however, the very skills that Iago derides in Cassio are the ones that appeal to Othello--Cassio seems to be a kind of strategist, with a mathematical or theoretical approach to war that strikes Iago as ludicrous and cowardly. In either case Iago's objection to Cassio's promotion leads him to point out a crucial flaw in the system of credit.

Having relayed the whole story of Cassio's appointment to lieutenant and his own to lowly "ancient" or ensign, he tells Roderigo: "Now sir, be judge yourself / Whether I in any just term am affined / To love the Moor" (1.1.37-9). Iago's suggestion here is that he has no love for Othello *because* he has not been promoted, negating the premise that "preferment goes by letter and affection." If preferment depends upon affection, love, and affinity--another word for bond--between parties, Iago's case demonstrates that this system coexists unhappily with one of preferment based upon merit. Moreover, both these systems are subjective, with the balance of power in evaluating both kinds of criteria slanted firmly toward the party who enjoys greater wealth, status, and sway. As Iago points out, and as I have suggested earlier in this chapter, though the credit system seems to offer an equality of potential to be preferred--trusted, familiar--service is in fact not an equal opportunity to become preferred. Instead service is a contract in which you must seek to please betters or employers hoping, rather than ensuring, that they will come to "prefer" you.



In 1.1 Iago outlines a subversive alternative to the traditional bond of service. He is uninterested now in participating in the system of credit as it has been laid out for him: "I follow him to serve my turn upon him. / We cannot all be masters, nor all masters / Cannot be truly followed" (1.1.40-2). Instead, he proposes to manipulate the system, taking advantage of the very flaws he has revealed in it.

IAGO. You shall mark

Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave  
 That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,  
 Wears out his time much like his master's ass  
 For nought but provender, and, when he's old, cashiered.  
 Whip me such honest knaves! Others there are  
 Who, trimmed in forms and visages of duty,  
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves  
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,  
 Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lined their coats,  
 Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul  
 And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,  
 It is as sure as you are Roderigo,  
 Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago. (1.1.43-56)

Iago's disdain for true service, which must be content with the most basic form of compensation--food and shelter--has less to do with the inequality of the economic exchange of labor for "provender" than it has to do with the inequality of the emotional exchange. The better one serves--by "doting," caring, even loving one's master--the more

one is debased with the result that, rather than being preferred, a good servant is merely used up and discarded like a beast of burden. For Iago this unfair system demonstrates the value of appearances. Rather than being "duteous," Iago recommends the "forms and visages of duty," "shows of service." Rather than "doting" on "bondage," he suggests that "hearts" should "attend on themselves." This method, Iago claims, will yield material benefits. Servants who feign rather than feel love toward their masters will "thrive," "line their coats," and "do themselves homage." The nature of this self-compensation is ambiguous, but in effect what Iago is describing is a kind of theft. He proposes to steal "preferment."

There is a key concept here that has to do with the relationship between the one who is trusted and the one who trusts in the system of credit. As Iago suggests, this relationship is tantamount to a kind of union in which each party treats the other as an extension of themselves, and the other's best interests as their own: "were I the Moor," and I am not, though I am supposed to be, "I would not be Iago."<sup>22</sup> But the play will test what happens when that union is both real--because Iago will retain the position of close friend and ally to Othello--and false. Iago plans to abuse the bonds of service between Othello and himself to undermine Othello's "preferred" status with the Venetians. The system of credit is a system of trust not only between specific parties but also between all members--the understanding is that no one will abuse the bonds of familiarity. To steal preferment is not only to steal, say, cash or to attain a promotion to an office under false pretenses. To pretend a bond of love and obligation where none is felt is to steal more; it

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<sup>22</sup> Greenblatt reads the line as an expression of Iago's "shaping power" (*Self-Fashioning* 235). For Greenblatt, Iago's knack for deceptive confabulation makes him a master of narrative self-fashioning. Genster offers an extended reading of substitution in the play, noting the conflation of military and marital offices in Iago's rhetoric.

is to compromise the real socio-economic status of the duped party because they, too, have trusted falsely, though without their knowledge. By abusing his bond with Othello, Iago proposes to revoke Othello's membership in the culture of credit, to reduce Othello to the status of zero credit, a status that is essentially lethal. A split identity is also required--"I am not what I am"--because Iago also is forfeiting any future role in the culture of credit. What he hopes for now is not preferment but revenge. To accomplish this task, however, Iago takes advantage of a very real problem in the culture of credit.

As he has demonstrated in his complaint to Roderigo about the curse of service, it is impossible to distinguish between true affinity--bonds of love and trust--and its counterfeit, what he calls the "Flag and sign of love, / Which is indeed but sign" (1.1.154-5). And as Iago is all too aware, signs ("seemings," outward appearances) are easily counterfeited particularly because signs must be interpreted through a highly subjective language of judgment--we might think of the rumor mill or popular belief. Despite these layers of arbitrary judgment, parties are held accountable for the decisions they make based on their "affinity" for others.

IAGO. The Moor is of a free and open nature

That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,

And will as tenderly be led by th' nose

As asses are. (1.3.398-401)

In the culture of credit, the ultimate goal is to be deemed worthy of another's trust by the language of judgment. In Iago's model, the "curse of service," to trust or be trustworthy is simply to be an ass. Othello is all too ready to trust that honesty exists where it only "seems" to. While Iago is a skeptic, Othello is a true believer that a system of preferment

by "letter and affection" will also reward those who do in fact merit advancement. In addition, Othello himself has benefited from displaying his own signs of trustworthiness. He has attained a high rank and has gained the respect of the Venetian Duke and senators for his expertise in military matters and for his past service.

As Iago goes on to prove, these outward signs of trustworthiness are quickly trumped by other kinds of signs. These other signs are as detrimental to Othello's privileged position of trusted vassal as the first set of signs was beneficial. The difference is that this second set of signs is unquestionably beyond Othello's control. These signs relate to Othello's status as a traveler: a stranger, perhaps a religious convert, and the possessor of certain somatic signs interpreted as signs of social difference. It is the emergence of these signs as legible, meaningful, and *indelible* in the language of judgment that I read as the appearance of a stigmatized racial difference.

### **Speak of Me as I Am**

As Act 1 progresses we learn first of Othello's good reputation with the Venetian government. Brabantio, citing Othello's guilt in the crimes Roderigo and Iago have reported to him, attempts to have Othello formally accused and tried.<sup>23</sup> Brabantio, too, is a man of great clout and reputation in Venice, but, as Iago has already guessed, even Brabantio's accusations will not be enough to impugn Othello. At this moment news has reached Venice of the Turks' imminent attack on Cyprus, and Othello, whose reputation rests largely on his perceived prowess in battle, is still the man of the hour. The Duke and senate place their trust in the soldier who knows Cyprus best and whom "opinion" deems most trustworthy.

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<sup>23</sup> For a treatment of the trial scene, see Bartels, "Othello."

DUKE. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes  
 for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude of the place is best  
 known to you, and, though we have there a substitute  
 of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign  
 mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you. (1.3.222-6)

Here again, a disembodied "voice," the language of judgment, proves to be the most puissant force for determining an individual's worth as well as his relative guilt or innocence. It is no coincidence that "opinion" is, like Desdemona, a woman who has placed her absolute trust in Othello. Desdemona's choice is easily called into question despite Othello's favor with the state. The Duke acknowledges the power of an ephemeral force like "opinion" to bring about real change. The identification of the personified Opinion as a powerful woman, "the sovereign mistress of effects," however, should also be recognizable as a suggestion that opinion also is suspect.

While the Duke admits that the power of opinion perhaps trumps other criteria, it is Othello's worldly experience that allows decision-makers to follow where opinion would lead them and confer real power and responsibility on Othello. As Othello goes on to reveal, even Brabantio himself has placed a high value on Othello's experience as a traveler and adventurer.

OTHELLO. Her father loved me, oft invited me,  
 Still questioned me the story of my life  
 From year to year--the battles, sieges, fortunes  
 That I have passed.  
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days

To th' very moment that he bade me tell it. (1.3.129-34)

Brabantio's avid interest in hearing about Othello's adventures is a recognizable trope. Travelers were popular figures, admired, sought after for their knowledge and for the entertainment value of their stories, but also undesirable as permanent connections to one's household. While the returned travelers of comedy are frequently foppish and thus unattractive (like the fop, Eustace, of *The Elder Brother*), however, Othello's travels--perilous, strange, and lengthy--place him in the company of hero-travelers of military expeditions, escaped captives and adventurers like John Smith, John Fox, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Francis Drake. The irony inherent in the use of the past tense, "her father loved me," draws attention to Brabantio's hypocrisy as well as his naïveté. Brabantio loved Othello's travel stories, but did not expect that Desdemona would love them, too. Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* (1653) offers a useful comparison in Alsemero, a traveler who falls in love with a gentleman's daughter in Alicante.<sup>24</sup>

BEATRICE. I am beholden to this gentleman...

And in discourse I find him much desirous  
To see your castle: he hath deserved it, sir,  
If ye please to grant it.

VERMANDERO. With all my heart, sir.

Yet there's an article between: I must know  
Your country; we use not to give survèy  
Of our chief strengths to strangers. Our citadels  
Are placed conspicuous to outward view  
On promonts' tops; but within are secrets.

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<sup>24</sup> On the Spanish location of the play, see Randall.

ALSEMERO. A Valencian, sir.

VERMANDERO. A Valencian?

That's native, sir; of what name, I beseech you?

ALSEMERO. Alsemero, sir.

VERMANDERO. Alsemero? Not the son

Of John de Alsemero?

ALSEMERO. The same, sir.

VERMANDERO. My best love bids you welcome. (1.1.160-74)

Alsemero, too, is invited into the home of his future father-in-law. Alsemero, however, is vetted not by his merit but by his nationality and lineage. Othello can offer no such guarantee. Indeed it is Roderigo who reminds Brabantio of Othello's rootlessness and history of wandering as a cause for concern. In the process, Roderigo deftly links Desdemona's "gross revolt" to Othello's own travels, throwing suspicion on them both

RODERIGO. Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,

I say again, hath made a gross revolt,

Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes

In an extravagant and wheeling stranger

Of here and everywhere. (1.1.131-5)

Brabantio is all-too-easily persuaded by such insinuations and is soon denouncing Othello as more than worldly, as an "abuser of the world." Brabantio goes on to challenge the voice of opinion, "the sovereign mistress of effects," cited by the Duke as the most powerful persuasive force in determining Othello's honors and office. Iago's warning to Othello that Brabantio "hath in his effect a voice potential as double as the

duke's" proves sound; the old man determinedly "vouches" not *for* Othello but against him as a practitioner of dark magic.

In the trial-like scene that follows, Othello and Brabantio act out a sort of tutorial on the operation of the language of judgment. Before an audience of senators as well as playgoers they debate Othello's trustworthiness, presenting no material evidence but instead bandying words: Brabantio's accusations, innuendo, and slander that borders on racial slur, are countered by Othello's avowals, testimony, and respectful addresses. In the process, the chains of obligation between all parties are also delineated. Othello's guilt or innocence is linked to Desdemona's, which is to their detriment since Othello's innocence comes to be predicated on Desdemona's guilt in betraying Brabantio. In turn, Desdemona's guilt is predicated upon Othello's blackness and his identity as a traveler.

BRABANTIO. I therefore vouch again

That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood

Or with some dram conjured to this effect

He wrought upon her (1.3.104-7)

Brabantio calls upon the statesmen of Venice--and the language of the play upon the audience--to be aware that the "effect" of voice (opinion) may be subverted by the "effect" of magic. It is Brabantio's assertion that only powerful magic could produce this behavior in his daughter. What is crucial is that Desdemona's unheard of behavior, the action that convinces Brabantio that Othello must be an evil sorcerer though he looks and acts like an honorable man and a good soldier, is Desdemona's decision to leave her father's household: to move, to travel. The choice here is stark. Either Othello is an "abuser of the world, a practiser of arts inhibited," or Desdemona is delinquent, guilty of



traveling beyond the bounds of her father's house and beyond the bounds of Venetian society as it is understood by Brabantio and others. If the latter is true and Desdemona is the guilty one, Othello is still tainted, and not by association but in himself. Othello represents the border that Desdemona has crossed, illegally or immorally, as Roderigo insinuates--"At this odd-even and dull watch o'th' night, / Transported with no worse nor better guard / But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier" (1.1.120-3)--and Brabantio laments in disbelief--

BRABANTIO. For I'll refer me to all things of sense,  
 If she in chains of magic were not bound,  
 Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,  
 So opposite to marriage that she shunned  
 The wealthy, curled darlings of our nation,  
 Would ever have, t'incur a general mock,  
 Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom  
 Of such a thing as thou? (1.2.64-71)

While Othello remains confident that his merits will stand the test of even the most heinous accusation, Desdemona's reputation is, in effect, lost at this early moment in the play. Moreover, it is never in dispute that *both* Desdemona's "transport[ation]" and Othello's "travailous history" are *outré*.

Standing before the great men of Venice, Brabantio insists that Desdemona has been disinclined to any kind of movement, let alone outright elopement: "A maiden never bold, / Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion / Blushed at herself" (1.3.95-7). Othello's counterargument specifically discredits this claim, describing Desdemona as

both repelled by and attracted to his stories of the adventure of travel: "She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished / That heaven had made her such a man" (1.3.163-4). Even in Othello's own version of events, Desdemona's femininity is associated with the domestic--

OTHELLO. Still the house affairs would draw her thence,  
 Which ever as she could with haste dispatch  
 She'd come again and with a greedy ear  
 Devour up my discourse (1.3.148-51)

--while her desire to travel is identified as a desire to be masculine.<sup>25</sup> In due course Brabantio ratchets down from identifying the breach of trust in his household a "theft"--Othello's crime--to calling it an "escape"--Desdemona's. For her part, Desdemona remains resolute in her desire to travel, proposing, to the surprise of the Venetians, to accompany Othello to the battlefield at Cyprus.

DESDEMONA. That I did love the Moor to live with him  
 My downright violence and scorn of fortunes  
 May trumpet to the world...  
 Let me go with him. (1.3.249-60)

Desdemona is apparently aware that her request goes against custom, but by now there is little she can do to shock her countrymen any further. Roderigo is perfectly willing to believe Iago's lie in 4.2 that Desdemona plans to follow Othello back to Mauretania (226). Desdemona's decision to travel is synonymous with her decision to reject local custom and culture. The penalty for her display of incredibly dubious behavior--shunning "the

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<sup>25</sup> For more on Desdemona's domestic sphere and the construction of gender in the play see Walen; Callaghan "Looking"; Frye; and Korda 111-58.

wealthy curled darlings of our nation" in favor of a "sooty bosomed" "thing"--is a total loss of credit with her father. Eventually, even Othello gives credence to the idea that this very behavior--Desdemona's choice of a moor like himself for her husband--indicates that she is untrustworthy.

In the meantime, Othello's own reputation remains remarkably unscathed. Othello scoffs at Iago's suggestion that he flee the wrath of Brabantio and the senators: "Not I, I must be found / My parts, my title and my perfect soul / Shall manifest me rightly" (1.2.30-2). Othello stands firm even in the face of Iago's warning that Brabantio's "voice" has great clout in Venice. Othello places his faith in his own "services" to the state, pitting the "voice" of his past actions against Brabantio's, admittedly influential "voice."<sup>26</sup>

OTHELLO. Let him do his spite;  
 My services, which I have done the signiory,  
 Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know--  
 Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,  
 I shall promulgate--I fetch my life and being  
 From men of royal siege, and my demerits  
 May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune  
 As this that I have reached. (1.2.17-24)

Actions speak, and they speak louder than words, Othello suggests, demonstrating his naïveté about the culture of credit. Othello does not yet see the irony in believing that actions can "speak" for themselves. In the language of judgment it is not actions that

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<sup>26</sup> Nicholson and Magnusson have commented on the importance of rhetorical display in the process of social differentiation in *Othello*.

speak, Iago would argue, but people who gossip. Undaunted, Othello goes on to describe other kinds of vocalizations. His achievements will argue on his behalf but, if necessary his warrior's lineage could boast of itself, and even his faults could "speak" unabashedly. Othello is confident in his record of excellence in his office as a soldier and leader and in his moral authority. The Duke and senators are inclined to agree. The Duke teases Brabantio with the rhyming couplet, "If virtue no delighted beauty lack / Your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3.290-1). Yet here, too, the choice is stark; blackness falls outside the bounds of the recognizable and acceptable. Either virtue must lack beauty or virtuous Othello must be fair-skinned. The Duke and senate seem comfortable with a metaphorical whitening of their chosen champion. It is Othello himself who leaves the door open for his own eventual fall from grace with the Venetian leadership. Before his departure for Cyprus, Othello reassures the assembled Venetian statesmen that his performance will not be affected by the presence of his new bride. Just as they have judged him worthy of office based on the voice of opinion, which now favors him, Othello invites them to judge his future worth by his future reputation.

OTHELLO. And heaven defend your good souls that you think

I will your serious and great business scant

When she is with me. No, when light-winged toys

Of feathered Cupid seel with wanton dullness

My speculative and officed instrument,

That my disports corrupt and taint my business,

Let housewives make a skillet of my helm

And all indign and base adversities

Make head against my estimation. (1.3.267-75)

Making a dire prediction, Othello commands that when Desdemona's presence at his side makes him a less effective soldier (i.e. when hell freezes over), the ridiculous should then be possible. His helmet would become a kitchen skillet, and "indign and base "adversities," shameful trials (perhaps like the one he has just been through with regard to Brabantio's accusations), would actually injure his "estimation," or reputation.

Finally, however, it will not be Othello's failure as an officer but as a husband that undoes him. Iago's plan takes full advantage of this loophole in which bonds of trust between state and servant are dependent upon bonds of trust between husband and wife. As Iago explains to Cassio, encouraging him to seek Desdemona's favor if he would seek Othello's: "Our general's wife is now the general" (2.3.309-10). In due course, Othello will seem to have allowed his judgment to become clouded (despite his earlier promise, that his "speculative and officed instrument" could not be "sealed with wanton dullness") because Desdemona will seem to have betrayed him. Iago will make it look to his superiors like Othello is incompetent by making it look to Othello like Desdemona is an unfaithful wife. He plans to accomplish this feat by first making Othello's choice of Cassio as lieutenant look like folly. Once again Iago abuses the language of judgment to achieve his ends, suggesting Cassio's guilt and Othello's incompetence by means of subtle but effective slander. Rather than relating specific events or actions, Iago communicates his doubt.

IAGO. I fear the trust Othello puts him in

On some odd time of his infirmity

Will shake this island...

MONTANO. It were well  
 The general were put in mind of it.  
 Perhaps he sees it not, or his good nature  
 Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio  
 And looks not on his evils...  
 'Tis great pity that the noble Moor  
 Should hazard such a place as his own second  
 With one of an ingraft infirmity. (2.3.122-36)

Iago has prompted Roderigo to provoke Cassio into drunken roughhousing, leading the visiting Venetian nobleman Montano to wonder why Othello would place his trust in such a person. Iago's offhand remark, "I fear the trust," is a devastating oxymoron and one that prompts Montano to rethink his opinion of Othello's leadership abilities. Montano begins by musing, "it would be good if..." as in "it would be good if this problem were brought to Othello's attention." However, he ends by disapproving, "it is very unfortunate that..." as in "Othello is not aware of this problem that he has been instrumental in creating by promoting Cassio." Montano translates Iago's "fear" that Cassio's sporadic bouts of "infirmity" will result in disaster at some point, into "great pity" for what he now sees as an ongoing calamity. Cassio's sometime infirmity has now become "ingraft" and Othello's trust, "hazard." Othello's reputation has begun to unravel, but to ensure his revenge Iago must make Othello's behavior seem as erratic as his judgment now seems irrational. In a bitter twist, it is Cassio's desperate bid to rebuild his own reputation that snares Desdemona and, through her, Othello.

In bringing about the downfall of all three characters, Iago employs a variety of language-based strategies, voicing his suspicions, doubts and reservations to whoever will listen. Of greatest interest to me here are the terms with which Iago describes their moral failings. Iago ensures his own credit by seeming to be both adept and accurate in identifying and interpreting the outward signs of inward guilt or fault. In fact he manufactures the signs he claims to note. As Iago plants suspicions that Cassio, Desdemona and Othello are guilty of failing to behave in a virtuous manner, failing to improve themselves by right behavior and maintain those improvements, he relies upon the crucial concept of personal mutability within the culture of credit. According to this idea, all members are responsible for their virtue/value because they have access to self-improvement strategies and thus have the choice to employ them or not. Iago's slanders center on such mutable differences, suggesting neglect or simulating it where there is none. At the same time, references to indelible difference abound. In these instances, Iago does not need to suggest a damning interpretation. Stigma has already attached, for instance, to the indelible marker "blackness."

IAGO. And by how much she strives to do him good

She shall undo her credit with the Moor--

So will I turn her virtue into pitch

And out of her own goodness make the net

That shall enmesh them all. (2.3.353-7)

Desdemona's virtue is opposed to blackness, in this case "pitch." This process of transformation, by which the outward signs of inward virtue are made to mean the opposite, is echoed in Othello's own lament.

OTHELLO. Her name, that was as fresh

As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black

As mine own face (3.3.389-91)

Without any help from Iago, the professed rumor-monger of the play, Othello suggests that his own blackness is a moral failing. He refers to Desdemona's metaphorical blackness, an outward sign of her sin, as a mutable mark, grime (or filth), but equates the mutability and thus culpability of Desdemona's blackness with his own indelible skin color. The implication is that Othello himself is always-already guilty. What is important to notice is that the only sign whose meaning remains constant in each of the iterations above is the sign of blackness. Blackness continues to represent both undesirable cultural otherness (Othello's non-Venetian origins and Desdemona's subsequent defection) and moral weakness along with culpability for those failings.

Blackness is set in direct opposition to genteel, cultivated behaviors. In a final turn, however, Iago transforms those same genteel, cultivated behaviors--so highly recommended in the culture of credit--into signs of moral failing as well.

OTHELLO. Haply for I am black

And have not those soft parts of conversation

That chamberers have (3.3.267-9)

We might imagine that Othello is comparing himself either with the "wealthy curled darlings" of Venetian high society or directly with Cassio, who is repeatedly described as a consummate courtier. Iago snidely refers to Cassio as a "complete knave" and swears to the unsuspecting Cassio, "I will / gyve thee in thine own courtesies" (2.1.169-70). Even Cassio himself is over-proud of his "manners": "'Tis my breeding / That gives me



this bold show of courtesy," he boasts as he kisses Emilia, Iago's wife, on the hand. But even more likely, it is Desdemona with whom Othello compares himself. Desdemona is a model of feminine gentility.

OTHELLO. 'Tis not to make me jealous  
 To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,  
 Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well:  
 Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.  
 Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw  
 The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt,  
 For she had eyes and chose me. (3.3.186-92)

He praises Desdemona for her virtues and identifies her choice of him for a husband as a rational one. But all too quickly, Othello is persuaded by the converse argument:

OTHELLO. And yet how nature, erring from itself --  
 IAGO. Ay, there's the point: as, to be bold with you,  
 Not to affect many proposed matches  
 Of her own clime, complexion and degree,  
 Whereto we see, in all things, nature tends (3.3.231-5)

It is in Othello's reevaluation of Desdemona's virtue, in the wake of Iago's accusations, that the play reveals what is most problematic about a language of judgment: the added burden on and vulnerability of certain groups. Othello's bitter litany of Desdemona's accomplishments is a checklist of reasons to doubt her. Desdemona's conduct is unimpeachable *and* it is her conduct that proves her guilt.

OTHELLO. Hang her, I do but say what she is: so

delicate with her needle, an admirable musician. O,  
 she will sing the savageness out of a bear! of so high  
 and plenteous wit and invention!

IAGO. She's the worse for all this.

OTHELLO. O, a thousand, a thousand times: and then  
 of so gentle a condition.

IAGO. Ay, too gentle. (4.1.184-191)

Desdemona's perceived misdeeds do "make head," and do so quickly, against her  
 "estimation" with Othello.

It is Othello's actual deeds, however, that undermine his reputation from this point  
 forward. Lodovico, Desdemona's cousin, arrives with a letter from Venice recalling the  
 general just in time to witness Othello abusing his wife both verbally and physically.  
 Interestingly, Lodovico's exclamation, "My lord, this would not be believed in Venice /  
 Though I should swear I saw't," suggests that even reports of this behavior might not, by  
 themselves, destroy Othello's reputation in Venice (4.1.241-2). Nevertheless, Othello  
 himself is resigned that all is lost: "Farewell: Othello's occupation's gone," he bids, long  
 before the tragic action of the last scenes begins (3.3.360). Incredulous at this treatment  
 of his cousin, Lodovico reacts like Montano at 2.3 after witnessing Cassio's disgraceful  
 conduct. His comment, expressing shock, then distaste and a prim regret, rings with  
 finality.

LODOVICO. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate

Call all in all sufficient? This the nature

Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue

The shot of accident nor dart of chance

Could neither graze nor pierce?...

IAGO. He is much changed.

LODOVICO. Are his wits safe? Is he not light of brain?...

What! strike his wife!

IAGO. Faith, that was not so well; yet would I knew

That stroke would prove the worst.

LODOVICO. Is it his use?...

I am sorry that I am deceived in him. (4.1.264-82)

Lodovico's concern over Othello's uncivil behavior leads him to suggest that there has been a strange substitution. Lodovico is at an impasse, for either this man is not the same one in whom the Venetian senate has placed its trust, or else the reputation that stood Othello in good stead in the face of Brabantio's attack in Act 1 is a falsehood. Othello is not Othello, he seems to say, though he remains skeptical of the notion. He does not possess Iago's "I am not what I am" nonchalance in the face of the possibility that a man may seem honorable and in fact be monstrous. The only excuses he can imagine--that Othello is out of his wits, "light of brain"--would place Othello outside the sphere of civil society. In the end he is resigned to the only realistic conclusion: he, along with the Venetian senate, the Duke, everyone, has misread the signs. Though Othello seemed honorable and was esteemed so, he was not. At this point Iago's revenge plot, technically, has been fulfilled. Othello's credit is undone, his obligation of loyal service to the state in default. For Othello, however, there is still more left to lose.

Lodovico's rhetorical question, "Is this the noble Moor?" echoes an earlier query, this one from Othello, himself: "Are we turned Turks?" Both questions employ a similar irony that depends upon a shared notion of civility, but there is a significant difference. When Othello accuses his men of turning on each other (in the drunken brawl of Act 2) as if they had transformed into the Ottoman enemy, the comparison is designed to evoke chagrin for all from highest to lowest ranking man. He uses the inclusive "we" to underscore this: *we* are not turned Turks, *we* would never do that because it is contrary to *our* best interests and highest ideals, so *we* should behave as if that is the case.<sup>27</sup> Othello has not been brawling, but his obligation to his men is such that he takes their misconduct as a mark against himself. Lodovico's suggestion is far less communal. He singles out Othello as both different in and of himself and as behaving differently than usual. In his phrasing "noble Moor" borders on oxymoron, and blame falls on Othello's superiors not because he has misbehaved but because they have failed in reputing him, foolishly, "all in all sufficient." Nevertheless, both Othello and Lodovico's questions hold a similar import in recognizing that something, some behavior, is out of place.

Behavior that is out of place is tantamount, in the most extreme instances in this play, to the loss of self. Iago forfeits himself ("I am not what I am") in order to behave in a way that is opposite to his true feelings and opinions. That widespread belief--you are how you behave--confronts its antithesis in *Othello*--you *are not* if your behavior is false, and all behavior is false. But the belief itself takes on greater breadth here, too. In *Othello*, you are how you behave, but also, *where* you are is how you behave. Finally, it

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<sup>27</sup> The suggestion is not that Turks are prone to brawling. On the contrary, contemporary sources such as Moryson's *Itinerary* report that Ottoman soldiers are strictly forbidden to brawl on pain of death. Othello instead compares those who would fight with their own comrades in arms to (Ottoman) enemies in the ranks (Moryson Ggg).

is in these moments--recognizing that something, someone, some behavior is *out of place*--that I locate travel. To travel is not to move from place to place, but to be aware or for others to be aware that something is out of place. Travel is thus an uncorrected flaw, which continues as long as travel continues and often fails to be repaired even after a return. Perhaps this is why Othello's journey's end is his death: because there can be no satisfactory repair of the flaw that is Othello's travel. He will always be recognizable as out of place. As Lodovico suggests, for the Venetian senate ever to have said otherwise was folly. In the end, Othello's credit amongst the Venetians is based on this one quality. As a trusted servant of the state he is a great man, as a Moor, out of place, he is no one.

Even Othello seems cognizant of this double standard. In his final speech he compares his own behavior with that of two foreigners, a "base Indian" or "Judean" and a "turbaned Turk."

OTHELLO. Soft you, a word or two before you go.

I have done the state some service, and they know't:

No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,

When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,

Speak of me as I am. Nothing extenuate,

Nor set down aught in malice. Then must you speak

Of one that loved not wisely, but too well;

Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,

Perplexed in the extreme; of one whose hand,

Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away

Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
 Drops tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
 Their medicinable gum. Set you down this,  
 And say besides that in Aleppo once,  
 Where a malignant and a turbanned Turk  
 Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,  
 I took by th' throat the circumcised dog  
 And smote him--thus!     *He stabs himself.* (5.2.336-54)

Many scholars have discussed the connotations of the textual variant "Indian/Judean" in line 345, but, in the introductory pages of this dissertation, I have drawn attention not to the adjective describing (perhaps) ethnicity or country of origin but to the adjective that describes the condition of that individual.<sup>28</sup> Between the two adjectives, I have suggested "base" and not "Indian/Judean" as the more ambivalent, troubling, and unstable term. It denotes a faulty state of mind, a low estate, a moral failure; it connotes ignorance or naïveté, willful defiance or simple misfortune. To add to this overabundance of meaning, the adjective may characterize a single individual or disparage an entire nation. In comparing himself to the base Indian/Judean, Othello draws attention to his dual self. In his own eyes, he is like a Christian European, an insider, subjectively evaluating the relative merits of other cultures; and he is also like a heathen other, too backward to be aware that his behavior is being judged, too ignorant to behave in another, more acceptable way.

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<sup>28</sup> The Indian/Judean textual crux has been debated at length in the pages of scholarly journals such as *Shakespeare Quarterly* (with contributions from Freeman; Fleissner; Poisson; Veit; Shaheen; Levin; and Williams) and *Notes and Queries* (Duncan-Jones; Fleissner; Milward; and Jackson) for decades, and in the notes and glosses of editors for even longer. Holmer provides a useful overview, while also glossing the "Arabian Trees." For a concise summary in layman's terms, see Rosenbaum 196-217.

Othello insists, however, on being distinguished from any group. "Then you must speak of *one*," he demands, and the import is underscored by the use of anaphora: "of *one* who loved," "of *one* not easily jealous," "of *one* whose hand," "of *one* whose subdued eyes" (my emphasis). He seems to want to reclaim his humanity by demanding a reevaluation in the language of judgment and one which, rather than lumping him in with an amorphous group of strangers, identifies him as singular, unique. He next dictates his own eulogy, not trusting witnesses to recount his story without misrepresenting him. Like Iago, who asserts in Act 1, "I know my price, I am worth no worse a place" (1.1.10), Othello now trusts his own self-estimation above that of a tainted language of judgment, stating definitively, "I have done the state some service, and they know't."

Iago's bald statement crudely equates credit with price, and though Othello retains the vocabulary of obligation--citing the value of his "service" rather than his "price"--a new sense of irony has crept into the previously straightforward general's speech. Othello's dictated version of events, of the "unlucky deeds" leading up to the tragic finale, is coupled with a reference to another episode: the allusion to the encounter with a Turk and a Venetian in Aleppo, which took place previously but nebulously "once." Critics have offered various readings of Othello's strange pronouncement, prelude to a sudden and violent suicide.<sup>29</sup> I read these lines as ironic antithesis. Othello delivers two lengthy and complex similes in a row--

Of one whose hand,  
 Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away  
 Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes,  
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,

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<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Stallybrass, "Marginal England."

Drops tears as fast as the Arabian trees

Their medicinale gum. (5.2.344-9)

--incorporating unnecessarily exotic imagery into both. It would not be difficult, even at this point, to suggest that Othello's lines may be satirical rather than serious. Baiting the listening crowd by mocking their inevitable future attempts to convey Othello's life, a cautionary tale, to others. He preempts those who would transform his experiences in their "letters"--the term may connote instruments for the artful transmission of news combined with personal opinion or interpretation, whether in the form of an official administrative report, an open epistle in manuscript or print, or mere gossip--into moralizing tales filled with rhetorical flourishes. He authors the rhetorical flourishes himself, coupling simile with metonymy, comparing not himself but his hand to a base Indian/Judean, his eye to an Arabian tree.

The similes are followed by a third allusion, again employing exotic imagery, but this time equating rather than comparing Othello with someone or something else.

In Aleppo once,

Where a malignant and a turbanned Turk

Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,

I took by th' throat the circumcised dog

And smote him--thus! *He stabs himself.* (5.2.350-4)

Critics have puzzled over the way in which Othello's final speech equates him with the very enemy he came to Cyprus to defeat.<sup>30</sup> I see this move as congruent with a

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<sup>30</sup> Critics have commented on Othello's equation of himself with the Turkish enemy in these lines (see, for example, Neill, "'Mulattos'"; Bartels, "Making More"; Loomba, *Shakespeare* 91-111; and Matar, *Turks*). It should be noted, however, that there is no consensus on either the import of this rhetorical move, or on the exact nature of Othello's national, ethnic, or religious affiliation. Everett suggests a Spanish Othello; on the



foreboding refrain in the play, one in which one person is equated, united, with another in order to demonstrate their common interests and intertwined fortunes.

Iago first sounds this chorus of ill-fated verbal unions with a denial: "Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago" (1.1.56). It is Desdemona, however, whose verbal equations are most telling when read alongside Othello's final speech. Still marveling at Othello's erratic behavior, Desdemona wonders, "My lord is not my lord" (3.4.125). Soon, however, she seems to have guessed where the escalating violence of Othello's outbursts will lead. Even as she lies dying she unites herself with Othello, absolving his guilt by confessing herself her own murderer--

EMILIA. O, who hath done

This deed?

DESDEMONA. Nobody. I myself. (5.2.121-2)

--with an eerie determination. These iterations refer to the "curse of service," Iago explicates in 1.1, in which fools bind themselves in chains of obligation to other fools. Servants adopt their master's interests as their own, wives their husbands' ("Our general's wife is now the general"), and subordinates their superiors', all denying the fact of their competing interests in the culture of credit and blithely ignoring their complicity in the operations by which the culture of credit produces the very social differences that predetermine access to credit, curtailing it, sometimes eliminating it altogether.

Iago expresses his cynicism about this state of affairs, injecting the verbal union with a healthy dose of irony. This is sometimes overt, as when he swears to gullible

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indeterminacy of Othello's faith and the popular idea of forced conversion to Islam in the Mediterranean, see Vitkus, *Turning*; and Burton, *Traffic*. On Othello as a Moor and the breadth of meaning associated with the term "moor" in the period, see Bartels, *Speaking*. This indeterminacy has enhanced rather than inhibited the study of race and related issues in the play because it supports a less rigid understanding of such categories in the early modern period.

Roderigo, "I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables / of perdurable toughness. I could never better stead / thee than now," mocking him with multi-syllabic devotion, while promising to "stead," to serve or even stand in for Roderigo in the pursuit of his desires (1.3.338-40). At other times it is subtle, as when he completes the parallel construction, "Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago. / In following him I follow but myself," with a third and final phrase, "I am not what I am," where either "I" may now refer to "Iago," "the Moor" or the hybrid Iago-as-Moor evoked in the earlier lines (1.1.56-64). Iago believes that the signs that signify differences between people are entirely mutable, that they are subject to interpretation and misinterpretation. However, social difference itself, the competing interests that definitively separate one individual or group from another, is indeed indelible.

### **Conclusion**

The irony of the antithesis that balances those two similes--Othello as Indian/Judean and Othello as Arabian tree--against the final, seemingly unrelated allusion to the Turk confounds the project of the play: fixing Othello spatially, at a distance from Venice (Europe, England) by reconciling the beloved and trusted "valiant Othello" of Act 1 with the cruel Moor of Act 5, a far-distant traitor. In its failure to do so, *Othello* can be read as a critique of credit, or an attempt to make sense of the impossibility of the culture of credit, which promises freedom from static social difference in the form of universal mutability while at the same time promoting the kind of stigmatized and indelible difference that renders Othello permanently black, cruel, and a Moor. If the credit system is sound, then the cruel Moor must be revealed as a fiction, valiant Othello absolved. In

the end, however, the fiction is valiant Othello, who is reviled, guilty of murder, abject and dehumanized by the loss of credit. Othello's end is his final act of service to the state, in which, as if realizing that he represents a threat to the credit system, a trusted and trustworthy foreigner solves the problem of his existence by snuffing it out immediately and without ceremony.

Nevertheless, Othello is a disruptive exception. He embodies the untenable terms of the culture of credit because, of course, the language of judgment that condemns him is not universal, but culturally specific. As my reading of *Othello* demonstrates, in plays, far-distant people who travel into Europe expose the illusion that the language of judgment is universal by traveling from the periphery to the center and thus entering into a system of conduct that is alien to them but understood as universal by the audience. As strangers in the cultural center, their credit appears warped, and they become monsters no matter how faithfully they follow native codes of behavior. A comparable dilemma may be seen in the representation of English and European people traveling from the center to the periphery. The value or socio-economic benefit of Europeans performing virtuous (cultivated) behavior in the periphery is debatable, as I will discuss in the next chapter. The idea that Othello is not, finally, at fault for his behavior, that it is neither he nor his ethnic or regional attributes that brings about the tragedy, is also the idea that all people are vulnerable to this kind of loss of self. The uncultivability of far-distant people comes to symbolize the impotence of all members of the culture of credit.

In Chapter Three, I consider the fate of creditable Englishmen and of a creditable English custom, hunting for sport, overseas. In the New World context, as authors fantasize, access to cultivation is open, equal and easy. There, land and concomitant

upward social mobility are available to any man with the courage, skill, and wit to lay claim to them in a strange, dangerous and wonderful place that is at once English and foreign, welcoming and forbidding. As I show, the English colonial context provides the opportunity for authors and audiences to debate, once again, the universality of the culture of credit. Authors struggle to interpret the customs of the country's indigenous inhabitants, and they question the value of an effete skill set (dancing, fencing, polite conversation) that is highly prized as the mark of elite status back home, but far less impressive in a struggling colony in the wilderness.

## Chapter Three

### "This Green Plot Shall Be Our Stage": Performance and the Periphery

#### Introduction

John Fletcher's *The Island Princess* (1620-1) begins with a bit of idle conversation between two Portuguese sailors stationed in the Moluccas. Pyniero recalls a recent upset—the king of one island kingdom, Tidore, has been captured by the governor of a neighboring island kingdom, Ternata.

PYNIERO: The Governour of Ternata made surprise

Of our confederate, the King of Tidore,

As for his recreation he was rowing

Between both Lands

For Pyniero's countryman and fellow sailor, Christophero, the point of interest is not the kidnapping itself but the occasion for it.

CHRISTOPHERO: But I wonder much how such poore and base

pleasures,

As tugging at an oare, or skill in steerage,

Should become Princes.

Pyniero offers this theory as to why one might take pleasure in rowing a boat:

PYNIERO: Base breedings love base pleasure;

They take as much delight in Baratto,

A little scurvy boate, to row her tithly,

And have the art to turne her nimbly,

Thinke it as noble too, though it be slavish,  
 And a dull labour that declines a Gentleman:  
 As we Portugalls, or the Spaniards do in riding,  
 In managing a great horse which is princely,  
 The French in Courtship, or the dancing English,  
 In carrying a fair presence. (1.1.16-26)

As the exchange between Pyniero and Christophero suggests, the customary pastimes of various nations may all be evaluated on a single scale that runs from princely to base as well as from martial to effete. On this scale Moluccan row-boating falls far short of horsemanship, courtship, or dancing, activities that were generally acclaimed as appropriate to gentlemen and specifically recommended in English conduct books offering instruction in these arts. Fletcher's comedy opens with tongue in cheek, however. Fletcher offers his English audience the chance to eavesdrop on a rival European power, but what they overhear is worse than censure. In Pyniero's list of the favored pastimes of various nations, the English obsession with dancing doesn't quite stack up to the Spanish pursuit of horsemanship or even to the French mastery of polite conversation. Instead, the "dancing English" are appended offhandedly, linked to a pastime that is neither martial nor politic but merely pretty. This subtle jab at the English depends upon the simpler but more sweeping observation that, "base breedings love base pleasure."

With this platitude, Pyniero critiques not only the King of Tidore or the row-boat-loving Moluccans, but all those who, like the Moluccans, are basely bred. The remark has the alliterative ring of a popular adage and indeed, it precedes a list of accepted

associations between particular groups of people and their accustomed habits, activities which they believe to be noble and therefore worthy of their devotion. Thus the Spaniards "take as much delight" in riding as the French do in courtship, and "think it as noble" an exercise as the French think theirs. The difference between the Spaniards or the French and the basely-bred Moluccans is that they are correct in believing that their pastimes are princely, while the Moluccans are so badly mistaken that it is comical. Fletcher chooses two sailors, men who spend their life laboring aboard ships, to voice the general opinion that it is ludicrous to revere "a little scurvy boate," the way one would a great horse. The Moluccans' mistake, one which reveals their base breeding, is in mistaking labor for pleasure. This failure indicates their inability (deficit of capacity) to distinguish between the two and thus their fitness for the one (labor) rather than the other (pleasure); it indicates that they are "slavish," a telling assumption that I will address further.

Moreover, the severity of their failure to distinguish princely pleasures from dull labors impugns not only the breeding of the Moluccans as compared to the Spaniards, French or English, but also the majesty of their actual princes. Pyniero and Christophero's conversation moves a little too quickly away from the subject of kidnapping to the subject of sporting because they have already dismissed the matter as a petty dispute between basely-bred local potentates. Their nonchalance suggests that the Portuguese as a group maintain a position of power in the Moluccas that allows them to ignore and malign the indigenous people. This raw display of colonial power has made *The Island Princess* the subject of renewed critical attention as a play concerned with English ideas about colonialism and trade between Europe and the wider world in the

early modern period.<sup>1</sup> I introduce this passage from *The Island Princess* not to open a discussion about colonialism but to point to sport as a key cultural idiom for negotiating social difference in English colonial discourse. As I will argue, the status of sport as an accepted strategy for self-improvement in the English ideology of cultivation makes the frequent and detailed discussions of sports in travel writing and travel drama into more than pseudo-ethnographic description. The appearance of the class-coded language of sport in these texts draws upon an already-fraught domestic system of social differentiation.

In this chapter I begin by examining the custom of early modern English country house entertainments, dramatic performances of welcome for royal or aristocratic guests visiting country estates. There, class relations are enacted and affirmed through a series of gestures--including, crucially, theatrical performance and hunting--that are interpreted and measured by a discerning intermediary. Country house entertainments stage the ideological connections between recreation and land-ownership, between labor and subservience. Participants in country house entertainments strove to demonstrate their admiration for royalty and their own sophistication through elaborate dramatic interludes, speeches, and dumb shows. Some were praised for their innovation and clever use of allegory, wordplay, literary allusion, and veiled references to current events. Others were exposed as ignorant if earnest suppliants, whose status as working folk was, if not indelible, then impossible to disguise. Elite guests, on the other hand, not only received these welcomes as tribute to their high rank in society, but also enacted that high rank for an audience of keen observers by engaging in the practice of hunting.

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<sup>1</sup> Neill; Jowitt; Forman; Raman; and more recently Feerick; and Nocentelli, have used *The Island Princess* in order to offer new arguments and historical information on race, long-distance trade, religious conversion, and England's rivalry with other European powers in India, East Asia and the Pacific Islands.



In the second half of the chapter I go on to examine changes in the custom of welcome and its companion art of hunting in the context of the English experience in the New World.<sup>2</sup> There, English settlers would encounter barriers both natural and cultural to the exercise of planting and hunting. The authors of promotional literature sought to work these obstacles to their advantage with a rhetorical appropriation of Native American land and technologies. In the promotional literature English settlers are received by native people with open arms. Despite the proficiency of Native American hunters, and the complexity of Native American customs, English promotional literature portrays "Indians" not as social elites in possession of the land, education and equipment necessary for cultivation through hunting, but as feral, unruly, and vagrant. As they are portrayed in these texts, not only do natives not lay claim to the land, they *cannot* lay claim to the land: they do not imagine themselves as social elites or even as upwardly mobile working folk because they are not capable of such imaginative leaps. Instead, promotional literature revised domestic codes of conduct in order to produce an artificial and permanent social difference between English settlers and indigenous people.

As we saw in *The Island Princess*, in the colonial context, not only the power of sport to elevate practitioners, but also the meanings (relative values) of various sports came under direct pressure. In order to determine the correlating measure of social status across cultures, authors attempted to measure the sports of strangers--"Barratto, a little scurvy boat"--on the same base-to-princely scale that was familiar to early modern

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<sup>2</sup> I have chosen to pair travel writing about the New World--promotional literature--and country house entertainments in order to examine the ways in which domestic forms of welcome are reworked in the colonial context. It should be noted, however, that there is also a growing body of critical work on representations of cultural others in English and European entertainments, festivals, and pageants. See for example Hall, "Troubling"; Staub and Pinson; Boorsch; Verberckmoes; Wintraub; Alison Scott; and David Baker, "Allegory of a China Shop."

English people. This measure was unreliable, however. In the colonial context, the very concepts of labor and pleasure came under scrutiny as authors of travel writing and travel drama asked questions about the nature and significance of social differences in the wider world, sometimes unintentionally, sometimes as a means of questioning accepted beliefs. In the New World, the topic of hunting became particularly fraught. Already laden with English domestic associations with both the pleasures of landed gentlemen and the labors of illicit poachers hunting for subsistence or financial gain, in the New World the English encountered a new and strange group of hunters who were both scorned and admired by turns. Native American hunting could not be described without recourse to the codes of conduct familiar to English readers. Established correlations to social status did not comfortably apply, however. In seeking to evaluate the status of Native American hunters, authors managed instead to question the system of conduct-based evaluation itself.

Hunting was both a highly favored and heavily coded activity within the land-based hierarchy of the country estate complex.<sup>3</sup> It was a time-honored cultivating strategy, but one that was available only to those who could afford or had access to the space of a forest or chase, the proper education as it was outlined in numerous new hunting handbooks, and the necessary equipment and staff (e.g., horses and hounds, as well as masters of the horse and hound) required. Traditionally the prerogative of aristocrats, hunting perhaps more than any other elite sport required a high level of access to land. For those who enjoyed hunting as sport, land ownership or close personal ties with landed folk was a must. Hunting references the social, political, and economic

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<sup>3</sup> Berry; Kirby and Kirby; and Arthur MacGregor provide a useful overview of hunting culture in early modern England with particular regard to the hunt as a symbol of royal power.

power of the landed gentleman who owns and operates the estate by displaying the extent and the "cost" of his leisure before an audience (or imagined audience) of non-participants, folk without access to the same activity. We might thus describe hunting as a form of conspicuous consumption, the performance of leisure.

Numerous handbooks on hunting and other outdoor recreations aimed at genteel readers, like George Gascoigne's *The Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting* (1576), give further evidence of the elite status associated with hunting.<sup>4</sup> In addition to these works, husbandry manuals often included entries (sometime quite lengthy) on hunting as an appropriate leisure activity for the landed gentleman.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the early modern period, the prestige associated with hunting could only increase as game laws restricted the practice of legal hunting to gentlemen of a certain rank and above, while physical barriers (hedges, fences, and ditches) restricted public access to hunting grounds. As a result, hunting both affected and reflected the growing division between those who labored and those with leisure.

Because enclosure deprived the poor of the use of commons and waste land for pasture, fuel and fruits, and of gleaning rights...it increased the dependence of the poor on wages. They were forced to work harder and more regularly, no longer able to choose their own time for labour....

Between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries Parliament made every

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<sup>4</sup> Manning, *Hunters and Poachers* 5-17 gives an overview of conduct literature on hunting. *The Noble Art of Venerie*, as well as Cockayne's *A Short Treatise of Hunting* (1591) were two of the more popular titles.

<sup>5</sup> Markham and Estienne, for example include chapters on hunting within larger husbandry manuals.

conceivable circumstance in which a commoner might hunt deer or hares a crime. (Hill 99-100)<sup>6</sup>

These legal, physical and ultimately cultural restrictions on hunting clearly favored those with wealth and land. This group benefited from the simple economic advantage of access to venison and timber, commodities that were becoming more valuable as deforestation continued throughout England. In addition, they benefited socially from the symbolic power the practice of hunting lent them.<sup>7</sup> Hunting enacts the demarcation between those who work and those who recreate, between bodily labor and intellectual relaxation, or between those who are merely idle and those who must "recreate their minds" (a concept I will discuss in greater detail below) with outdoor sports such as hunting.

I contend that deep divisions between early modern English people based on their varying relationships to the land were made more pronounced in the face of encounters with non-European cultures, particularly in the New World, where restrictions on hunting were minimal and land was available for claim or purchase, but where the harshness of the wilderness demanded intense agricultural labor to make settlements habitable and profitable. Authors of promotional literature, pamphlets and longer accounts--such as Thomas Harriot's *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* (1588)--enticing English settlers to the New World strove to advertise the possibilities and

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<sup>6</sup> Blomley provides a concise and comprehensive survey of historiography on enclosures in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For a more in-depth account see Thirsk, *Tudor Enclosures* and "Enclosing and Engrossing." Literary critics have also taken up the discourse of enclosure as it relates to themes of social restriction and unrest in plays, prose and poems from the period. See, for example, Stallybrass; Burt and Archer; Boose; Hentschell 19-50; Wilson; Edwards; and Langert.

<sup>7</sup> On the history of poaching, see Trench; Hill 91-109; and Manning, "Unlawful Hunting." On aristocratic feuding, as well as social tension and periodic armed conflict between peasants and gentlefolk over the contested space of the forest, see Beaver, "Great Dear Massacre"; and Beaver, *Hunting*. For poaching as a symbolic placeholder for warfare, see Manning, "Poaching."

downplay the hardships of plantation. They offered a pastoral fantasy, rewriting the New World landscape as uninhabited, unused and inexhaustibly bountiful. Against this backdrop, a green space available for claim and enclosure, authors were able to recast the English settler as genteel. In this image from de Bry's *Americae Pars Decima* (Figure 3) English settlers demonstrate their mastery and ownership of the landscape by engaging in hunting, hawking and fishing. They do not pursue these activities in any common fashion; they do not fish with nets or chase small game through the bushes. Instead, they are equipped with horses, hounds, guns, and falcons; they do not fish but angle with hook and line; this is the sporting life of the landed gentry.



Figure 3: "English Sportsmen in the New World," de Bry, J.T. *Americae pars decima*, 1618.

Indigenous people, however, presented problems of representation to the authors of promotional literature.<sup>8</sup> Native Americans were able hunters, but their customs not only of dress and diet but also of land-ownership and use were a mystery to the English. These authors refigured indigenous labor, especially hunting, as illicit recreation, and indigenous ties to the land as autochthony rather than ownership. This act of epistemological violence robbed Native Americans of their ability to labor in any meaningful way either through good husbandry or *cultus animi*. Instead they were portrayed pursuing hunting not as pastime or hard work, but either idly or ineffectually, to their distraction and downfall.<sup>9</sup>

Studies, especially historical studies, of interactions between English settlers and Native Americans have frequently emphasized the importance of European notions of "savagism" and "civility" or "nobility" in these exchanges. It is important to note, however, that these studies generally employ such terms (necessarily vague in such broad historical accounts) without reference to the larger framework for understanding the notion of relative civility as it relates to the larger study of the socio-economic, historical

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<sup>8</sup> The classic introduction to the genre is Howard Jones; see also Lindholdt; and Richard Davis. Studies of promotional literature tend to focus on a single tract, author, or theme rather than on the genre as a whole. In addition, promotional tracts or "literature" are considered valuable by some only as historical documents, and unreliable ones at best. Lindholdt compares promotional literature to "the prospectus printed by modern corporations to attract potential investors," but also notes that reading audiences would have included not only investors, adventurers and potential settlers, but also armchair travelers seeking diversion and education in stories about foreign lands (58-62). Jones divides the promotional literature into eight distinct categories with two overarching themes (179-85). This exercise, however, is more bibliographic than useful in literary critical terms. I, like Lindholdt, would describe the genre of promotional literature in terms of its general aims, while also recognizing the boundaries of the category as amorphous, encompassing text and image, print and manuscript, personal and corporate interests, and an incredibly varied history of textual transmission and cross-pollination. For my purposes, moreover, I would argue that it is crucial to consider promotional literature under the rubric of travel writing more broadly. In its focus on description and dialogue about regions distant from England and Europe, and in its variety of aims, forms, and uses, promotional literature fits comfortably within the broader generic outlines of travel writing.

<sup>9</sup> Recent contributions from Miller; and Wrightson have offered nuanced treatments of class and labor in the British Atlantic world, connecting English attitudes toward labor and class difference at home with those in Ireland and the Americas. Herman; and Bergstrom offer extended treatments on English hunting in the New World. For native American hunting culture, see Malone.

and culturally-specific phenomenon that is conduct (Braddick is a recent and notable exception). Thus important work by historians such as Kupperman and Sheehan employ "savagism" in reference to period opinions about characteristics of the body and disposition, alarming customs from aggression to cannibalism, bestiality, or pagan religion. In this chapter, I read many of the same early American texts on which Kupperman and Sheehan rely, attending, as they do, to the authors' comments on the relative civility of English settlers and indigenous people. My focus, however, is on the use of specific English customs as a means of negotiating geographic transition and cross-cultural exchange. By tracing one specific activity, hunting for sport, through multiple discursive contexts, both domestic and foreign, I am able to draw conclusions about the work of conduct in the process of social differentiation within and across cultures.

In the wake of Stephen Greenblatt's influential essay, "Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and Its Subversion," literary critics have taken up the literature of discovery, particularly literature about the Americas, in order to reexamine the impact of the material experience of colonialism--the devastating and rapid spread of disease from English settlers to indigenous Americans, in Greenblatt's case--on English literature and culture.<sup>10</sup> Peter Hulme's *Colonial Encounters*, too, takes colonial discourse as his object of inquiry. Hulme, however, is particularly concerned with aspects of colonial discourse that depart from material experience, working instead in the realm of colonialist fantasy. For Hulme, the "language of 'savagery'" became the "sharpest instrument of empire" in

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<sup>10</sup> Pioneering criticism on the Americas within early modern studies begins with studies of power, gender and discourse such as those of Greenblatt; Montrose; Hulme; and Patricia Parker; and continues with studies by Knapp; Miller; Fuchs; and Fuller. Recent studies have taken on even more nuanced subjects. See, for example, Fuller's *Remembering the Early Modern Voyage*, which considers the production and reception of grand narratives such as the "age of discovery."

the Americas, with cannibalism as its most recognizable and powerful signature (3). My own project follows in this vein, though I attend to customs and practices that are far more banal than the exotic practices, such as cannibalism, which caught the imagination of colonial writers and contemporary critics alike. I focus on sporting as a "language of conduct," of judgment, deployed as an interpretive and argumentative strategy in both country house entertainments and in promotional literature. These two kinds of texts share in a discursive field that is at once green, pastoral, and open, as well as violent, political, and contested.

### **Premeditated welcomes**

In the late sixteenth century Queen Elizabeth revived the tradition of the royal progress with a vengeance. The elaborate performances of welcome critics refer to as country house entertainments were the highlight of her yearly journeys into the English countryside. On progress, the Queen delighted in these performances. She stopped in cities and towns, receiving their effusive gestures of welcome and fealty, but it was her visits to the country manors where she was entertained by her most elite subjects that captured the popular imagination.<sup>11</sup> Texts circulated in cheap blackletter pamphlets amongst the populace and in copied manuscripts amongst the upper echelons, recounting her entertainments by the likes of long-time favorite Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester at his estate of Kenilworth, Sir Henry Lee, royal champion, at Woodstock, Anthony Brown,

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<sup>11</sup> Bruce Smith includes an appendix listing fifteen country house entertainments for Elizabeth with the date, place, host, period sources, and modern editions for each. Cole gives a thorough chronology of all of Elizabeth's royal visits and progresses. A series of articles by McGee and Meagher, "Preliminary Checklist of Tudor and Stuart Entertainments," covers the period 1485-1642. Nichols, *Progresses*, the authoritative and in some cases the only edition of a great many royal entertainments, has recently been edited by Jayne Archer et al and is forthcoming from Oxford UP.



Viscount Montague, a prominent catholic courtier, at Cowdray, and Lady Elizabeth Russell, the dowager countess, at Bisham.<sup>12</sup>

Country house entertainments make clear the extent to which the custom of welcome was about land, staging the land-based social hierarchy which early modern English people believed themselves to be part of. Country house entertainments were constructed around three main movements: an elaborate and lengthy welcome, a series of smaller events including vignettes, pageants, interludes, speeches, dancing, music, and other even more novel forms, and a final farewell. As Cedric Brown explains:

The welcome was often the largest part of the whole festivities, from a theatrical point of view. Usually it began out of doors, frequently at the entrance to the park enclosure or at some convenient point within the park, where the visiting party could be intercepted. The speeches were generally spoken by actors playing local rustics or local deities. Sometimes apparent rudeness or ignorance was contrived to begin with, feigning absence of welcome or lack of decorum, so that this could be superceded by more courtly welcomes as the party was conducted toward the house. (263-4)

Country house entertainments provide the opportunity to study the ways in which the custom of welcome allows a diverse group to sort out, pronounce, and affirm their

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<sup>12</sup> For an introduction to the genre of country house entertainments see Westfall; Smuts; Bradbrook; Bruce Smith; Cooper; and Cedric Brown (Brown surveys the generic properties of the entertainments in an effort to disqualify Milton's *Arcades* from the category). Recent studies of the genre include Jayne Archer and Knight's edited volume, as well as Heaton's monograph, which provides a much needed treatment of textual issues including readership and manuscript circulation. Numerous articles on individual entertainments have appeared in recent years as critics have turned to the extant materials as sources for the study of early modern women's writing, history of the book, court culture, the cult of Elizabeth, and other topics. See, for example, Steggle on the entertainment at Ashby; Davies on the entertainment at Elvetham; and Kolkovich; and Johnston on the entertainment at Bisham.

various social identities. With the country estate, a microcosm of the country at large, serving as backdrop, participants, spectators and the larger reading audience, are able to demonstrate their various relationships to the land as locals, agricultural workers, estate managers, and monarchs.

The familiarity and popularity of this complex custom, welcome as dramatic performance, functions in both domestic and foreign contexts. Certainly English aristocrats, ambassadors, and monarchs were accustomed to receptions on this level when they traveled to the continent or received important guests from abroad. As I will show in the second half of this chapter, however, it is in the context of English experiences in the New World that forms of country house entertainments as welcome take on a crucial importance. There, participants struggle to establish their relative social identities, their relationships to a new and newly contested land, against barriers of extreme linguistic and cultural difference.

Literary critics and historians have come to understand country house entertainments as a genre in large part because the variety of forms and occasions has made it difficult to liken them to more established and uniform dramatic genres such as court masque, public plays, and civic entertainments. Instead, a country house entertainment is an "exotic hybrid," combining the costly pomp and participatory elements of the court masque, the festive formality of the civic entertainment, and the immediacy and dynamism of the public plays (Smith 62). These sprawling undertakings featured a series of a events penned by authors working side by side or even in competition rather than in direct collaboration, and included both professional poets and playwrights as well as amateur authors both aristocratic and humble. In addition,

production required an extensive group of creative minds contributing music, dance, properties and costumes, feasts, expensive and intricate gifts, fanciful outdoor adornments such as arbors and garden plats, temporary structures to house guests and their entourages, and even permanent architectural modifications to the estate designed to impress a worldly visitor.

In particular, however, country house entertainments are distinct from other dramatic genres in "two respects," as Bruce Smith says:

Those respects are time and place. No formal occasion contains these devices: they spill over into days and weeks, interweaving golden threads of artifice into the green fabric of Elizabeth's entire stay at a country estate. (61)

Smith refers to the entertainments' wide variation both in length, from a single day to nearly a month (and royal visits could also be cancelled or added at a moment's notice), and in setting. The events of the entertainments took place largely out of doors and used the specific landscape of each individual country estate, manipulating and making use of their best natural and manmade features, particularly the wooded chase that both provided a setting for encounters with wandering knights or wild men, and offered genteel guests good hunting. As Helen Cooper explains, "The setting is not a function of the action; the action is made possible by the landscape" (144). The genteel practice of hunting, in particular, produced the peculiar format and rhythms of country house entertainments. Inviting guests to hunt, especially royals, had long been a cornerstone of aristocratic hospitality. In effect, however, hunting parties regularly riding over the estate

grounds meant that the "audience" for each dramatic interlude was constantly moving from place to place.

One final element of the entertainments that critics have stressed is that actors in the dramatic events, who might be either genteel or humble and who could play a part or appear as themselves, had to be prepared to improvise. With only a single performance carefully tailored to delight a single important guest, participants had to accommodate rapid changes in everything from the mood of their elite spectator, to the weather, to current events both local and global: "Surprise, spontaneity counted for all. Elizabeth's impromptu response one day might become a part of tomorrow's design" (Smith 61). The Queen was often the most important and unpredictable variable: "She insisted...on her own symbolic function, and made sure that pageants...extended outward to make her part of their action."<sup>13</sup> Scholarship on country house entertainments has tended to emphasize heavily the relationships between the Queen and her aristocratic hosts, carefully reading the subtext of extant documents in order to draw out the political aims and agendas of the courtiers who sought to please Elizabeth with these elaborate displays of wealth.<sup>14</sup> Leicester's 1575 entertainments for Queen Elizabeth, for example, are thought to have represented Leicester's final bid for the Queen's hand.<sup>15</sup> At Kenilworth, Leicester staged one of the longest and most extravagant entertainments ever given for the Queen,

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<sup>13</sup> King James I would be far less interested in this level of participation, preferring the more stylized court masques and moving the whole enterprise of royal entertainments back to London and indoors to highly designed spaces like the banqueting-hall (Cooper 144-5).

<sup>14</sup> Following Roy Strong's call to seek out the politics of power always embedded within the court masque, scholars such as Doran; Breight; and Heaton have attended carefully to the specific historical moment of the individual entertainment, eschewing treatments of the genre more broadly. For most this has meant using biography and related historical documents to reveal what might have been at stake, politically or personally, for the visiting monarch and the aristocratic families who hosted them. Leslie's recent contribution is an example of the alternative approach. Leslie suggests there is a crucial difference between court masque and country entertainment, and calls for greater attention to the function of the landscape within the genre.

<sup>15</sup> Doran looks at the changing role of country house entertainments between 1561-1581 in debates concerning the Queen's marriage.

clocking in at 19 days and nearly 20,000 pounds spent (Bradbrook 143). Gascoigne, famed poet and impoverished gentleman, was a major contributor to the entertainment. He, too, sought the Queen's favor and patronage, receiving a royal commission just a year after the Kenilworth entertainment (Hamrick 2).<sup>16</sup>

The critical focus on court relations, aristocratic fortunes and reputations, national politics and bids for patronage in country house entertainments echoes the focus on court-centered display in studies of conduct and conduct literature. Curtis Breight, for example, echoes Whigham's emphasis on the importance of rhetorical display for would-be courtiers when he argues that, "Once we understand that political danger compelled courtiers to specialize in various forms of indirect communication, we can theorize that entertainments are complex rather than simplistic and then investigate the politics of these events/texts" ("Realpolitik" 21). However, the country house entertainment was more than an "opportunity to address the monarch" (Heaton 7). By reading country house entertainments in much the same way that court masques have been read by Roy Strong and others, however, we miss the opportunity the entertainments offer to understand relations not between monarch and peer but between people and land. The entertainments constitute a reaffirmation of the material reality of social difference in early modern England. Queen, lord, and country working folk performed their own relationships to the land and thus their relationships to each other, by playing their lives as parts. Furthermore, participants (re)produced their relative social status, from high to low, by demonstrating their knowledge of the difference between those degrees. They

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<sup>16</sup> Other authors included William Hunnis and Edward Ferrers. Gascoigne's contribution, *The Princely Pleasures at the Courte at Kenelwoorth*, was published anonymously in 1576 and then reproduced posthumously in *The vvhole woorkes of George Gascoigne Esquire* (1587). On Gascoigne's role in the entertainments at Kenilworth and Woodstock, and his bid for royal favor see Hamrick; Mauré; and Prouty.

did this by performing with more or less sophistication with regard to the various registers (allegory, mythology, romance) and settings (wild wood, pasture, garden) that entertainments featured. They did it by adapting with more or less facility to the improvisational rhythms of the events, which switched quickly in tone from informal to formal and back. And they did it by demonstrating their insight into the real-world, real-time meanings of their performative gestures, by knowing themselves and showing it. Focusing on the welcoming custom of country house entertainments, I argue that its function is to teach and evaluate social roles in relation to the land, and to affirm the nature and importance of those roles.<sup>17</sup>

The Kenilworth entertainment is recorded at greater length in Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures*, and in more detail in Robert Laneham's pamphlet, *A letter wherein part of the entertainment vntoo the Queenz Maiesty at Killingwoorth Castl in Warwik sheer in this soomerz progress 1575 is signified* (1575).<sup>18</sup> Laneham begins his account of the Kenilworth entertainment by allowing his reading public a tantalizing glimpse of Kenilworth itself. Through Laneham's eyes readers see Kenilworth as a perfectly situated paradise. They are treated to a vision not only of Kenilworth's situation, its arable land, lakes, pastures and meadows, but also of the contents of its most exclusive outdoor amenity, its well-stocked and furnished chase. With the queen's entrance, her "progress"

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<sup>17</sup> I do not mean to suggest that country house entertainments were not or could not be subversive or serve to support or undermine political agendas. Rather, I would suggest that the politics of performance have a wider scope. I would add the gestures and agendas of "rustics" to the list of politically meaningful elements in country house entertainments.

<sup>18</sup> Laneham, a London mercer delighted to have won Leicester's patronage for his facility with languages, addressed his public "letter" to another mercer of his acquaintance, Master Humfrey Martin. Laneham's engaging prose style and attention to detail has long endeared him to scholars of early modern literature. At the same time, however, his authorship of the Letter has long been debated. See, for example, Kuin "Purloined"; David Scott; Goldring; O'Kill; and, for a succinct overview, see Woudhuysen. I will follow the more common practice of referring to Laneham as the author of the piece. With two lengthy period sources to draw from, there have been numerous scholarly treatments of the Kenilworth entertainment. For a recent, clear and thorough overview of the entertainment, the events as well as its thematic and political issues, see Mauré.

into these spaces, a general reading audience also enters; the fences, forests, and walls of the great country estate become passable. Within these zones figures such as savage men, gardeners, dairy maids, hermits, shepherds and knights represent the real operations of both state and estate. In crossing the boundaries of the country estate, guests are imagined to be crossing the boundaries separating classes as well. In this way entertainments seem to present the opportunity to renegotiate relationships of social identity by renegotiating the boundaries and functions of spaces within the country estates.

As they approach, guests are invited by way of command, or importuned unceremoniously, to lower themselves and to participate fully in the contemplative mood of the countryside and the working life of the country estate. Costume and disguise are intertwined as aristocrats along with actors and real working-class people impersonate fairies, farmers, foresters, shepherds, nymphs and demigods of the forest, drawing on both the pastoral and georgic modes. This intermingling of classes is designed to be festive. Irreverence, in these instances, communicates a welcome that places host and guest on intimate terms. At Harefield, Queen Elizabeth was greeted by a bailiff (Robert) and a dairy-maid (Joanne). Uncertain of the strangers' pedigrees--"You should seeme to be Ladies...I know not what you are."--Joanne greeted the Queen as a fellow huswife and invited her to "take a simple lodginge" with her own family rather than try the manor (Nichols, *Harefield* 10-11).<sup>19</sup> In a further breach of decorum, Joanne the dairy-maid reveals that she thinks the Queen and her party are migrant farm-workers.

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<sup>19</sup> Queen Elizabeth visited Harefield Place in Middlesex on her final summer progress in 1602, just a year before her death. She was hosted by Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper and his third wife, Alice Countess Dowager of Derby (Nichols, *Harefield* 3-4). Some scholars have attributed the authorship of the Harefield entertainment, as well as the entertainments at Cowdray, and Bisham to John Lyly. These entertainments

JOANNE. My Mrs. charged me earnestly to retaine all idele hearvest-folkes that past this way; and...on Monday morning to carry them into the fields; and to make them earne their entertaynment well and thriftily; and to that end I have heere a Rake and Forke, to deliver to the best Huswife in all this company. (11-12)

Joanne demands that the Queen identify herself as a huswife in order to receive the gift of bejeweled tools, but it is clear that this type of affront is affectation and indulgence on the part of elite householders and their noble guests.<sup>20</sup> Not only paid actors and real local rustics, but also aristocratic landowners disguise themselves as working folk, making the entertainment a kind of amateur theatrical. At Cowdray the "countrie people" presented Queen Elizabeth with a "pleasant daunce, with Taber and Pipe" and Lord and Lady Montague danced right along with them (Breight, "Caressing" 162).<sup>21</sup> And as she neared Bisham, where she was welcomed by Elizabeth Cooke, Lady Russell, the Queen came upon a vignette of Pan and "two Virgins keeping sheepe, and sowing in their Samplers" (*Speeches* A2v). The two virgins were most likely played by Lady Russell's own daughters, Elizabeth and Anne (Johnston 76).<sup>22</sup>

Though these green world and agricultural characters, some genuine, some comic impersonations, and some fantastical, interact with genteel guests with an exaggerated

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and others appear with editorial apparatus in Volume 1 of Bond's edition of *The Complete Works of John Lyly*. For a recent study of the entertainment at Harefield, see Erler.

<sup>20</sup> A note in the margin of the manuscript calls the tools "2 Juells" (11-12).

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Browne, Viscount Montague welcomed Queen Elizabeth to his estate of Cowdray in Sussex, on her summer progress of 1591. Breight provides a transcription based on two extant manuscripts in the British Library in "Caressing."

<sup>22</sup> In 1592 Elizabeth Cooke, Lady Russell welcomed Queen Elizabeth to Bisham, the Berkshire estate of her son Sir Edward Toby. Johnston and others have argued that Lady Russell herself authored the entertainment in order to recommend her daughters to the queen as maids of honor for her household (71). On the Entertainment at Bisham and Lady Russell's authorship, see also Kolkovich; Malay; and Davidson and Stevenson.



disregard for their gentility, in fact, entertainments merely reaffirm a static hierarchy in which land is paramount. This tension is evident particularly in unscripted moments of confrontation such as the Queen's encounter with the Lady of the Lake at the edge of the water encircling Kenilworth as she returned from hunting.

The Lady of the Lake (famous in king Arthurz book)...floting too land, met her Maiesty with a wel penned meter and matter after this sorte: First of the auncientée of the Castl, whoo had béen ownerz of the same, éen till this day, most allweyz in the handes of the Earls of Leyceyter, hoow she had kept this Lake syns king Arthurz dayz, and noow vnderstanding of her highnes hither cumming, thought it both offis & duety in humbl wyze too discoouer her and her estate: offering vp the same, her Lake & pour thearin, with promis of repair vnto the Coourt. It pleased her highnes too thank this lady & too ad withall, we had thought indéed *the* Lake had béen ours, and doo you call it yourz noow? Well we wyll héerin common more with yoo hereafter. (Laneham B4v-B5)

This unscripted but carefully recounted exchange precedes the Queen's entrance into Kenilworth proper, the final stage in her gradual, episodic approach. Though she is headed toward Leicester's estate, his hearth and table, the Queen insists on her own sovereignty over subjects and land. As Bradbrook has pointed out: "The sovereign Lady was wont to date her orders from 'our castle of Kenilworth', 'our manor of Cheney's' or wherever she happened to rest; for all estates lay in her gift" (Bradbrook 248). As the queen explains to the welcoming mermaid, pertly and in a tone that suggests everyone

should know better, this lake, incorporated into her entertainment by her subject and suitor and in her honor, is her own lake before it is anyone else's.<sup>23</sup>

For Laneham, too, the characters drawn from mythology or romance did not, in the end, make the biggest impression. Instead, Laneham devotes most of his letter to the description of the Queen's hunting and the performances by local townsfolk and rustics. Smith calls these interludes *commedia rusticale*, "bumptious country farce" that delighted a courtly audience (73). In the *commedia rusticale* of country house entertainments, "the city man...stands back from the spectacle before him, only his wit engaged by rustics who are so enthralled at performing before nobility that they see no irony, no glimpse of the larger, more complicated world beyond their fields" (73). In Smith's definition of *commedia rusticale*, Laneham would be the "city man" enjoying the spectacle of earnest, costumed rubes who cannot hope to achieve his critical perspective, doing their best to please an audience. In fact, Laneham does describe the performance of just such a group of local men at great length. However, it is not Laneham but the men of Coventry, presenting their "bumptious country farce" in deadly earnest, who best embody the spirit of improvisation that defines country house entertainments.

Having lost the right to perform their "olld storiall sheaw," an annual Coventry civic pageant that had been censored by Puritan authorities, these men snatched the occasion of the Kenilworth visit to present their discontinued play and thereby their

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<sup>23</sup> During the Queen's summer progress of 1572, Henry, Lord Berkeley was conspicuously absent from his country estate in Gloucestershire and was thus unable to welcome the Queen with entertainments as she passed through (Manning, "Poaching" 200-1). The Queen visited anyway, perhaps in retribution for this slight. Though no explicit challenge was issued by either Berkeley or the Queen, the symbolism of this exchange is clear. The Queen, with the Earl of Leicester, rode into Berkeley's park and hunted his deer: "Such slaughter was made as 27 stagges were slain in the Toiles in one day" (quoted in "Poaching" 200). Berkeley was an avid hunter who prized his deer. Berkeley was enraged, but unable to respond; the Queen had called his bluff, claiming his hospitality--including the right to hunt in his private reserve--even without his consent.

petition to revive it to the Queen herself (Miskimin 181-2). However, they are described as lacking the wit and sophistication to truly understand their performative offering to the queen. Laneham does not recount their performance as a bid for upward social mobility through royal favor, like those of Gascoigne or Leicester. Instead, Laneham's describes their performance as proof of their low degree, emphasizing their failure to participate in the elaborate ritual of entertainment as knowing equals.

Heertoo folloed az good a sport (me thought) presented in an historicall  
 ku, by certeyn good harted men of Couentrée, my Lordes neighborz  
 thear: whoo vnderstanding amoong them the thing that coold not be  
 hidden from ony: hoow careful & studidous hiz honor waz. *that* by all  
 pleazaunt recreasions her highnes might best fynde her self wellcom, and  
 he made gladsum & mery (the groundwoork indéed & fooundacion of  
 hiz Lordships myrth & gladnes of vs all) made petition that they moought  
 renu noow their olld storiall sheaw: Of argument how the Danez...on a  
 Saint Bricez night. Ann. Dom. 1012. (Az the book sayz)...wear all  
 dispatcht & the ream rid...expressed in actionz & rymez after their maner,  
 they thought it moought mooue sum myrth too her Maiesty the rather.

(Laneham Ev-E2)

The decision of the "Coventree men" to present (by way of petition for renewal) their "olld storiall sheaw" is predicated upon the depth of their "understanding" of the stakes of Leicester's grand entertainment for the Queen. As they understand it, their Conquest of the Danes is the sort of "pleazaunt recreation" that the queen will enjoy and, crucially, that will communicate a welcome from both town and country folk, both humble and

great local men for their monarch. But Laneham's commentary already hints that the mirth the play evokes in both the queen and the exalted audience has another source. He notes that the Coventry men's history play is expressed in actions and rhymes "after their manner," perhaps suggesting a difference between the "manner" of the good-hearted men of Coventry and that of professional actors and playwrights employing sophisticated dramatic verse and drawing on the authoritative prose of histories and chronicles such as the one Laneham notes in the margin as a source for the history of the St. Brice's Day massacre.

The source Laneham cites as "Florileg. li.I.fo.300" is *Flores Historiarum*, a medieval chronicle that appeared again in Latin in 1567 and 1570 editions by Archbishop Parker (Kuin, *Robert Langham* 96-7, n. 615). With his marginal note, Laneham reminds readers that the Coventry men, for example, would not likely have had access to such a text, relying on oral history instead. Laneham notes and praises the Coventry men's pride in their reenactment of the events of the St Brice's Day massacre while subtly casting doubt on their devotion to this popular version of events. He invites a comparison between his breadth of reading, evidenced by his marginal indexing, with that of Captain Cox, who spouts a comical litany of chapbook romances not marginally but at great length and before the queen herself.

But aware, kéep bak, make room noow, heer they cum. And fyrst captin  
Cox, an od man I promiz yoo: by profession a Mason, and that right  
skilfull: very cunning in fens, and hardy az Gawyn, for hiz tonsword hangs  
at his tablz éend: great ouersight hath he in matters of story: For az for  
king Arthurz book, Huon of Burdeaus, The four suns of Aymon...with

many mo then I rehearz heer: I beleeeue he haue them all at hiz fingars  
 ends...and at afternoonz can talk az mooch withoout book, az ony  
 Inhollder betwixt Brainford and Bagshot, what degré so euer he be. (E2v-  
 E3v)

Laneham's representation of Cox as an important figure amongst the working class townsfolk of Coventry is a caricature. Though Cox's "degree" is low, Laneham boasts with tongue in cheek that the well-read mason and retired warrior can hold his own with those of any rank. His subtle jibe--Cox has as many books and can "talk az mooch withoout a book" as others--suggests an important difference between refined behavior and the impersonation of refinement.<sup>24</sup> That is, owning books and possessing cultural capital are very different things. Cox's claim to Laneham's good opinion rests more on his enthusiasm than on his experience. While Laneham will acknowledge Cox as a "skillful" mason, his reading habits and martial arts render him "od" rather than genteel. In effect, Cox's list of prose and poetry becomes Laneham's own. Cox's litany underscores Laneham's breadth of reading--Laneham's familiarity with these texts as well as with numerous, unnamed others is understated and therefore more powerfully affirmed.

In this same vein, though Laneham emphasizes the earnest intentions and serious tone of the Coventry men's history play, it is not history but comedy that entertains Laneham and, by extension, the elite audience at Kenilworth. As Laneham says, the performance is "good sport," but not only because it is "prezented in an historicall ku

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<sup>24</sup> The definitive work on Captain Cox's library is Furnivall, who provides not only a scholarly edition of Laneham's letter, but also a short commentary with historical background or passages from each of the titles listed in Captain Cox's inventory. *Quin Robert Langham* provides a more recent edition with notes, commentary and an appendix on Captain Cox's library that supplements rather than replaces Furnivall's.

[cue]." The comic hero of the Coventry men's play is Captain Cox, whose performance as a rustic buffoon precedes the actual dramatic entertainment.

Captain Cox cam marching on valiauntly before cléen trust & garterd  
 abooue the knee, all fresh in a velluet cap (master Golldingam lent it him)  
 floorishing with hiz tonswoord...the danish launsknights on horsbak, and  
 then the English...Eeuen at the first entree the meeting waxt sumwhat  
 warm: that by & by kindled with coorage abothsidez, gru from a hot  
 skirmish vnto a blazing battayl (E3v-E4)

Cox's costume does little to disguise him. Instead he appears cross-gartered above the knee, humiliated without even his knowledge, like Olivia's upstart servant, Malvolio. His finery is borrowed or mistaken. The description of the battle reenactment continues with a blow-by-blow account, laden with irony, for another full page of prose. Though the battle "blazes," it is the enthusiasm of the rustic warriors, their simple patriotism and regional pride that entertains. The other primary source for the Kenilworth entertainments of 1575 reduces this elaborate performance to a single sentence: "And nowe you haue asmuch as I could recouer hitherto of the deuises executed there: the countrie shewe excepted, and the merry marriage: the which were so plaine as néedeth no further explication" (Gascoigne B2). In Gascoigne's estimation, Captain Cox and the Coventry men's annual play and reenactment mounted in costume, armed and on horseback amounts, essentially, to nothing at all. The Conquest of the Danes is a "countrie shewe" on par with the pastoral mock-marriage that was performed simultaneously on Sunday July 17th. In fact the queen did not even see the performance, which conflicted with the brideale. Instead she ordered the Coventry men to return on

Tuesday and perform the play in full a second time for her pleasure. Though Laneham describes this "good sport" at great length while Gascoigne maintains that the "countrie shewe" needs no explication, both authors agree that the performance is a "plaine" one.

Plainness in this context connotes a particular kind of deficit both in social stature and in sophistication. While this is not an immediately negative quality, it should be noted that "plaine"-ness in dramatic entertainment is a defect powerful enough to make it debatable whether such a performance should be described, mentioned, remembered, or even witnessed by anyone. Plainness, in effect, is that quality which robs dramatic entertainment of its meaning and even its content. As I will discuss, it is by means of just such a process that whole groups of people are stigmatized by the deficit of capacity to enact, imagine or even impersonate a better version of themselves.

In the exchange that is entertainment--between performing subject and exalted audience--the imaginative capacity of both groups is being measured. More importantly, this measure of the capacity for imagination (labor in the mind) is understood as an indication of relative social status. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* underwrites the commonplace that amateur theatrical performance, in its very failure to achieve excellence, is a performance of hierarchical inferiority and duty or fealty toward a more exalted audience.

HIPPOLYTA. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

THESEUS. The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

HIPPOLYTA. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

THESEUS. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they

may pass for excellent men. (5.1.207-12)

Theseus instructs Hippolyta in the relative roles of elite audience and actor: in listening to, understanding and accepting a mediocre performance on the part of their inferiors an exalted audience is itself performing an imaginative act by transforming mediocre theatrical performance into "excellence." However, the "excellence" this act reaffirms is that of the exalted audience, rather than the humble players who merely "pass" by means of this beneficence. Thus what is merely a perfunctory attempt at participation on the part of working-class would-be actors is in fact a cultivating exercise for their audience. The imaginative work of interpreting bad entertainment is itself good entertainment.

By contrast, Bottom and the rude mechanicals scurry with frenetic and earnest activity to prepare for what they perceive as a serious performance: "Most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy" (4.2.39-42). They gather, rehearse, and get into costume, intending to give the best performance they can of "A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth," unaware that the act of offering to perform has established their social inferiority and debt to the Duke and his bride, no matter how strong or weak their actual delivery. Though locals of every degree, Laneham suggests, are capable of understanding "the thing that could not be hidden from ony: hoow careful & studious hiz honor [Leicester] waz that by all pleazaunt recreasions her highnes might best fynde her self wellcom," it seems that only some of these are capable of expressing their message of welcome in the medium and manner they intend. This elite group is made up of those capable of imagining, interpreting and understanding social difference. The reward for this insight, of course, is social elevation. Both



Laneham and Gascoigne clamor for this prize, but to attain elevation others must be imaginatively lowered and even their access to this kind of imaginative power limited. Theseus's master of revels, Philostrate, describes such pitiful players as ones who have "never labored in their minds" (5.1.73). Thus "good harted" men of Coventry, like the "hard-handed" mechanicals of Athens, may be "right skilfull" in the manual or skilled labor of their trades, but the intellectual labor, the art of welcome, is reserved for a privileged few and, in turn, is proof of their privilege (5.1.72).

### **Recreate the Mind**

In country house entertainments, the role that land plays in mediating the relationship between ruler and ruled is reflected in the green space that doubles as the setting for the performance of fantastic vignettes and the setting for the performance of hunting, an expression of land-based power. Even within the popular imaginary, the landscape of the country estate is understood as analogous to the presiding social order. As I discussed in Chapter One, social differentiation is imagined in terms of the varying relationships of groups to the land--as owners, tenants, laborers, etc. In this familiar green space the social relations between all parties seem clear and irrefutable and thus may be mythologized and even satirized without risk within the entertainment. Laneham dutifully informs his readers of the "effect of the show" by the Coventry men, though the outcome is easily predicted.

Her Maiesty laught well: they wear the iocunder, and so mooch the more  
 becauz her highnes had gyuen them too bucks & fiue mark in mony too  
 make mery togyther.... Reioycing vpon their ampl reward and what,

triumphing vpon the good acceptauns: they vaunted their play waz neuer so dignified, nor euer any players afore so beatified. (E4r-v)

The Coventry men accept the queen's reward as proof of their skillful performance.

Laneham echoes Theseus at 5.1.211-12--"If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men"--when he explains, condescendingly, that the Coventry men "vaunted" that their play was the most dignified and their own acting nearly divine. Have they imagined themselves to be great or has the Queen imagined them to be greater than they are or can be? The measure of their greatness is expressed as an exchange of good feeling--the Queen "laught well," the Coventry men were "the iocunder"--but also as a monetary value, a quantifiable measure. However, the Queen's offer of "too bucks & five mark in mony" is not in fact the value of the Coventry men's performance but an acknowledgement of their fealty and subservience.

Monetary "rewards" for theatrical performance may be understood as compensation for imaginative skill or labor. However, the performance of entertainment or welcome is not evaluated in this way. Instead, the theatrical welcome that is entertainment is an expression of a transaction which has *already taken place*. An elaborate ritual of acceptance predicated upon a previous conquest or concession, country house entertainment offers a predetermined welcome. Welcome may be understood as a performance of social connection and obligation. With the grounds of the country estate as backdrop, guests are welcomed with fanciful, pastoral and mythological representations of a social hierarchy based on real relationships to the land.

The amateur theatricals of the working country folk are intended to give pleasure. In producing pleasure for the elite guests/audience, however, they merely mimic a

previous and ongoing process of appropriation in which the labor of working folk produces leisure and thus enables elite status, but always for others. The fruits of their more banal agricultural and skilled labor have in fact already been appropriated. In addition, however, any cultural capital to be attained by participating in the performance or witness of the theatrical welcome accrues not to the Coventry men, but to the elite audience who patronize them. The difference between these two groups is marked not only by the gift of five marks but also, even more potently, by the "too bucks," a gift of game. In this exchange, the fruit of the queen's recreation (hunting) is also the fruit of the Coventry men's labor in entertaining her. It is an uneven exchange, however, since the queen's recreation is understood by all to be of greater value than the Coventry men's time preparing and performing their pageant. Instead, a hierarchical relation is reiterated here in which recreation is of greater value than labor despite the fact that both leisure time and the space necessary for recreation are byproducts of the appropriation of others' labor.

This relationship is mapped onto the space of the country estate in entertainments. In entertainments, theater and hunting--the gift of the performance and the gift of game--are balanced against one another both spatially and imaginatively; this is evidenced by the use of the country estate's cultivated wilderness, its chase or park as the setting for aristocratic entertainments. Both activities are performances, mutually constitutive performances, of social identity. The "chase" or "park" is a distinct area of the estate, and a space to which public access is strictly controlled. Maintained as a space apart from the more functional areas of the country estate, the chase is associated with the highest ranking members of the community. Stocked with game and maintained by a staff of

keepers and foresters, it is a space in which genteel land-owners and their guests may practice self-improvement through hunting and other outdoor recreations such as hawking and angling. Husbandry manuals and hunting handbooks published in the period offered instruction in the construction, maintenance and proper enjoyment of the chase and, even in the classical antecedents to later works of conduct literature, authors allude to an implicit connection between husbandry, hunting and entertainment. One of the most authoritative classical texts being read in this period, Columella's *De Re Rustica*, covers the topic of the chase in great detail, describing its nature and purpose:

Ancient custom placed parks for young hares, wild goats and wild boars near the farm, generally within the view of the owner's dwelling-place, so that the sight of their being hunted within an inclosure might delight the eyes of the proprietor and that when the custom of giving feasts called for game, it might be produced as it were out of store. (2: 9.421)

Columella notes the importance of the chase as a kind of extended larder for entertaining guests with ample feasts. In addition, he encourages the placement of the chase "within view" of the house with the express purpose of entertaining--meaning, in this case, "delighting the eyes" with the sight of hunting in progress.

The construction of the park requires a high level of control over land use, while the use of the park requires access to restricted areas of the estate reserved for recreation. This high level of control and access indicates elite social status as well, displayed against the very backdrop of the chase through the performance of both elaborate entertainments and recreational hunting. The green space of park or chase is thus a place of "rehearsal," but for a performance that is always underway everywhere. Hunting not

only symbolizes control over land, the most important symbol of socio-economic authority, but also suggests a sufficient level of sophistication to require recreation of the mind. As Gervase Markham stipulates in *Country Contentments*, "Recreation is most necessary" and furthermore, "to none is it more due than to the Husbandman" (Bv). This bold claim elevates the status of both husbandry and recreation. Markham goes further, however, in affirming that hunting is the most appropriate, in that it is the most sophisticated, recreation available to the husbandman.<sup>25</sup>

Now for as much as these sports are many and diuers, I thinke it not amisse to begin and giue that recreation precedencie of place which in mine opinion (how euer it may be esteemed partiall) doth manie degrees goe before, and precede all other, as being most royall for the statelines thereof, most artificial for the wisdom & cunning therof and most manly and warlike for the vse and indurance thereof. And this I hould to bee the hunting of wilde Beasts ingenerall. (B2)

What is implicit in this passage, and discussed at length in other husbandry manuals and handbooks, is that hunting is the prerogative of the genteel husbandman who has not only the access but the rank to use wooded land lawfully for the purpose of recreation. In essence, hunting and other forms of recreation for the mind are considered sophisticated behaviors suitable for more elevated individuals. In *The Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting*, a conduct book on hunting printed the year of the Kenilworth entertainment, George Gascoigne places hunting in direct opposition to other forms of festive

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<sup>25</sup> See also *Maison rustique or The country farme* (1616) another popular husbandry manual that first appeared in translation in 1600--"In all these [three kinds of hunting] the Lord of the countrie farme may find occasion to exercise himselfe, but especially in the hunting of the foure footed beastes" (Estienne Lll6v).

entertainment: "How sight of such delights, doth scorne all common showes, / Of Enterludes, of Tumblers tricks, of antikes, mocks, and mowes" (A4). Indeed, recreational sports like hunting are achievable (in acceptable, non-transgressive forms) only by those with a high level of access to the education and resources required to "recreate" themselves in these ways. The performance of such activities in turn indicates an individual as someone whose time (whether leisure or labor time) is of great value, someone who labors in the mind and therefore must, on occasion, recreate the mind.

"Recreation of the mind" is a key phrase in conduct books devoted to hunting. Authors like Gascoigne recommend hunting as an "Arte or Science" particularly suitable--not only "commendable" but also "necessary"--for "Noblemen and Gentlemen." However, for my purposes here, I want to underscore the terms under which Gascoigne and others prescribe hunting as an appropriate cultivating strategy for gentlemen. In this quote from the prefatory material of the *The Noble Art of Venerie*, Gascoigne places two models of free time (or labor-free time), recreation and idleness, in direct opposition.

For if (as Salomon sayeth) all earthly things be vanities, then are those moste to be esteemed which may continew the life of Man in most comfort and godly quiet of mynd, with honest recreation. And if it be true (as it is doutlesse) that pride (which is roote of al vices,) doth increase by idlenes, then is that exercise highly to be commended, which doth maintaine the body in helth, the mynd in honest meditations. (A2v-A3)

Calling on both Solomon and Aristotle to shore up this argument, Gascoigne calls hunting a remedy for excessive pride and distinguishes that "exercise"--an "*honest*" recreation--from other, less wholesome activities. In a lengthy "commendation" of

venerie in verse form Gascoigne offers an example of exactly *how* this moral improvement is manifested in hunting or in the huntsman, reminding the reader how early hunters must rise, freeing themselves from both sloth and lust: "I might at large expresse how earely hunstmen ryse, / And leaue the sluggish sleepe for such as leachers lust deuyse" (*Venerie* A3v). However, the pursuit of virtue is clearly only one part, and one small part, of the notion of hunting as cultivating strategy. In Laneham's descriptions of the Queen's hunting it is spectacle and pomp, not humble honesty, that underwrites the idea of hunting as the pastime of princes.

Thear to beholld the swyft fleeting of the Déer afore with the stately caryage of hiz hed in hiz swimming, spred (for the quantité) lyke the sayl of a shyp: the hoounds harroing after, az had they been a number of skyphs too the spoyle of a karuell: the ton no less eager in purchas of hiz pray, then was the toother earnest in safegard of hiz lyfe: so az the earning of the hoounds in continuauns of theyr cry, the swyftnes of y<sup>e</sup> Déer, the running of footemen, the galloping of horsez, the blasting of horns, the halloing & hewing of the huntsmen, with the excellent Echoz betwéen whilez from the woods and waters in valleyz resoounding, mooued pastime delectabl in so hy a degree, az, for ony parson to take pleasure by moost sensez at onez, in mine opinion thear *can* be none ony wey comparabl too this: And specially in this place that of nature iz foormed so féet for the purpoze. (Laneham C2r-v)

Laneham's account includes an array of supporting characters who facilitate the queen's hunt--dogs and horses, footmen and huntsmen, as well as the implicit hunting party and

spectators, including Laneham himself. In addition, he employs a florid prose style thick with metaphor, parallel phrasing and balanced clauses: "the ton no less eager in purchas of hiz pray, then was the toother." In this way, Laneham makes the case for the hunt as a "delectable pastime," satisfying the ear with rhetorical flourishes while suggesting that the hunt satisfies by pleasing all the senses at once. It is also telling that these passages describe the leisure of elite sportsmen and women in terms of the massive orchestration of labor on the part of servants and livestock (the game, the horses and the hounds) to facilitate and in some ways to produce it. The display of cultural capital through leisure activity is enhanced by the simultaneous performance of labor activity by social inferiors. Also crucial here is the importance of mastering land along with livestock. When Laneham points out that the hunt is even more satisfying "in this place that of nature iz foormed so fêet for the purpoze" he praises not nature, but in fact practitioners such as the queen who are equipped to take advantage of the stocked and cultivated wooded areas in and around the country estate. Hunting entails a prior or ongoing landscaping (active manipulation of the land in service of the elite art of recreation). This apparent waste of space (of arable land, say) is again the conspicuous consumption that helps to elevate recreational activities such as hunting to the level of art.

As I will go on to explore, however, the definition of recreation hinges upon the subtle distinction between efforts at relaxation and effort itself: more precisely, the distinction between leisure and labor. Take for example these lines from *The Noble Art of Venerie* in praise of hunting, in which genteel recreation is at once contrasted and equated with humble labor:

It is a *Noble sport*,



*To recreate the mindes of Men, in good and godly sort.*

*A sport for Noble peeres, a sport for gentle bloods,*

the paine I leaue for servants such, as beate the bushie woods,

To make their masters sport...

For my part (being one) I must needes say my minde,

*That Hunting was ordeyned first, for Men of Noble kinde.*

And vnto them therefore, I recommend the same,

As exercise that best becommes, their worthy noble name. (A4)

Here, recreation of the mind is a "good and godly" activity for noblemen. The elevating activity of hunting is facilitated by the "paine" of working-class servants and, in addition, the servants' "paine" indicates the moral or behavioral inferiority of that group. In this way the power of hunting as cultivating strategy is affirmed via the didactic authority of the conduct book and reinforced with an implicit hierarchy that places elite leisure above humble labor. Though Gascoigne juxtaposes them here as simultaneous activities, elite leisure may be interpreted as the product of working class labor.

This reciprocal--and hierarchical, as it is imagined--relationship between elite leisure and humble labor is echoed throughout the hunting handbooks. There, the hunt-related (as well as fowling and hawking-related) skills and duties of numerous kinds and classes of servants are discussed but always sublimated to the overarching message of the books. The imagined reader and recipient of hunting how-to lessons is also the beneficiary of hunting as cultivating strategy. That reader is a cultural elite, a member of the landed gentry and, often implicitly, male. The rituals of the hunt acknowledge martial, economic, and cultural power by referencing hereditary (land-based) power. To

perform these rituals well--the purpose of Gascoigne's teachings in the conduct book--is potentially to claim some measure of such social power for oneself.

The link between land and power, communicated through the mediating language of the hunt, is part of an old tradition. This tradition is reiterated in the popular discourse of early modern England--the hunting handbooks and husbandry manuals, as well as plays, poems and popular print--but it is also a precedent established in some of the oldest laws and charters as the legalist John Manwood explains in *A Treatise of the Lawes of the Forrest* (1615).

The auncient Lawes of this realme having always had a speciall regard to the continuall studies and care that Kings and princes have in great and weightie affaires of matters of Commonweale, for the good of their Subjects, whereby they are often times wearied with the toyle of the same...have given unto them divers royall prerogatives of most noble and princely pleasures to recreate themselves withal, to put away from them the remembrance of their laboursome toyle. Amongst which prerogatives, the royall prerogative of the libertie of a Forest is not the least: for, a Forest both is and hath beene always accounted a franchise of such noble and Princely pleasure, that it is not incident unto any subiect of this realme to have the same, but onely unto the Crowne and royall dignitie of a Prince. ¶4

Manwood, who had also served as a gamekeeper, justifies royal prerogative for exclusive access to hunting grounds by citing the weight of history, the lineage of kings, as well as the extremely "laboursome toyle" that such exalted figures must bear (J.H. Baker). The

nature of these forests set apart as places of pleasure is key because, in *Lavves of the Forest*, as in other sources, the fact and the import of ownership (or at least of access and control) is implicit. Princely labor, such as Theseus's, is in the mind, having to do with "weighty affaires" rather than actual heavy lifting. Princely pleasure is in the mind as well, but it is marked and mapped on the material world by means of exclusion. We may extrapolate that this process of exclusion is what is ancient and traditional, not merely the practice of elite sports. The production and maintenance of class difference centers on the preservation of restricted access to hunting, which in turn depends upon restricting access to hunting grounds. This is the nature of cultivating strategy: cultivation distinguishes by identifying both desirable and undesirable habits while at the same time creating insurmountable boundaries between the two. In addition, however, cultivation allows for the redefinition of desirable habits as undesirable. With hunting this is a simple process of linking *good* hunting with the practice of legally recognized groups in legally designated spaces.

In turn, *bad* hunting is eschewed through cultural taboo as well as through strict reinforcement of the "ancient" laws and customs that designated hunting space and access. In his 1609 proclamation against "Hunters, stealers and killers of Deare within any of the Kings Majesties Forrests, Chases or Parks," James invokes the very ancient laws Manwood describes in detail in an attempt to warn away unlawful hunters from his forests.

We had hoped, seeing it is notorious to all our Subjects, how greatly we delight in the exercise of Hunting, as well for our recreation, as for the necessary preservation of our health, that no man...would have offered us

offence in those our sports.... Gentlemen and persons of the better sort (who know best what becometh their duetie) have restrained their own humors and framed themselves therein to give us contentment: yet falleth it out notwithstanding, that neither the example of them, nor respect of the Lawes, nor duetie to us, hath had power to reforme the corrupt natures and insolent dispositions of some of the baser sort, and some other of a disordered life...Wee cannot interprete that the transgressions that are done therein do proceed, but either out of a barbarous and uncivil disposition, not fit to be suffered in an ordered Estate, or out of an insolent humor & unrespective to our person, no wayes to be endured...in this well ordered Kingdome, that cannot bridle so inordinate an humour. (*Stuart Proclamations 227-9*)

Hunters who make use of restricted areas are not pleasure-seekers but "stealers and killers of deere" who "attempt to offend with...licentiousnesse" and do so not out of a desire to better themselves through sophisticated and cultivating activities but "out of a barbarous and uncivil disposition...or out of an insolent humor." The affront in the tone of the proclamation suggests amazement that any would sink to such behavior. Nevertheless, the corrective message of the proclamation assumes a hierarchy of behaviors that begins with "Gentlemen and persons of the better sort (who know best what becometh their duetie)" and who "have restrained their owe humors," foregoing their own hunting for pleasure in these spaces in order to facilitate the king's recreation there. At the far end of the spectrum are the perpetrators who exhibit the "corrupt natures and insolent dispositions of some of the baser sort, and some other of a disordered life." It is implicit

here that these unfortunates are corrupt *because* they are base. They persist in disordered behavior, recreating themselves in a manner and within a space suited only to princes and, in doing so, show themselves to be base. The proclamation reveals a presupposition about who may hunt for recreation and where. This preexisting pattern of exclusion is assumed as customary.

The customary exclusion of base and subsistence hunters from the practice of hunting for self-improvement is reiterated here with great authority. The accepted method of enforcement is to place restrictions on access to spaces designated for hunting as cultivating strategy. These restrictions are enforced with the threat of physical violence, ostracization and even loss of national identity; the proclamation goes on to threaten the worst offenders with "Fine and imprisonment," exile, or even death. However, the existence of the proclamation itself--the need for this corrective--suggests that the green space of forest or chase is in fact a contested space. As I have suggested, the green space of the chase serves to determine the boundaries of the country estate and by extension the nation as culturally imagined. And it follows that within this boundary region or interstitial space, borders are in fact ill-defined, constantly under negotiation, just as welcome is never a done deal.

As I discuss at length in the second half of this chapter, in the New World there may in fact be no clear answer to questions such as who lays claim to land and with it power, and who is the guest and who the host. The answers to these kinds of questions are crucial, however, and must be determined if social relations between parties are to be made clear. As the authors of promotional literature about the New World show, in the

absence of such clarity, not only the uncertain power dynamics of the New World, but also the fault-lines of the domestic system of social differentiation are laid bare.

### **Entertainment in the Periphery**

The forms and gestures of country house entertainments traveled well and intact overseas. In the periphery entertainments, complex rituals consisting of a variety of activities including conversation, feasting, music, dancing, impromptu and scripted dramatic interludes, and hunting, are crucial in conveying welcome. The complexity of the ritual reflects the complexity of the intended (and unintended) messages welcome delivers. Entertainments contain messages of respect as well as threats of dominance, gestures that emphasize commonly held beliefs as well as defiant proclamations of cultural difference. "The voiage made by Sir Richard Grenville, for Sir Walter Raleigh, to Virginia, in the yeere 1585," for example, describes an encounter between two rival powers, the English and the Spanish, on Hispaniola. Here, banquetting, polite conversation, music, exchange of gifts and an invigorating hunt on horseback are all incorporated into a ceremony of welcome and hospitality.<sup>26</sup> The subtext of the meeting, however, is that of parley between two competing military and colonizing powers in the very theater where the contest waxed hottest.

While our English Generall and the Spanish Governour discoursed betwixt them of divers matters, as of the state of the Countrey, the multitude of the Townes and people, and the commodities of the Iland, our men provide two banquetting houses covered with greene boughes...and a sumptuous

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<sup>26</sup> The account was printed in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589). Grenville transported Ralph Lane and a group of colonists to Virginia in 1585, leaving from Plymouth in April and arriving in the largely Spanish-controlled Caribbean in May before sailing on to the English colony.

banquet was brought in served by us all in plate, with the sound of trumpets, and consort of musicke, wherwith the Spaniards were more then delighted.... The Spaniardes in recompence of our courtesie, caused a great heard of white buls, and kyne to be brought together from the mountaines, and appoynted for every Gentleman and Captaine that would ride, a horse ready saddled, and then singled out three of the best of them to bee hunted by horsemen after their maner, so that the pastime grewe very pleasant for the space of three houres...After this sport, many rare presents and gifts were given and bestowed on both parts. (Hakluyt 8: 314)<sup>27</sup>

By describing the general and governor "discoursing" about various topics including the successes of the Spaniards' colonizing efforts on Hispaniola and sharing in that bounty, the author of this account suggests that the English may (and should) someday be capable of hosting such an event in their own New World territories. The English offer of a banquet and music is "recompensed" by the Spanish hunt in a sort of battle for the title of best "courtesie." The peaceful meeting between two rival powers implies an agreement or concession that the Spanish have firm control of the island. However, there is also the suggestion that the two groups are competing, though subtly, to decide who is the guest here and who the host. In the English account, however, the forms of the entertainment and its meanings (however complex, multi-layered or contradictory) are familiar to all. Each major figure (the general and the governor) clearly represents a European nation, acting as an extension of that nation's policies, positions and customs. In such episodes,

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<sup>27</sup> Quinn identifies the Spanish general as Captain Rengifo de Angulo (*Roanoke Voyages* 163). Hakluyt's source for this episode was an anonymous journal written by someone traveling aboard Grenville's flagship, the *Tiger* (*Roanoke Voyages* 178, n. 4).

the social hierarchy is anything but static, and the outcome of the careful negotiation of participants' relative roles is not predetermined as it is in country house entertainments.

In other meetings, too, between English and native people in the Americas, the forms of welcome also appear familiar, at least to English chroniclers, while the meanings of welcome are in fact far from clear. While they are often inattentive to the diversity of native cultures in the vast area of North Eastern America, most often using the term "Indians" indiscriminately, authors of promotional literature are exacting in their descriptions of the gestures and activities that constituted face-to-face interactions between English colonists and tribes like the Algonquian of coastal New England and the Powhatans of the Mid-Atlantic.<sup>28</sup> In the de Bry engraving that illustrates the passage the "Arrival of the Englishmen" (Figure 4) in the 1590 edition of Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report*, an English ship approaches a Virginia shore.<sup>29</sup> In the image, the small English vessel has successfully passed through dangerous shallows where the wrecks of other ships are visible; its passengers look toward the small island of Roanoke, while one sailor at the prow holds up a cross. On the island, indigenous people engage in hunting, farming, and fishing, and a small raiding party faces off against a group of armed defenders. The image conveys a simple narrative about a series of unsuccessful

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<sup>28</sup> Mancall offers a concise introduction to interactions between English settlers and Native Americans throughout the early modern period.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Hariot traveled to Virginia in 1585, as part of Grenville's voyage. His short *Briefe and True Report* (1588), was first published to attract support for future voyages to Virginia. It was then reissued as part of Theodor de Bry's "Grand Voyages," accompanied by large engravings, based on the paintings of John White, for which Hariot wrote short captions like the passage above. Hariot's patron, Sir Walter Raleigh, supported his work as a scientist and mathematician. Hariot, in turn, used his skills to aid Sir Walter Raleigh in his colonial ventures. Critical attention to Hariot and of *A Briefe and True Report* has expanded, particularly in the wake of Greenblatt's influential essay "Invisible Bullets," first published in 1981. White provides a useful overview of scholarship on Hariot since Greenblatt, but see also Mary Campbell "Illustrated"; Hadfield "Thomas Harriot" and "Bruited Abroad"; Hamlin; and Stallybrass "Admiranda." De Bry's edition of *A Briefe and True Report*, originally published in French, German and Latin as well as English, has been made readily available to modern scholars and students in two facsimile editions: the 1972 facsimile reproduces the English edition, and a new facsimile from The Mariner's Museum with notes and critical essays reproduces the Latin edition.





Figure 4: "Arrival of the Englishmen," Hariot, Thomas. *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia*, 1590.

European attempts to reach land and make peaceful contact with the native people who have gone on with their pastoral lives, undisturbed by the voyages of exploration that are, for the English, a great national enterprise. Now that moment of successful contact is immanent.

Wee came vnto a Good bigg yland, the Inhabitante therof as soone as they saw vs began to make a great a horrible crye, as people which meuer befoer had seene men apparelled like vs, and camme a way makinge out crys like wild beasts or men out of their wyts. But beenge gentlye called backe, wee offred *them* of our wares, as glasses, kniues, babies, and other trifles, which wee thought they delighted in. Soe they stood still, and perceuinge our Good will and courtesie came fawninge vppon vs, and

bade us welcome. Then they brought vs to their village in the iland called, Roanoac, and vnto their Weroans or Prince, which entertained vs with Reasonable curtesie, although the wear amased at the first sight of vs. Suche was our arriuell into the parte of the world, which we call Virginia, the stature of bodee of wich people, theyre attire, and maneer of lyuinge, their feasts, and banketts, I will particullerlye déclare vnto yow. (Plate II)

The English "arrival" quickly becomes their "welcome" and "entertainment" by the Indians. This move refigures what might be understood as an English invasion or conquest of an existing society by presenting a positive reception, a welcome arrival, in a mode familiar from country house entertainments. The Indians' "amazement" is then written as the awe of the subject viewing an approaching monarch or lord. Contrasting this entertainment with the one recounted in "The voiage made by Sir Richard Grenville," the suggestion of a meeting of equals who are also rivals is missing. Here, the exchange of gifts is one-sided, from the English to the Indians, and the gifts themselves are not "rare presents" but "wares" and "trifles." In a more commercial transaction, gifts elicit welcome from an otherwise non-committal or hostile group. There is also the suggestion that this commercial exchange favors the English whose gifts are not as valuable as the welcome they receive.

Contradictions abound in this encounter, seemingly readable as "welcome." The Indians are both infantile, distracted and swayed by trifles, and hosts capable of "reasonalbe curtesie." This episode introduces an account, not of similarities between Indian and English culture, but of cultural differences in both manner of living and forms of entertainment (feasts and banquets). Communication would seem to be impossible

between these culturally disparate groups--the Indians greet the English with "crys" and antics the English describe as inarticulate, bestial, insane. Nevertheless, moments later, despite language barriers and other stark differences, the English respond with "calls" of their own. Next, miscommunication becomes clear agreement with the Indians "perceiving" English "courtesie" and returning their own with legible gestures such as "fawninge" and "bidding welcome."

Presenting a subjective interpretation of events as objective and authoritative, Hariot's account denies the possibility that this encounter between English and indigenous people might be anything other than amicable. This kind of translation, it should be understood, is a show of power. The move is familiar from country house entertainments, and involves the epistemic theft of agency. At Kenilworth, Cowdray, and Bisham and in the fictitious green world of Theseus's palace wood, an elite audience's "labor in the mind" robs working folk of even the capacity for social comment through the medium of theater. Instead unsophisticated performance is a performance of their inferiority and fealty whether or not they intend it to be. As Theseus describes it, even "silence" is a performance of subservience and devotion:

THESEUS. Where I have come, great clerks have purposèd  
 To greet me with premeditated welcomes;  
 Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
 Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
 Throttle their practiced accent in their fears,  
 And in conclusion dumbly have broken off,  
 Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,

Out of this silence yet I picked a welcome;  
 And in the modesty of fearful duty  
 I read as much as from the rattling tongue  
 Of saucy and audacious eloquence.  
 Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity  
 In least, speak most, to my capacity. (5.1.93-105)

The imaginative intent of subjects to offer a meaningful demonstration--premeditated welcome, purposed greeting, practiced accent--disappears in Theseus's explanation of these rituals.<sup>30</sup> Instead of a performance, he witnesses "no such thing," "nothing," a "mistake." Rather than a meaningful demonstration, it is the absence of performance, "what poor duty cannot do," that not only conveys but conveys best the love and loyalty of amateur actors. Essentially, as Theseus explains to a bewildered Hippolyta, these humble folks are incapable of acting, or of artistry in the presentation or cultivation of themselves. Instead, Theseus sees his own "capacity," his "might" reflected in their efforts--"The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing," the less they speak, the greater he is, as it were. The inability of Indians to demonstrate through speech or action, through custom, their capacity to imagine themselves as better men, is a common theme in the promotional literature. It is a key rhetorical strategy in supplying a readership of potential English investors, supporters, and settlers with a justification for cultivating what might otherwise be understood as Indian land.

*A relation or iournall of the beginning and proceedings of the English plantation settled at Plimoth in New England* (1622), also known as "Mourt's Relation," recounts the

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<sup>30</sup> Critics have long recognized in Theseus's brand of patronage, the implicit echo of Queen Elizabeth's monarchical power. Montrose calls Duke Theseus the Queen's "princely surrogate" ("Shaping Fantasies" 85).

story popularly known as the First Thanksgiving, perhaps the best-known instance of entertainment in New World promotional literature.<sup>31</sup> The "relations" collected in *A relation or iournall* chronicle, though selectively, the Plymouth colony's first year in a bid to attract additional settlers and support. In "A Letter Sent from New England," attributed to Edward Winslow, the vision we saw in the account of Grenville's reception on Hispaniola, of the English someday lavishly entertaining foreign guests in their own colonial territory, is realized (Heath xiii). In the language of country house entertainments, the First Thanksgiving episode may be read as the Indians' impromptu performance of fealty, thus supporting the idea of Plymouth plantation as an established country estate. On the other hand, the presence and magnanimity of Massassoyt, an Indian "king," also suggests that the colonists may in fact be no more than tenant farmers living and working at the Indian king's sufferance:

One harvest being gotten in, our Governour sent foure men on fowling, that so we might after a more speciall manner reioyce together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours ... at which time amongst *other* Recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the *Indians* comming amongst vs, and amongst the rest their greatest King *Massassoyt*, with some nintie men, whom for three dayes we entertained and feasted and they went out and killed fiue Deere, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governour, and vpon the Captaine, and others. (K3)

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<sup>31</sup> "Mourt's Relation" is so called in reference to the preface signed by a "G. Mourt"; Heath remains the definitive edition. Edward Winslow and William Bradford, founding members of the Plymouth colony, are thought to be the principal authors. Bradford's *Of Plimmoth Plantation*, a chronicle of the English experiences at Plymouth covering the years 1630-1646, has become a key historical document. Though *Of Plimmoth Plantation* has received a great deal of attention from literary critics (See for example, Laurence; Douglas Anderson; Burnham "Merchant"; and Donegan), it was not published until the nineteenth century.

The English settlers at Plymouth plantation plan festivities in celebration of their first successful harvest. The celebration then becomes an entertainment when they are joined by the Indians and their "monarch." The feasts, "recreations" and feats of arms serve to confirm not only that the settlers' land is bounteous and fit for agriculture, but also that the nearby Indian tribes are peaceful and perhaps even loyal or subservient. *A relation or journall* dwells on the suggestion that relations between the settlers and the local tribes are reliably peaceful. Winslow claims that, "We for our parts walke as peaceably and safely in the wood, as in the hiewayes in England, we entertaine them familiarly in our houses, and they as friendly bestowing their Venison on us" (K3).<sup>32</sup> In the passage above the idea of "entertainment" includes what is clearly a significant offer, a gift of game. As I discussed in the first half of this chapter, however, the gift of game is loaded in terms of negotiating social hierarchy. Readers are assured that the Indians are not hostile, but the author cannot confidently assert that the Indians' goodwill, their provision of game, is a gesture and not a necessity for the colonists' survival. The settlers' hard-won mastery over the land must be underwritten by the suggestion that the Indians acknowledge and support English claims to the land.

John Smith reverses this scenario in *A true relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia* (1608) when he is invited by a local king and plays the part of the visiting aristocrat himself.<sup>33</sup> Recalling the descriptions of

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<sup>32</sup> As governor of Plymouth colony William Bradford worked to maintain peaceful relations between the English and the neighboring tribes, particularly the Wampanoag. He reached a peace agreement with Massasoit, who controlled a large portion of the New England area. Bradford strongly encouraged the idea that land must be purchased from its Native American owners.

<sup>33</sup> Barbour's three volume collection is the definitive edition of John Smith's complete works. Kupperman's *Captain John Smith: A Select Edition*, offers a more manageable introduction to Smith, contextualizing his writings with commentary, history, biography, maps and organization by theme. Barbour notes that *A true relation*, a chronicle of the Jamestown colony's first year, was the first account of that colony to reach London (I.5). Based on a personal letter from Smith to a friend, it was edited and printed without his

Kenilworth in the accounts of the 1575 entertainments, Smith is ogled by the townsfolk as he approaches a country "seat" that is well situated with a grand prospect, outbuildings and game-filled parks.

The next day another King of that nation called Kekataugh, hauing receiued some kindnes of me at the Fort, kindly inuited me to feast at his house, the people from all places flocked to see me, each shewing to content me. By this the great King hath foure or fiue houses, each containing fourescore or an hundred foote in length, pleasantly seated vpon an high sandy hill, from whence you may see westerly a goodly low Country, the riuer before the which his crooked course causeth many great Marshes of excéeding good ground.... A pleasanter seat cannot be imagined: the King with fortie Bowmen to guard me, intreated me to discharge my Pistoll, which they there presented me with a mark at six score to strike therwith but to spoil the practise I broke the cocke, whereat they were much discontented though a chaunce [accident] supposed [pretended]. (C)

In this scenario, Smith is the royal guest, provided with an honor guard and met by the local potentate. However, Smith disrupts the planned entertainment, a contest of arms, by refusing to participate in the marksmanship exercises they have arranged. Smith's reading audience is privy to his ruse, pretending a misfire, so that the Indians' earnest ignorance provides entertainment in and of itself, like the men of Coventry's amateur theatrical. Smith's refusal to participate seems unnecessary, yet in the context of the

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knowledge or permission. This was probably the work of the Virginia Company, which hoped to quell rampant rumors of failure and disaster in the new colony (Barbour I.5). Spengemann situates *A true relation*, and promotional tracts more broadly, within the canon of early American literature.

country house or, here, colonial entertainment it is a crucial gesture, like Queen Elizabeth's tart reply to the Lady of the Lake that the lake is and always has been the Queen's own. And like Queen Elizabeth, in denying the Indians' request that he accept their hospitality by participating in their games Smith is also able to deny the claims their hospitality stakes to the "exceeding good ground" on which he stands.

### **Land and Difference**

Despite their transparency as advertisements for England's various New World projects, the pamphlets, reports and published accounts (promotional literature) that appeared in print in England beginning in the 1580s are clearly part of an ongoing dialogue about the nature and purpose of England's presence overseas and about colonial enterprise more generally. Many were conflicted about the prospect of usurping Indian lands. Authors of promotional literature discuss current events and trends in New England and Virginia, compare English experiences with those of other European powers present in the New World, and take note of the cultural differences between the English and the Native American tribes of the eastern seaboard. Authors variously extol, defend, or declaim the prospect and practice of claiming land that may belong to the Indians. Evolving policy on land ownership in the colonies and distinct differences between English and Native American ideas about property rights complicated matters still further.<sup>34</sup>

Robert Cushman's short treatise "Reasons and Considerations Touching the Lawfulness of Removing Out of England into the Parts of America," published in the

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<sup>34</sup> See Vaughn 110-14; and, for an extended treatment of English justifications, see Washburn; and Sokol and Sokol. For the evolution of English land law at home and overseas, see Pestana; Billings; and Konig.



1622 collection *A relation or iournall*, rehearses a major concern of would-be settlers: the right to claim and cultivate land in the New World.<sup>35</sup> Cushman reiterates what must have been, after over 20 years of English settlements in America, a familiar argument. Both the justification for "living in the heathens' country" and the incentive for "removing out of England into the parts of America" is that the land is empty, open, and uncultivated.

But some will say, what right have I to goe liue in the heathens countrie?...

This then is a sufficient reason to proue our going thither to liue, lawfull their land is spacious and void & there are few and doe but run ouer the grasse, as doe also the Foxes and wilde beasts: they are not industrious, neither haue art, science, skill or facultie to vse either the land or the commodities of it, but all spoiles, rots, and is marred for want of manuring, gathering, ordering, etc. (L2r-v)

Cushman's description of America's indigenous peoples effaces any claim they might have to the land by transforming Native American settlements and communities into roving herds of animals. "Running over the grass," the indigenous peoples leave not so much as a footprint to indicate that they have marked or "used" the land in any way. Cushman aims a vague critique at these ephemeral peoples, suggesting that they have rather "marred" the land through disuse and lack of industry.

Winslow voiced a similar complaint in "A Letter Sent from New England."<sup>36</sup>

Winslow was the son of a yeoman farmer who was successful, though not a gentleman, but an older brother stood to inherit the lands and estate. Winslow's vision speaks

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<sup>35</sup> Heath attributes this final chapter of "Mourt's relation" to Cushman (xi). Cushman was involved in the 1620 voyage of the *Mayflower* but did not travel with that group as Winslow and Bradford had. He visited the colony briefly in 1621. On Cushman's religious stance and writing see Foster.

<sup>36</sup> Heath attributes the letter, which is signed "E.W." to Edward Winslow (xiii).

volumes about the possibility that industry, rather than primogeniture, will best profit the potential settler.

The countrey wanteth onely industrious men to employ, for it would grieue your hearts (if as I) you had seene so many myles together by goodly Riuers vninhabited, and withall, to consider those parts of the world wherein you liue to be even greatly burthened with abundance of people. (K3v)

Winslow laments the emptiness of the American landscape, which might be bustling with activity and production. The lack is particularly keenly felt when Winslow recalls for the reader of this open letter the overcrowding and scarcity still prevalent in England.

Winslow and other authors of promotional literature superimposed a future population of busily employed English settlers onto visions of the vast, untapped abundance of the American wilderness. They offered this vision along with other arguments as to why it was acceptable to claim and cultivate land that supported another community and another way of life.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the curiosity aroused in England by descriptions of the Indians, authors such as Winslow, Cushman and others suggest that the land is unoccupied at least relative to an overcrowded in England. Claims such as these, of an open, empty, and uninhabited landscape communicate a more subtle message as well: a large and unoccupied space is also an accessible one, available for purchase or claim, for settlement and cultivation.

The fantasy of a freely attainable country estate in the New World is implicit, here, reiterating a common theme of the promotional rhetoric.

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<sup>37</sup> Seed examines the ways in which English settlers claimed land in the New World by imposing culturally-specific changes on the landscape such as fences and gardens. For more on English and Native American agricultural practices see especially Cronon; Virginia Anderson; and Cowan.

To underscore this fantasy of access, authors describe the native population as a welcoming rather than a challenging or competing group as in Robert Johnson's *Nova Britannia* (1609): "They are generally very louing and gentle, and doe entertaine and relieue our people with great kindnesse" (Johnson B4v). This familiar move places Native Americans in a position of subservience, just as with the working folk of country house entertainments. In turn, the guests, the English settlers, are obliged to accept the (imagined) proffered welcome. Authors acknowledge welcome as an appropriate gesture, indicative of Native Americans' willingness to be ruled as well as their actual need for guidance and protection. Francis Higginson affirms, indirectly, that the Indians do not and *cannot* (are unable to) "possesse" or "make vse of" the land.<sup>38</sup>

The *Indians* are not able to make vse of the one fourth part of the Land, neither haue they any setled places, as Townes to dwell in, nor any ground as they challenge for their owne possession, but change their habitation from place to place.... They doe generally professe to like well of our comming and planting here; partly because there is abundance of ground that they cannot possesse nor make vse of, and partly because our being heere will bee a meanes both of reliefe to them when they want. (*Nevv-Englands plantation* C3v-C4).

Higginson's note is more than an observation, it is a devastating comment on the fitness of Indians as a group to own land and, by extension, on the value of their cultural capital.

Debates over Indian claims to the land center on an understanding that there is a universally applicable measure of the proper (virtuous) use of land, highlighting

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<sup>38</sup> Higginson, a minister with the Massachusetts Bay Company, wrote *Nevv-Englands plantation* after his arrival in New England in 1629, it was printed in 1630. For more on Higginson, see Gildrie.

agricultural cultivation but dwelling on the subject of hunting as either a complement or counterpoint to good husbandry. Those who fail to succeed on this scale, whether English or Indian, may be deemed less than virtuous or, certainly, less than deserving of land or the privileges that come with land ownership. In essence these debates over property rights come down to a debate over the nature and character of the Indians as a group. Some authors affirm that Indians are capable and willing to be improved: "They are easie to be brought to good, and would fayne embrace a better condition" (Johnson B4v).<sup>39</sup> Other authors identify deficiencies in the Indians as a group. They argue that upward mobility is impossible for a group of people who share a common, negative, but amorphous trait. The stigma these authors discuss ranges in nature from incivility to outright savagery to simple laziness.

The most common claims made to support the general stigma of uncultivatableness by authors of promotional literature, were that Indians were bestial, in the best and worst senses, and might be tamed but never civilized, or that they were incurably idle. Cushman describes the Indians as animals, "There are few and doe but run ouer the grasse, as doe also the Foxes and wilde beasts," to support English usurpation of their land. Johnson is even more expressive:

It is inhabited with wild and sauage people, that liue and lie vp and downe in troupes, like heardes of Deare in a Forrest: they haue no law but nature, their apparell skinned of beasts, but most goe naked: the better sort haue houses, but poore ones, they haue no Arte nor Science. (B4r-v)

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<sup>39</sup> Many authors, like Cushman, lent support to the popular notion that improving the Indians was a central objective of English settlement, supporting a program of religious conversion: "It seemeth vnto me that we ought also to endeouour and vse the meanes to conuert them, and the meanes cannot be vsed vnlesse we goe to them or they come to vs: to vs they cannot come, our land is full: to them we may goe, their land is emptie" (L2v).

In Johnson's description, Indians are likened to animals, living, moving, and even dressed (or undressed) to appear like animals. By likening Indians to specifically nomadic rather than territorial animals, he reinforces the notion that they are unable or disinclined to claim land as their own. In addition, for Johnson as well as Cushman, Indians are like animals and, more specifically, like game animals: foxes and deer. With this move, Indians become less like rivals for land ownership and more like the livestock of great country estates, things to be cultivated by the husbandman (as he cultivates himself) rather than beings capable of self-improvement. The object of this kind of crude ethnography is not to suggest that Indians as a group should or must be improved. Instead, the suggestion is that English settlers will be able to bring the countryside and its bestial inhabitants under their care and supervision in the way a genteel landlord cares for his livestock, lands, servants, and tenants.

The fantasy of the New World as a country estate awaiting its genteel landlord, discussed in Chapter One, includes a vision of forest game. Raleigh paints this image in *The discoverie of the large, rich, and bevvtiful empire of Guiana* (1596):

Beyond [the town of Tuteritona in Tarracoa province] lyeth another towne towards the south in the valley of *Amariocapana*, which beareth the name of the said valley, whose plaines stretch themselues some 60. miles in leugh, east and west, as fayre ground, and as beawtifull fieldes, as any man hath euer seene, with diuers copsies scatered heere and there by the riuers fule, and all as full of deare, as any forrest or parke in England (Mv)

Raleigh's vision is of a spontaneous country estate stocked with deer.<sup>40</sup> Implicitly this vision extends into a pleasant future in which Raleigh and other colonists live like country squires, hunting, fowling and fishing at their leisure. And leisure is the order of the day in these and other passages from promotional literature, where the bounty of the New World country estate does not seem to require industry or husbandry. In these passages, the bounty of the landscape and the countryside as chase is ample while the inhibiting presence of the Native Americans is eliminated. The lifestyle advertised is one of pleasure and recreation. As I will discuss, however, the specter of hunting as subsistence living--a practice associated with poor folk as well as with Native Americans--haunts the promotional literature. In it, both Indian and English efforts to win a living from the land are valorized, and expert hunting is (sometimes unwittingly) prized as both a cultivated skill and as a survival technique.

### **Princely Pleasures**

The authors of promotional literature agree that there is good hunting to be found in the New World, and they have no qualms about advertising this hunting as "sport" "delight" and "pleasure" as well as "necessary use." A frequent gesture authors use is to describe the hunting available in the New World by comparing it to that in England. Sir George Peckham, in his *A true reporte, of the late discoveries, and possession...of the*

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<sup>40</sup> Authors enumerate the natural bounty at great length. See for example John Brereton's *Briefe and True Relation of...Virginia* (1602): "The ground bringeth forth, without industrie, Pease, Roses, Orapes, Hempe, besides other plants, fruits, herbs and flowers.... Beasts of many kindes; some of the bignesse of an Ore, whose hides make good buffe: Deere, both red and of other sorts in abundance.... Fowles both of the water and land, infinit store and varietie; Hawks both short and long winged, Partridges in abundance, which are verie great, and easily taken" (B4v-C).

*new-found landes: by...Sir Humfrey Gilbert* (1583), and others imagine a wilderness tamed by skilled huntsmen, falconers, anglers.

For such as take delight in hunting, there are Stagges, Wild Bores, Foxes, Hares, Conneys, Badgers, Otters, & diuers other such like for pleasure.

Also for such as haue delight in Hawking, there are Hawkes of sundry kindes, and great store of game, both for Land and Riuer, as Fezaunts, Partridges, Cranes, Heronshawes, Duckes Mallardes, and such like.

(Peckham E4)

This is a fantasy, but a very powerful one, and one that appears frequently in promotional and descriptive literature about the New World. Peckham's list includes animals--such as stags, partridges and pheasants--that would have been off limits to most hunters in England, animals that were legal game only for those above a certain rank (Hill 100). In the New World, however, hawks abound, needing only to be trained, and wildfowl and deer are to be found everywhere, available to everyone. This fantasy is often substantiated by references to the success and contentment enjoyed by Native American hunters whose familiarity with the landscape and established culture there prove that successful habitation in the New World is possible. As William Wood notes in *New englands prospect* (1634) with a mixture of pity and admiration, "They have no swift foote Grayhounds, to let slippe at the sight of the Deere, no deepe mouthed hounds, or senting beagles, to finde out their desired prey; themselves are all this" (M4v). Despite oft-noted deficiencies (inferior crafts, lack of edged tools and weapons, an uneducated and immoral state) authors of promotional literature could not help but praise Native American prowess.

The expertise of native hunters is undisputed, their mastery clearly admired and feared as it is in Alexander Whitaker's *Good newves from Virginia* (1613).

I suppose the world hath no better...marke-men with their bow and arrowes then they be; they will kill birds flying, fishes swimming, and beasts running: they shoote also with meruailous strength, they shot one of our men being vnarmed quite through the bodie, and nailed both his armes to his bodie with one arrow: one of their Children also, about the age of 12. or 13. yeares, killed a bird with his arrow in my sight. (G3)

Whitaker warns against any English complacency which would assume the “idle” Indians to be flabby and ineffectual. Their skill, though characterized as skill in sport rather than work, is nevertheless quite formidable. In many promotional texts, such as Hariot's *Brief and True Report*, native groups like the Algonquian are praised for their tastefully sedate and bucolic life. Hunting fits seamlessly into this vision of the contemplative country life. Detailed descriptions of Indian methods and customs for hunting come close to those of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth or a lord at his country estate. In Smith's *The Description of Virginia*, which appeared in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, he acknowledges that a kind of conduct system is in effect in which hunting prowess earns Indian men the respect of peers and admiration of women.<sup>41</sup>

At their huntings they leave their habitations and reduce themselves into companies.... When they come to the place of exercise, every man doth his best to shew his dexteritie, for by their excelling in those qualities, they get their wives. Forty yards will they shoote leuell, or very neere the

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<sup>41</sup> Purchas's source for this work may have been Smith's notes, a now-lost manuscript, or perhaps his *A Map of Virginia* (1612), which has many similar passages (Pennington 456).



marke, and one hundred and twenty is their best at random.... In one of these huntings they found Captaine Smith, in the discovery of the head of the River of Chickahamania, where they slew his men, and tooke him prisoner in a Bogmire, where he saw those exercises and gathered theses observations. (Purchas XVIII 443-4)

Smith has the Indians "removing" to the country like a genteel English hunting party, but he also transforms the skilled hunters into mere trained "blood hounds." Such ambivalence is common, with Indian hunters alternately represented as bestial and noble.

As with Whitaker's wary praise of Indian marksmanship, however, the use of bow and arrow for hunting is always also associated with military prowess, with war. At the end of the passage from *Description of Virginia*, above, a hunting expedition transforms into an episode of direct confrontation. Smith, who had been out hunting and exploring with a small English party, is taken captive by an Indian hunting party. The last scene is an important one, actually pictured as one of Smith's most famous adventures in the New World in an engraving by Robert Vaughn included in *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624) (Figure 5). At the top of the small panel C.S. (Captain Smith) is being dragged away by two men. Finally, Smith himself is the game, swallowed whole by an alternate, alien conduct system in which the meanings of hunting or capture seem familiar but are ultimately uncertain. In the same panel, however, a second story unfolds in which the action seems to push back against the captivity narrative above. Here Smith has done the capturing with a "salvage" bound to his arm for protection. He stands alone against a large party of armed and attacking Indians. Three of his opponents lie dead, their bows fallen to the ground while the puff of smoke from Smith's musket billows out to touch the



Figure 5: detail, engraving Robert Vaughan, *The Generall Historie of Virginia*.

tip of a fourth man's nocked arrow.

This small panel reflects a conflict not only of arms but also of representational strategies; what's at stake is more than Captain Smith's life or legend: it is the land itself. Represented here by a crudely drawn river, stand of trees, grass tuft and flowering shrub, the land is actually the main character in this and so many other episodes in promotional literature. Smith ventures into an unfamiliar area outside Jamestown looking for game and other resources only to meet competing claimants for those resources face to face. The punishments threatened in James I's proclamation against abusers of the king's forests are also, it seems, in effect here. It is unclear, however, who are the "stealers of deer" and who the legitimate hunters. The prominence the authors of promotional literature give to such episodes of hunting indicates that, for English readers, hunting would be a key ideological ground on which to negotiate English claims to land in the New World.

Despite the emphasis on the New World countryside as a retreat for pleasure-seekers, bounteous without the necessity of difficult agricultural labor, Indians are criticized for their "idleness," their neglect of good husbandry, and their abuse of hunting as a leisure activity: "The Men for the most part liue idley, they doe nothing but hunt and fish: their wiues set their Corne and doe all their other worke" (Higginson C4). Authors of promotional literature regularly claim that Indian men are not industrious, lacking either the will or the capacity for productivity. In these passages authors question the right and ability of Indians to claim the land for themselves. This kind of censure involves the same rhetorical strategies employed in domestic texts, such as James I's proclamation, to rewrite subsistence hunting as an illicit or idle activity. In domestic texts idleness is linked rhetorically to "base breeding," a "baser sort" of people, in order to justify the legal and physical barriers necessary to restrict their access to certain key spaces, such as chases. In promotional literature, too, outdoor recreation is available as a cultivating strategy but only to a select few, for it is not merely the physical labor of husbanding the land, but also the intellectual capacity and curiosity to make the most or best use of it that indicates a right to the claim and use land. This sliding scale ranks Indians' recreational activities, as well as their labors decidedly below those of the arriving English settlers.

However, discursive slippage within the promotional literature reveals a lingering admiration for the Indians' ability and even their drive to cultivate the land for their own use as in Thomas Morton's *New English Canaan* (1637):

The Salvages are accustomed, to set fire of the Country in all places where they come; and to burne it, twize a yeare, vixe at the Spring, and the fall of

the leafe. The reason that mooves them to doe so, is because it would other wise be so overgrowne with underweedes, that it would be all a coppice wood, and the people would not be able to passé throught the Country out of a beaten path (G2v)

Morton, a political opponent of William Bradford and the Plymouth colony, founded a separate, more commercially-oriented colony at Mount Wollasten.<sup>42</sup> In *New English Canaan* he offers more unvarnished praise of Native Americans than other authors of promotional literature. Here, he describes a comprehensive, planned, seasonal program of cultivation.<sup>43</sup> The continuous efforts of the "Salvages" to make the country "passable" are designed to make the land more suitable for their own pursuits, but the practice pleases the English colonists as well: "And by that meanes the trees growe here, and there as in our parks: and makes the Country very beautifull, and commodious" (Morton G3v). In praising the Indians' efforts at cultivation, Morton draws on what is most familiar to him. With the example of manicured English parks, he draws a parallel between English and Indian customs as they relate to the land.

In addition, chroniclers regularly acknowledge not only the Indian facility for hunting but their genuine pleasure in hunting, effectively an acknowledgement that Indian people hunt not only for food, but also as a leisure activity. Just as authors note Indian delight in hunting, they also note their sorrow in the loss of game. As William

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<sup>42</sup> Morton's *New English Canaan* offers a lively counterpoint to the sober accounts of Bradford and others. For recent work on Morton, see Burnham "Land."

<sup>43</sup> See also Wood: "And whereas it is generally conceived, that the woods grow so thicke, that there is no more cleare ground than is hewed out by labour of man; it is nothing so; in many places, divers Acres being cleare, so that one may ride a hunting in most places of the land, if he will venture himselfe for being lost: there is no underwood saving in swamps, and low grounds that are wet...it being the custome of the *Indians* to burne the wood in *November*, when the grasse is withered, and leaves dryed, it consumes all the underwood, and rubbish, which otherwise would over grow the Country, making it unpassable, and spoyling their much affected hunting" (C2).

Wood pointed out, "It grieves them more to see an *English* man take one Deere, than a thousand Acres of land" (M4v). Even more tellingly, however, authors underscore the importance of hunting to Indian cultures by demonstrating that Indians see a close relationship between claims to game, such as deer, and claims to the land.

Euery *Sachim* knoweth how farre the bounds and limits of his owne Countrey extendeth, and that is his owne proper inheritance, out of that if any of his men desire land to set their corne, hee giueth them as much as they can vse, and sets them their bounds. In this circuit whosoever hunteth, if they kill any venison, bring him his fee, which is the fore parts of the same, if it be killed on the land, but if in the water, then the skin thereof: The great *Sachims* or Kings, know their owne bounds or limits of land, as well as the rest. (Winslow I)

Edward Winslow's ethnographic commentary in *Good newves from New-England* (1624) is also a warning that the meaning hunting has for the Indians may be different than the meaning it has for the English, but it is no less filled with import, especially in its relationship to the land.

In order to offer the possibility of upward social mobility in the New World to a wide readership, the authors of promotional literature attempt to restrict (rhetorically) the Indians' access to the pursuit of hunting as virtuous, self-improving behavior. Promotional literature proceeds not by effacing indigenous hunting, but by refiguring it as base, rather than a princely activity. This strategy, however, produces a new set of problems by creating leisure activities, especially sport, as a new site of potential sociopolitical conflict.

## Dull Labors

The image discussed above of Europeans hunting, hawking, fowling, and fishing in a plentiful landscape stocked with game (Figure 3) illustrates a short passage in de Bry's *Americae Pars Decima* (1618), which recounts the navigations of Amerigo Vespucci as well as the narratives of Ralph Hamor and John Smith (Bucher 185). The passage is headed with various titles in the several editions. The passage describes the "amusements" or "entertainments" available for an elite group variously described as "equestrians" "nobles" and "gentlemen." In the image, Old World hunters, fully equipped with guns and fishing rods as well as horses, hounds, and hawks, are enjoying the teeming wildlife of the New World. The folio volume appeared in German in 1618 and in Latin in 1619, and the text for the passage appears to have been adapted from John Smith's 1616 promotional pamphlet, *Description of New England*.<sup>44</sup> However, the de Bry text in both languages robs Smith's prose of its bite.<sup>45</sup> While the de Bry versions merely catalog the kinds and delights of hunting for gentlefolk in the New World, Smith draws attention to the idea of hunting as a performance of wealth and class. He advertises the New World as a place to attain such status by those means while at the same time suggesting the absurdity of such a system.

For Gentlemen, (Note: imployments for gentlemen) what exercise should  
more delight them, then ranging dayly those vnknowne parts, vsing

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<sup>44</sup> *Description* recounts Smith's experiences on two voyages to New England, one in 1614, and another unsuccessful attempt in 1615.

<sup>45</sup> Van Groesen offers an insightful and important corrective to current scholarship on the de Bry collection of Voyages. As he argues, despite the common view that the collection espoused a "Protestant iconography" of the New World, the de Brys' business savvy led them to make subtle adjustments in the images and texts of German editions, aimed at a Protestant readership, and Latin editions, aimed at Catholic readers. In this way they were able to avoid censorship, keep from offending rival groups and continue to increase sales of the large and expensive volumes in the Voyages collection throughout Europe.

fowling and fishing, for hunting and hauking? and yet you shall see the wilde haukes giue you some pleasure, in seeing them stoope (six or seauen after one another) an houre or two together, at the skuls of fish in the faire harbours, as those a-shore at a foule; and neuer trouble nor torment your selues, with watching, mewing, feeding, and attending them: nor kill horse and man with running & crying, *See you not a hawk?* For hunting also: the woods, lakes, and riuers, affoord not onely chase sufficient, for any that delights in that kinde of toyle, or pleasure; but such beasts to hunt, that besides the delicacy of their bodies for food, their skins are so rich, as may well recompence thy dayly labour, with a Captains pay. (Smith, *A Description* F4)

For Smith the word is not amusements but "employments" with its broader connotation of work as well as pastime. Smith, who claims a versatile identity--"I haue not beene so ill bred, but I haue tasted of *Plenty* and Pleasure as well as Want and Miserie"--takes care to address the aspects of life in New England that may appeal respectively to gentlemen, middling and poorer sorts (*Description* F2v). For the benefit of his gentle readers Smith compares the pleasures of hawking in New England—a relatively carefree enterprise—with the more troublesome practice in England. In doing so, however, he also suggests a reordering of the system.

Hawking, like hunting, was a sport for princes and aspirants, but few could afford the cost of keeping servants qualified to care for, train and fly the hawks.<sup>46</sup> The sport was popular, but far less practical than hunting. The skills involved in hawking were not

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<sup>46</sup> Game laws also restricted the practice for common folk. Grassby provides a useful overview of the sport and its connotations in the early modern period.

applicable in war, there were many more effective methods for catching game, and the valuable birds themselves were often lost in the field (Grassby 48, 62). Thus, on closer examination Smith delivers a subtle critique of hawking and its aficionados. His description of a frantic falconer stopping passersby to ask "Have you seen my hawk?" is meant to seem a bit absurd. He acknowledges the wear and tear of a gentleman's pleasure on those who serve him, "horse and man," that hawking is both a "kind of toyle" and "pleasure." His suggestion seems to be that one might give up hawking altogether and simply enjoy the sight of nature at work. He makes sure to point out, also, that hunters may do more than pass the time, they might also make a good profit.

Smith's plentiful New World landscape offers more than "chase sufficient" to delight a landed gentleman, but also a resource that can be appreciated by an upwardly mobile sort, perhaps a Captain like himself. In Smith's subtle proposition the landscape may be mastered and owned by he who uses it best, most industriously or productively. He suggests that pleasure may be had in the New World but that good hunting is also hard work and that honest labor may be the truly noble pastime, that the measure of the virtue of such efforts may be quantifiable and not merely qualitative. In this sense, Smith suggests an alternative to the prevailing conduct system. By adventuring to the New World one may recreate like a gentleman, live like a king, not by emulating their behavior but by imagining a social structure, a set of values that reflects a social hierarchy based on labor time rather than access to land, education, and favor. Smith critiques the gentleman who rests on his laurels, enjoying the status associated with pastimes like hawking that require others to labor without recognition. Smith asks his readers to labor in their minds and with their bodies if they wish to move up in the world.



Smith is not alone in this modified message about conduct and class. William Crashaw and Alexander Whitaker also admonish those who would avoid New World settlement or dissuade others from investing because settlement requires hard work and offers few amenities.<sup>47</sup> Both men invoke a similar litany of supposedly genteel and worthwhile pastimes as unseemly, un-Christian and un-English.

Doe we purpose to attempt and atchieue, to begin and to perfect any noble exploite, in such fashion of life as wee liue in *England*? Let vs not deceiue our selues. Stately houses, costly apparell, rich furniture, soft beds, daintie fare, dalliance and pleasures, huntings and horse-races, sports and pastimes, feasts and banquets are not the meanes whereby *our forefathers* conquered kingdomes, subdued their enemies, conuerted heathen, ciuillized the Barbarians, and fetled their common-wealths (Crashaw, *A sermon preached in London before the right honorable the Lord Lavvarre* F4)

The Prodigall men of our land make hast to fling away Gods treasures, as a greuous burthen which they desire to be eased of. Some make no scruple at it, to spend yearely an hundred pounds, two, three, fiue hundred, and much more about dogs, haukes and hounds and such sports; which will not giue fiue hundred pence to the releefe of Gods poore members....

Are not these miserable people heere better then hawks, hounds, whores

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<sup>47</sup> William Crashaw, or Crashawe, was a Yorkshire preacher with an avid interest in colonization. He possessed a library of works on cosmology as well as two globes. His farewell sermon preached on the occasion of Lord De La Warre's departure for the New World (1610) is well-known, but he also invested in the company personally. Crashaw also wrote the preface to Alexander Whitaker's published letter *Good News from Virginia* (1613). On Crashaw's life and work see especially Porter and Fisher. Clergyman Alexander Whitaker traveled to Virginia in 1611 and settled in Henrico. He was particularly interested in the native religion of the Powhatan Indians and their conversion to Christianity. On Whitaker, see Porter; and Littleton.

and the like? (Whitaker G3r-v)

While some authors advertise the New World as a sportsman's paradise, others offer it as a curative for overindulgence in sports. Both Whitaker and Crashaw cite hunting, alongside other expensive, amoral or frivolous activities, as habits men should not pursue instead of or at the expense of honest labor and good works. This second attitude toward Englishmen's labor and leisure favors not *cultus animi* (the tilling of one's own mind) but instead harvesting the "fruits of one's own labor" as the epitome of good and productive behavior. Genteel but useless folk are disparaged as are their sporting pastimes. The first chapter discussed the censure of sport pursued to excess in favor of husbandry for landed gentlemen. Now English plantation, too, an enterprise rather than one single estate, is a national duty. The notion that recreation for the mind trumps humble labor presents an obstacle to the success of that mission, since a colony's survival depends upon its members' willingness to labor.

Smith, who describes himself as a kind of hybrid man, both cultivated and hard-handed, employs a double-speak aimed at those who receive short shrift in the culture of conduct, men and women who work hard but are not upwardly mobile, people whose work instead enables the upward mobility of others. In *Description of New England*, he evokes a country estate for the common man where cultural capital is still available for free or at low cost: "Heer nature and liberty affords vs that freely, which in *England* we want, or it costeth vs dearely" (F3v). Smith is very much aware of the operations of the conduct system within a capitalist society. He offers the opportunity to take advantage rather than be taken advantage of.

What pleasure can be more, then (being tired with any occasion a-shore)

in planting Vines, Fruits, or Hearbs, in contriuing their owne Grounds, to the pleasure of their owne mindes, their Fields, Gardens, Orchards, Buildings, Ships, and other works, &c. to recreate themselues before their owne doores, in their owne boates vpon the Sea, where man woman and childe, with a small hooke and line, by angling, may take diuerse sorts of excellent fish, at their pleasures? And is it not pretty sport, to pull vp two pence, six pence, and twelue pence, as fast as you can hale and veare a line?... Thus, though all men be not fishers: yet all men, whatsoever, may in other matters doe as well. (*Description* F3v-F4)

Boldly, Smith draws attention to the inequality of access inherent in the conduct system, a system that is familiar to all and oppressive for many. Smith extends the offer of a new kind of cultivating strategy to men as well as women and children. Smith affirms that sports such as angling or fishing, a newly *au courant* pastime for gentlemen in England, is both pleasurable and profitable. This profitable pleasure, in addition, is icing on the cake. Smith is cognizant of the significance of "contriving" or laboring and "recreating" oneself not just any place but on one's "owne Grounds" and outside one's "owne doores." Disguising it as a humble and good-hearted aspiration, Smith manages to offer the fantasy of the New World country estate to any one and everyone with the imagination and will to make it happen. His veiled but subversive maxim, "Though all men be not fishers: yet all men may doe as well," states defiantly that cultivation and its rewards should be available to all. He acknowledges, however, that it is much easier to make this idea a reality in a place where each man's skills are so necessary to the success of all that the value of each man's labor is finally equal.

## Conclusion

Smith reorders the exclusive Old World codes of conduct, producing a New World husbandman with a gentleman's taste and working man's determination to survive. The need to exclude does not disappear from those codes, however, and authors of promotional literature continue to identify Indians as both unfit and incapable of improving themselves. After the massacre of 1622 the tenor of New World promotional literature reflects much less ambivalence in attitudes about Native American customs, relative civility, and rights to the land. Virginia Company secretary Edward Waterhouse turns disaster into propaganda in his promotional pamphlet, *A declaration of the state of the colony and affaires in Virginia With a relation of the barbarous massacre*, published the same year.

We, who hitherto haue had possession of no more ground then their waste, and our purchase at a valuable consideration to their owne contentment, gained; may now by right of Warre, and law of Nations, inuade the Country, and destroy them who sought to destroy vs: whereby wee shall enjoy their cultiuated places, turning the laborious Mattocke into the victorious Sword (wherein there is more both ease, benefit, and glory) and possessing the fruits of others labours. Now their cleared grounds in all their villages (which are situate in the fruitfulest places of the land) shall be inhabited by vs, whereas heretofore the grubbing of woods was the greatest labour. (D3v)

Waterhouse reverses the traditional metaphor (swords into ploughshares). Nevertheless, he envisions this process of colonization in which the English will "invade" the country, "destroy" the inhabitants, and "enjoy" the newly unoccupied land, as a program of good husbandry and fruitful industry. In this scenario the impediment to English cultivation of self and land is the Indian presence, occupancy and, yes, cultivation of the land. In Waterhouse's treatise the fact is laid bare that English and Indian notions of cultivation are competing, just as the two groups are competing for limited space and resources.

Here, the fantasy of endless bounty is replaced by a more pragmatic vision in which even "great labor" in the cultivation of land is wasted on the wrong locale and, in a devastating turn, the act of cultivation is wasted on the wrong group of people. In addition, the acquisition of others' land and, with it, the "fruits of others labors" becomes an openly acknowledged and clearly positive element of the good husbandry as cultivating strategy. This confident assertion, again, hinges upon the redefinition of Indian custom or nature as savagery. Waterhouse is scathing in his dismissal of even the possibility of Indian cultivation: their land can easily be cultivated and to much more plentiful ends while they themselves are beyond the hope of cultivation.

The way of conquering them is much more easie then of ciuilizing them by faire meanes, for they are a rude, barbarous, and naked people, scattered in small companies, which are helps to Victorie, but hinderances to Ciuilitie: Besides that, a conquest may be of many, and at once; but ciuility is in particular, and slow, the effect of long time, and great industry. (D4v)

He reprimands those who would argue for a more humanitarian or perhaps Christian approach to developing both the New World land and its inhabitants. Indians are not suited to the system of conduct the English live by. Their very culture or nature inhibits the acquisition of better behaviors because self-cultivation requires hard work over a long period of time. He suggests Indians are incapable of accomplishing this themselves and undeserving of English aid.

Despite having openly coveted the fruits of Indian labors, particularly their fertile and cleared lands, one of Waterhouse's main justifications for the appropriation of Indian land is their inadequate custodianship of the land. In particular he claims that the Indians have mismanaged the natural or wild livestock by hunting (as well as fishing and fowling) imprudently.

Those commodities which the Indians enjoyed as much or rather more than we, shall now also be entirely possessed by vs. The Deere and other beasts will be in safety, and infinitely increase, which heretofore not onely in the generall huntings of the King (whereat foure or fiue hundred Deerc were vsually slaine) but by each particular Indian were destroyed at all times of the yeare, without any difference of Male, Damme, or Young. The like may be said of our owne Swine and Goats, whereof they haue used to kill eight in tenne more then the English haue done. There will be also a great increase of wild Turkies, and other waighty Fowle, for the Indians neuer put difference of destroying the Hen, but kill them whether in season or not, whether in breeding time, or sitting on their egges, or hauing new hatched, it is all one to them: whereby, as also by the orderly

using of their fishing Weares, no knowne Country in the world will so plentifully abound in victuall. (D4r-v)

In Waterhouse's *Declaration* the language of hunting, interpersonal violence, and agricultural neglect overlap. Indian savagery is linked with martial violence and bad hunting practices, but also with inadequacy in custodianship of the land. The perceived inability or unwillingness of the Indians to use the land to better themselves while bettering the land (rather than leaving it idle) is used to condemn them as savages and non-entities in the bid for laying claim to the land itself.

Hunting appears again in the solution Waterhouse offers to this state of affairs. He proposes hunting as the place to strike hardest, starving the Indians by preventing their hunting and, in a deadly serious turn, hunting the Indians themselves as game.

Victorie of them may bee gained many waies; by force, by surprize, by famine...by assailing them in their huntings, whereby they get the greatest part of their sustenance in Winter, by pursuing and chasing them with our horses, and blood-Hounds to draw after them, and Mastiues to teare them, which take this naked, tanned, deformed Sauages, for no other then wild beasts, and are so fierce and fell vpon them, that they feare them worse then their old Deuill which they worship, supposing them to be a new and worse kinde of Deuils then their owne. (D4v)

This rhetorical maneuver draws on the implicit connections between sport, competition and physical violence. Waterhouse at once elevates and denigrates Indian hunting practices, suggesting that the area in which they show the greatest confidence is the area in which they should be defeated. English settlers must master Indian hunting techniques

by chasing down the Indians themselves relentlessly, through all seasons, sparing no one and thus hunting them to extinction. This backhanded praise is even more telling than the idea of competing cultivation programs; here pleasure through hunting and intercultural violence are equated. The Indians themselves, now fair game, are openly acknowledged as part and parcel of the New World bounty advertised in more florid terms by other authors.

Waterhouse's wholesale disparagement excludes Indians from the English national project of cultivation (the New World colonies), by excluding them from the crucial cultivating project of self-improvement. As the texts examined in this chapter--from country house entertainments to New World promotional literature--demonstrate, the belief in mutable identity is in fact underwritten by a process of appropriation. Discursively, the possibility of upward social mobility for a few is ensured through the production of a class of subservient people who are marked as immutably low, incapable of and uninterested in upward mobility through modifying behavior (cultivating strategies). Materially, this process entails the creation of elite leisure time through the increase of working-class labor time.

The appropriation of labor is also a process of racial marking, however. Following the introduction of cultural others into a domestic system of conduct, early modern English people would eventually come to imagine a scenario in which they might best attain the status of estate managers proper in the New World by actually creating an underclass of laboring, immutably deficient others. In a 1645 letter to his brother-in-law, John Winthrop, New England settler Emanuel Downing proposes a solution to the



problem of supplying the manual laborer necessary for the colony to thrive.<sup>48</sup> By exchanging captured Indians for African slaves, he suggests, the English colonists will acquire a permanent workforce incapable of--because they are unable to imagine it--upward social mobility through the acquisition and cultivation of land.

[Indian prisoners of war would provide] men woemen and children enough to exchange for Moores, which wilbe more gaynefull pilladge for us than we conceive, for I doe not see how we can thrive until wee get into a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our buisness, for our children's children will hardly see this great Continent filled with people, soe that our servants will still desire freedome to plant for themselves, and not stay but for verie great wages. And I suppose you know verie well how wee shall mayneteyne 20 Moores cheaper than one English servant. (Donnan 3: 8)

This is a seminal document in the history of slavery in the Atlantic. In it, Downing exhibits a belief in the exchangeability of people coupled with a racialism that separates the saleable from the seller by assigning a defect, a deficit of capacity to improve the self.

Downing himself had been a London lawyer living in Fleet Street. He married the sister of John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and, at Winthrop's urging, he moved his family from London to the colonies and settled in Salem. There Downing eventually acquired a hundreds of acres of arable land and meadow, the finest manor in the colony, and the right to enclose a private gaming preserve for water fowling. This last advantage recalls the geo-political or geo-cultural struggle mapped in Fred Wilson's graphic, "Chesapeake Bay Water-Fowling Region,"

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<sup>48</sup> On Downing's life, see Perley 18-29.

discussed in detail at the beginning of this dissertation. Downing's grant specified that, "It shall not be lawful for any person to shoot any gun within half a mile...nor shall use any other means for disturbance of the fowl there" (Perley 26). An absentee landlord, Downing collected rents from tenant farmers, and sent his son George to Harvard; George Downing was later knighted by Charles II.

Rising from Fleet Street lawyer to become a member of the landed, leisured and well-connected elite in the New World, Downing took hold of the very promise advertised by authors of promotional literature like John Smith. Downing's letter, however, reveals the unspoken processes of appropriation that enable such a meteoric rise. Downing hopes to acquire a group of workers who, unlike those currently available, will not "desire" or will not be capable of desiring the same "freedom to plant for themselves" that he himself has benefited from. This deficit of basic personal ambition in a land-based hierarchy is marked somatically. Downing distinguishes the dark-skinned "Moors" from the captive Indians and the English servants. Downing's tone suggests that the stigma borne by the Moors exists already. In fact, in this passage, it is being applied. Downing's comment reveals the truth that the value of the Moors and the English settlers' labor (measured in units of time or cost of wages) is equal. Instead, it is the way those hours are spent, either working so that someone else may "thrive" or imagining and working toward one's own future, that determines the difference in the way each group will be treated. In turn, that difference in treatment will determine the ceiling for their social status.

### **Coda: Slaves, Markets, People(s), Prices**

Identity is interchangeable, people, exchangeable. Michael Neill, Emily Bartels, Nabil Matar and others have drawn attention to the "notorious indeterminacy" of the word "Moor."<sup>1</sup> As these critics have shown, referencing texts from a wide variety of early modern English genres of writing, the term "Moor" might be used to indicate a bewildering range of nationalities, skin-colors and religions. The inevitable conclusion of such inquiries is that there is no single definition of "Moor," or indeed of other related and overlapping terms such as "Turk," "Indian" or "blackamoor," in this period. The search for some sense of the origins of stable ethnic categories in early modern English culture is frustrated by the prevalence of such slippery terms. The fact that "Turk," "Indian" and "Moor" might be used interchangeably suggests that attempts to link these terms to any specific region or ethnic or cultural characteristics may be futile. Yet the evidence that "Turks" and "Moors" are not only identified as disparate groups but also differentiated from each other definitively may be found if we understand them not as interchangeable but *exchangeable*.

In Othello's final speech, the encounter between a Venetian, a Moor and a Turk occurs in Aleppo, a kind of mirror for Venice, a wealthy Mediterranean trading hub, but not a Christian one. In Venice, Othello is a "valiant Moor" (also a brave Moor, a warlike Moor, a lusty Moor, a noble Moor, a lascivious Moor, a dull Moor, a cruel Moor) as often as he is "Othello." In Aleppo, it is not Othello but the Venetian and the Turk who are identified by nation rather than by name, gender, rank, or occupation. In this way, the

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase is taken from Neill, "'Mulattos,' 'Blacks,' and 'Indian Moors'" 364; but see also Bartels, "Making More" 434; and Matar *Turks* 7-8.

play demonstrates that representatives from these three major geopolitical powers of the Mediterranean are, in fact, interchangeable. Nevertheless, while the language of judgment relies upon arbitrary signs, it does produce a material difference between people and between groups. The nature of that difference, however, is socio-economic value. Credit is more than a measure of trustworthiness, it is a measure of value, and value, like identity, is mutable. Thus, in a culture of credit, relative value becomes an essential attribute that distinguishes one individual from another. In this sense, people, as commodities, are exchangeable since each person's value has meaning only in relation to the value of others.

This identity economy has its beneficiaries and its victims. As Lodovico orders or perhaps warns Gratiano in the closing moments of *Othello*: "Seize upon the fortunes of the Moor / For they succeed to you" (5.2.364-5). Othello's loss of face will be Gratiano's financial gain, it seems, but this is a dubious prize. The reality is that every member in the culture of credit is marked with a price (the exact nature or amount of which remains unknown to them) at all times. In the language of judgment, in a market for people, value is determined in the exchange, in the communication between consumers, not by inherent usefulness or goodness. This sobering prospect is the legacy of capitalism.

On the early modern stage, in a group of serio-comic scenes set in slave markets in and around the Mediterranean, individual men, women, and children are identified as belonging to particular, named groups. Moors, Turks and others are differentiated here less by distinct cultural characteristics than by a more discriminating measure: price.

BARABAS. Whats the

Prise of this slave, two hundred Crowns? Do the

Turkes weigh so much?

1 OFFICER. Sir, that's his price.

BARABAS. What, can he steale that you demand so much?...

LODOWICKE. Ratest though this Moore but at two hundred plats?

1 OFFICER. No more, my Lord.

BARABAS. Why should this Turk be dearer than that Moore?

1 OFFICER. Because he is young and has more qualities.

BARABAS. What, hast the Philosophers stone? (*Jew of Malta* 2.3.97-112)

In the market place salesmen and customers haggle over the relative worth of people, determining their value by judging a range of factors including skills, vitality, age, and personality. The slaves in these scenes, however, are identified primarily by terms such as "Turk" or "Moor" rather than by names or other distinguishing features. The slave traders in such scenes are often Turks, Jews or Spaniards, as in the lines quoted above from Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (1633). English dramatists disparage all three groups for their participation in slaving, accusing them of impiety and greed. Barabas's market savvy and skepticism about the "qualities" initiates a comic dialogue between buyers, slaves, and salesman. The common practice in this and other slave market scenes is to riff on the comic and scandalous traits of different European nationalities (Spanish, Dutch, English, Portuguese), deliver a few bawdy jokes about virile male or nubile female slave bodies, and rattle off the price for slaves of different colors, religions, or regions--in particular, Turks and Moors.

These scenes take up the geopolitics of the Mediterranean, where war, slavery and piracy were real concerns, and the imaginative possibilities presented by a multinational

gathering. Playing off more mundane trading practices such as the daily exchange of national currencies in London's business hub, the aptly-named Exchange, the serio-comic slave market scene performs an exchange of the nationalities themselves by making each human body a metonymic sign for a particular culture. It is this powerfully symbolic setting--a market for the exchange of people staged in the theater of the politically dynamic Mediterranean--that allows us to see past the "notorious indeterminacy" of terms. The slave market scenes confirm the possibility, for early modern English audiences, of definitively determining the relative value of individuals based upon the groups to which they belong. That these groups are simultaneously regional, religious, and racial should not trouble us as much as the acknowledgement that such categories are so readily converted into commodities. This slippage allows for the ideological assumption that more than labor, cultural difference itself has a dollar value in a global market, and certain groups may be marked as saleable not only for their labor, but in themselves.

This process of valuation is a communal and a communicative one in which salesmen, buyers, and the slaves themselves debate the relative worth of individual members of groups such as "Turks" or "Moors." That the debate is discursive is also crucial. The conversation, by means of which buyers and sellers agree on the price of an individual, is one in which power dynamics--various hierarchies of gender, class, and culture--are always at work. More to the point, it is buyer and seller, not slave, who determine price as this repeated phrasing demonstrates:

2 OFFICER. Every ones price is written on his backe,  
and so much must yeeld or not be sold. (*Jew of Malta* 2.3.3-4)

TURK. To the Male-Market with 'em, each man carries

His price upon his shoulder. (*A Challenge for Beauty C4v*)

The image of price tags literally written on the backs of men who are for sale suggests that their worth is knit into the fabric of their being. The situation demonstrates, however, that value is *not* intrinsic, but rather it is determined by a language of judgment. The slaves' prices, written on their backs, are visible only to those in positions of power-- buyer and seller. At first glance, the price tag is definitive, "written" (branded) and "carried" (like a burden) as if indelible. On closer reading, we must imagine that, while the price is indeed borne by the slave, it has been written by someone else, the seller, and, as evidenced, that price is not final but suggested. Finally, it is the buyer who determines the worth of the slave, who goes on bearing the burden of his or her price along with the burden of servitude.

The indelibility of the price mark is not unlike the indelible somatic marker discussed at the start of this chapter. The somatic mark that is perceived as the sign of an inherent flaw, but which is in fact stereotype, the result of persistent epistemic injustice, may also be understood as a kind of brand. A brand is an external mark created by outside forces rather than a manifestation of inherent qualities. As such it recounts the power dynamics involved by identifying both the bearer, whose value is determined by someone other than himself, and a brander, someone with the power to determine the relative worth of others. Legible and indelible, a brand continually communicates meaning to others without the bearer's consent or even without their knowledge. The meanings broadcast by this continual communication may be so ubiquitous as to be

perceived as essential qualities, such as an essential quality of uncultivatability. The power dynamics of branding help to illustrate the fallacy behind the belief in the culpability of marked people; whatever a person's inherent flaws, the brand itself *cannot* be self-inflicted.

The pricing of slaves is a process of dehumanization in which even the slave's own attempt at valuing or marketing him or herself is co-opted. It may also be understood as an epistemic injustice. As with the somatic mark, the price mark is interpreted as a deficit of capacity to *know* better, in this case to *know* one's own worth. In the slave market scenes, the personal claims of the slave are deemed untrustworthy--his or her "qualities" are inflated by the seller, discredited by the buyer.

BARABAS. Why should this Turk be dearer than that Moore?

1 OFFICER. Because he is young and has more qualities.

BARABAS. What, hast the Philosophers stone? And thou

Hast, break my head with it, I'll forgive thee.

SLAVE. No Sir, I can cut and shave.

BARABAS. Let me see, sirra, are you not an old shaver? (*Jew of Malta*  
2.3.110-15)

Neither slave nor seller, according to Barabas, is to be believed, but while the seller is merely touting his wares, the slave is accused of being a thief (an "old shaver") and liar. In Massinger's *A Very Woman* (1655), the slave master urges citizens to trust their eyes as they attempt to determine the value of slaves based on appearances alone. Nevertheless, customers are wary, concerned that their first impressions may be false ones. On the block there is no credit, no one to "vouch" for you; you cannot even vouch for yourself.



DOCTOR. We come to look upon your slaves, and buy too,  
 If we can like of the persons and the prices.

CUCULO. They show fine active fellows.

MASTER. They are no less Sir,  
 And people of strong labors.

DOCTOR. That's i'th' proof Sir. (*Very Woman* 3.1.23-6)

While customers would prefer the more reliable evidence of good nature that comes from long acquaintance with the individual or his recommender, the slave market is a scene of split-second decision, of immediate transaction. The fantasy is that such risky exchanges take place only in the distant and chaotic Mediterranean; that only people of the morally ambiguous nationalities of that region would participate in such negotiations.

TURK. A better peny-worth of flesh and bloud  
 Turk never sold.

FERRARS. Nor Christian but a Spanyard  
 Would ere have bought.

PINEDA. Oh yes, your English Iewes, they'le buy and sell their fathers,  
 prostrate their wives, and make money of their own children...

(*Challenge for Beauty* Dv)

Here a Turkish pirate sells the English captive Mont Ferrars to a Spanish gentleman. The feisty soldier boldly chastises his new Spanish master for participating in slave trading.<sup>2</sup>

In the slave market, however, slave, buyer and seller are interchangeable, too, depending upon geopolitical circumstances. Points of origin of all parties, the point of

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<sup>2</sup> Criticism of the Spanish on the grounds that they reveled in the cruelty and tyranny of slaving, especially in the New World, was made popular in England particularly through published translations of works like Bartolomé de las Casas's *The Spanish Colonie* (1583).

sale, and the imagined current events (military, economic and political) are all coordinates that dictate who wields the power of valuation in such scenes. In *The Jew of Malta*, the Maltese sign a treaty with the Turks, but later change allegiances and allow a Spanish captain to sell Turkish captives in their marketplace. In Heywood's *A Challenge for Beauty* (1636), Turkish pirates sell English slaves to Spanish buyers. This troubling game of international and intercultural musical chairs negates the possibility of judging any individual's worth on the basis of empirical data, perceived or proven "qualities." This disorienting vision mirrors the experience of English people during the early modern period as they attempted to make informed choices about whom to trust (and how much), and how to be perceived as trustworthy themselves in a rapidly expanding world. In a newly global marketplace, in which goods and people are constantly on the move, trust is difficult to find and to maintain. As a substitute, price is both taboo--signaling a loss of credibility, of humanity--and an absolute necessity.

In fact, every person in the culture of credit is exposed to this kind of dehumanizing treatment. The culture of credit itself is an open market in which all members are branded by the language of judgment. While members agree to be responsible for their behaviors, actions do not speak louder than words. Instead credit is determined through an external language of judgment. The indelible mark, price, is not the mark of greater or lesser virtue, but a sign for the social and economic value of one's credit. As I have shown, despite the culture of credit's promise of mutable social identity, in the language of judgment, imagined social difference is coupled with stereotype, with the result that some groups are placed at a disadvantage that is written off as the consequence of natural difference. The social value of credit is dependent not upon the

objective evaluation of virtuous behavior, but upon the subjective evaluation of relative social difference.

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