TRADING INDIA: COMMERCE, SPECTACLE, AND OTHERNESS, IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

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ABSTRACT

TRADING INDIA: COMMERCE, SPECTACLE, AND OTHERNESS, IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

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Spices – pepper, nutmegs, cinnamon and mace drove England's early quest for the East Indies. My dissertation charts the emergent stages of England's trade with the East Indies, exploring divergent English responses to both foreign objects and racialized bodies. Even before the establishment of the East India Company on December 31, 1600, 'India' circulated as a series of images, myths and commodities. While drawing on these older depictions of 'India' and the East Indies, my project takes into account the new ways in which early modern England interacted with eastern bodies after London merchants finally gained direct access to "the islands of spicerie." As such my research has much in common with the recent emphasis on a 'global renaissance,' situating England at the cross roads of transnational commerce and proto-colonialism. I argue that not just far flung tropical islands, but London itself needs to be recognized as a 'contact zone' (citing Mary Louise Pratt) where actual East Indians roamed the streets and Englishmen consumed eastern objects. In turn, Indian subjects and commodities found their way into court masques, civic spectacles and the commercial stage, briefly transforming Cheapside into a pepper plantation for the Grocer's guild, or Henrietta Maria into an Indian queen in Whitehall. Nonetheless, trade expansion triggered divergent reactions during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, leading to public disavowals or championing of the East Indies trade. Structured around civic pageantry, court entertainments and the public stage, my

chapters examine a mutually constitutive relationship between mercantile forces and cultural productions geared to varied and distinct publics.

Specifically, I focus on three particular publics: mercantile, courtly and playhouse gatherings. My opening chapter, "Imagining India: Discourse of the East Indies," reads the domestic spat between Titania and Oberon over the Indian Boy in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* alongside Mandeville's *Travels*, early cartography and the arguments against the East Indies trade set forth by seventeenth century pamphleteers like Robert Kayll and Edward Misselden. I argue that during the early modern period, older stereotypes of India as a land of aberrations transformed from a discourse on physical or moral monstrosity to that of economic deviancy. In my second chapter "Blackness, Spices and Civic Spectacle: Importing the East Indies in London's Lord Mayor's shows," I turn to mercantile publics and the Grocers Guild. I am particularly interested in how questions of indigenous labor, religious conversion and spice trade play out in Thomas Middleton's *The Tryumphs of Honor and Industry* (1617) and *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* (1622).

A racially ambiguous Indian queen and her troop of singing Brachmani priests form the subject of my third chapter, "Playing an Indian Queen: Neoplatonism, Ethnography, and *The Temple of Love.*" Focusing more on 'becoming' Indian, this chapter analyzes William Davenant's masque for Henrietta Maria alongside the thriving new market of curiosities. My final chapter "'And make them perfect Indies': Alchemy, transmutation and the East India Company," examines the conflation of roguery and East Indies trade in Jonson, charting how the fabulous riches of 'India' transform into a metaphor for an elaborate hoax. As such this chapter tests the limits of 'becoming' Indian, and the appetite for consuming spices, pearls and calicoes.

To my parents Gautam and Bandana Sen

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION: TRADING INDIA

> And now we see London an Indian Mart, and Turkie it selfe from hence served with Pepper, and other Indian Commodities
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> - Samuel Purchas. *Purchas His Pilgrimes,* 122.

Trading in Indian commodities is predicated on an idea of exchange, one thing purchased in lieu of another. Pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, and calicoes in exchange for silver, and hopefully, a few bales of English broadcloth. Writing in the seventeenth century, Samuel Purchas, English clergyman and compiler of travelogues, triumphantly announces London's new-found status as a marketplace that rivals the Ottoman Empire. Significantly, the mart in question is neither English, nor European, but Indian. London has become an Indian mart, exporting pepper and other Indian commodities. In 1641 in his speech before the Parliament, Sir Thomas Roe went even further claiming that "the surplus of our East India trade […] become in value and use as natural commodities."[1] What the former English ambassador to the Mogul court seems to be arguing for here, is the *naturalization* of Indian commodities – what was once Indian can now become English. Moreover in "value and use" they become indistinguishable from indigenous English products. The commodities in question that according to Roe's formulation were now conveniently *naturalized* "in value and use" arrived from all corners of the East Indies. Apart from pepper that was produced widely in the East Indies, cloves, nutmeg, and mace came from

[1] *Sir Thomas Roe, His Speech in Parliament. Wherein he sheweth the cause and decay of coine and trade in this land, especially of merchants trade*. (London, 1641) as quoted by Levy Peck 10.

the tiny islands of the Moluccas, cinnamon from Ceylon (modern day Sri Lanka) and the Malabar (Chaudhuri 1965: 167). But not just spices at the markets in Cochin on the Coromandel coast English merchants picked up rubies, pearls, diamonds, as well as Bezoar stones, and the neighboring "gem island" of Ceylon had large stores of pearls and sapphires (Lenman 101-102). Indigo could be bought from Agra and Ahmedabad in the western regions of the Indian subcontinent while textiles might be acquired from the Coromandel Coast, or from Bengal in the east (Chaudhuri 1965: 175; Mashall 275). Spices, precious stones, cloth, and dye from the East Indies arrived in England on ships of the East India Company, giving Englishmen direct access to exotic commodities, some of which like pepper and pearls had for long been part of the older trade routes that used the Italians or the Portuguese as middlemen (Lenman 99-101). Instead, for the first time English merchants could acquire these commodities and in turn sell them to other nations, becoming traders in Indian goods, not just the purchasers. While on the one hand English households sprinkled pepper, cinnamon, and mace into broth for cooking rabbits, birds, or mutton,[2] on the other, English merchants sold off surplus spices overseas, making "London an Indian Mart." Thereby, we might begin to understand a new way of recognizing English commodities, a way that actually included Indian spices and textiles. Moreover, such objects became part of an English cultural imaginary.

Furthermore, as Imitiaz Habib has recently shown, the bowels of the East India Company ships brought back more than spices, indigo, and chintz. They brought back actual East Indians who were either crewmen or servants of the English merchants. Some of these Indians were given English names like "Peter Pope" or partially English ones in the case of "Samuel Mansur" (Habib 2008: 240-246). Many were baptized. While this seems to suggest that Indian bodies can

[2] *The good hous-wiues treasurie* A4r-A5v.

become something else, the East Indies trade also seems to reveal how foreign objects came to be included in and became constitutive of an English identity. The statements of Purchas and Roe help us recognize a new mode of imagining England. London becomes an Indian mart, and Indian commodities become English. Actual Indians are given English names and walk the streets around Deptford, while in civic and courtly performances English children or ladies-in-waiting became, at least briefly, "Indian." This indicates an exchange of more than just material objects.

Trading India examines this phenomenon of how importation and consumption of spices, calicoes, and other East Indian commodities affected and altered the English domestic space in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly within certain London publics – ones that rose around lord mayor's shows, court masques, and the commercial stage. Therefore, I situate English reactions to racialized bodies, religious alterity and conspicuous consumption along-side Post-Reformation public spheres where questions of nationhood, and the nature of monarchy and parliament, were being debated (Pincus and Lake 273). The spaces that this project examines helps us understand how often private activities of consumption had public implications and enactments. From the liberties of Bankside and Blackfriars to the bustling streets of Cheapside and the magnificently painted recesses of the royal Banquet House, I trace the ad hoc publics that rose around late Elizabethan and early Jacobean drama, civic pageantry, and courtly rituals, highlighting how in each of these instances, in each of these publics, the real or figurative evocation of East Indian commodities and bodies came to constitute an important aspect of defining English commercial or monarchic identity. By tracing these publics I aim to show how the internal landscape of the city and its liberties came to include foreign objects and commodities, particularly, how the East Indies enabled new modes of imagining and articulating

a more *mixed* English domestic space. As I will shortly elaborate, the depiction of East Indies on the public stage, as well as mercantile and courtly publics in conjunction with contemporary commercial discourse, trade pamphlets, travel narratives, and cook books, helps us to ultimate trace the trajectory of what can best be described as domestic transculturation, a process of "Indianizing" the English.

Increasingly literary scholars have drawn attention to the impact of foreigners on the English imagination. But before we might venture out across the seas, it is important to pause and remember that England itself was divided internally. As Mark Netzloff argues in *England's Internal Colonies*, class tensions, and labor problems functioned as a prelude to later racial classifications. In fact, these racial taxonomies helped further consolidate class distinctions, and "practices of internal colonialism" ultimately impacted "the peripheral cultures of Britain and Ireland, nomadic and kinship-based cultures inhabiting regions such as the Anglo-Scottish Borders, Scottish Hebridian Islands, and Ulster, the northern province of Ireland" (Netzloff 3). To talk of a homogeneous English identity is a bit of an anomaly, one that as Robert Young for instance suggests, was the product of nineteenth-century reactions to colonial transformations affecting both the metropole and far flung corners of the empire (Young 3-5).

Though distinct from the period of high colonialism, particularly the British Raj, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries nonetheless witnessed greater explorations accompanied by an increase in England's commercial networks and territorial holdings. As Netzloff's own formulation suggests, engagement with foreigners helped articulate fractured English, Scottish and Irish identities. Increasingly we are coming to recognize a "Global Renaissance" a coinage that reveals contemporary critical emphasis on including non-European subjects in an area of study that had once traced the "revival of classical antiquity" particularly for purposes of

identifying "the precursor of the 'modern man' a term whereby the white, European man served as universal embodiment of superior civilization and culture" (Singh 2009: 4-5). Instead, As Jyotsna G. Singh observes while talking about a "Global Renaissance," humanist revival often came mediated through Arab texts, a trajectory that suggests that to begin with the foundations of what we understand today as the "Renaissance" was always in fact more "global" than we might have initially imagined (5). In fact, since Edward Said's monumental intervention in *Orientalism* (1978), on the one hand European depictions of racialized bodies have come under greater scrutiny, while on the other the role of these foreigners in constructing European social and political institutions has been fore-grounded. For instance Stephen Greenblatt in *Marvellous Possessions* argues how "European representations of the New World tell us something about the European practice of representation," with Catholics and Protestant travelers noting "different things, fashion[ing] different images" (Greenblatt 7-8). And as Richard Helgerson suggests, voyages to distant lands constituted a fundamental aspect of nation building, and compilers like Hakluyt "had also to reinvent both England and the world to make them fit one another" (Helgerson 153). Racial and religious others played a significant role in shaping English identity and nationhood.

However, while initial English encounters with East Indians and Algonquian Indians might have occurred outside of England's borders, they did not always remain so. Peoples and commodities arrived aboard returning ships, changing England's domestic space. This dissertation examines this process of what can best be described as domestic transculturation[3]

[3] The term "transculturation" was coined by the Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz in his seminal work *Contrapuncto Cubano* (1940), where he used it to describe modes of indigenous resistance to cultural hegemony and easy acculturation. As Pratt explains the term in fact was intended "to

whereby English men and women who might never have crossed seas or ventured out to distant lands nonetheless came in contact with foreign commodities and peoples not only in their everyday life, but also symbolically through printed texts, or dramatic performances, and thereby underwent a subtle but significant change. Therefore this project shares much in common with Mary Louise Pratt's interest in the creation of the European "domestic subject" through an acquaintance with the non-European subject. However, Pratt chooses to emphasize transformations affecting "metropolitan reading publics" by an accumulation of travel narratives (4). Instead, my idea of domestic transculturation argues for a much broader dissemination, ultimately encompassing modes of performance, whereby English domestic spaces as well as bodies transformed into something else. Moreover, the mechanisms of change also included direct contact with foreign commodities such as spices, and calicoes, as well as the inclusion of foreign subjects within the metropolitan domestic space. While theorists like Pratt primarily understand transculturation as something that occurs "out there" in exotic lands, I argue that London itself can be similarly seen as a "contact zone," a *social space* "where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery" (Pratt 4). In fact I take up Pratt's initial "heretical" challenge to locate transculturation in the metropolis itself (6). However, what I understand as domestic transculturation involves not just a clash of cultures, but also an acquisition of

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replace the paired concepts of acculturation and deculturation that described the transference of culture in reductive fashion imagined from which the interests of the metropolis" (228). Nonetheless, as Frank Schulze-Engler argues recently in *Transcultural English Studies* (2009), present debates on transculturalism call into question "the assumption that transcultural phenomena occur in 'peripheral' rather than 'central' constellations" (xi).

commodities and cultural objects. This is not to suggest that such commercial activities precluded proto-colonial strategies; during the early modern period the two were often intertwined. However, domestic transculturation ultimately brings the idea of hybridity as cultural as well as biological phenomena to the heart of England's civic and political arena, instead of recognizing it as something that manifests itself only in the colonies. Thus while on the one hand I use "*domestic*" transculturation to emphasize its occurrence in the center as opposed to the periphery of proto-colonial paradigms, I also want to suggest that despite the often public nature of this process it still nonetheless extended to the private recesses of the home in the form of spices in food, or muslins in wardrobes. When Purchas describes London as an Indian mart, selling pepper to the Ottoman Empire, he conjures an image of a metropolitan space that is filled with East Indian imports. What is English, now also includes the Indian. In fact, pepper, the spice that he highlights, had by the seventeenth century become a ubiquitous presence in English kitchens (Markley 30). However, pepper was not of course indigenous to England, and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Portuguese, Dutch, and the English fought both diplomatically in the courts of the Mogul emperor, and on the high seas and remote archipelagos of the Indian Ocean to secure stable supplies. While English travelers like Thomas Coryate learned native languages and wore Indian attires in Agra, his fellow countrymen in London were consuming spices and were about to acquire a taste for Indian textiles such as calicoes and chintz.[4]

[4] As Farrington notes Surat, Masulipatam, and much later Calcutta, which were the earliest sites for East India Company factories were also thriving textile centers. As early as 1620 the Company imported "50,000 pieces of painted and printed chintz" (69).

Accordingly, this project traces two related lines of inquiry: the representation of "India" in early modern England, exploring proto-racial and religious taxonomies that came to define "Indians;" at the same time examining how growing commerce and contact with material objects from the East Indies brought about new ways of imagining Englishness itself. In particular I am interested in how London's streets and English bodies "became" Indian,[5] if only for a brief period of time. Nonetheless, these "becomings" in civic pageantries and court masques constituted, as we shall see, a vital aspect of performing and defining English mercantile and monarchic authority. However, it is worthwhile noting here that in searching for "India" and "Indians" in early modern travel narratives, pamphlets, cartographies, poetry, and drama, we are dealing with what can best be described as marginal. The actual presence of "India" in these texts might seem peripheral, but as I shall show they nonetheless help us evaluate the changing world of the "Global Renaissance." However, even within the field of early global and colonial studies, India remains an often neglected category. Unlike Anglo-Turkish relationships that have generated widespread interest, the pepper trade and its impact on English life has evaded a similar following.[6] Part of this might be the result of our current concerns with Anglo-Islamic

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[5] I borrow this term from Jonathan Gil Harris. See his forthcoming collection of essays entitled *Indography*.

[6] For instance, Nabil I. Matar, Islam in Britain 1558-1685 (1998); Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the age of discovery (1999); Nancy Bisaha, Creating East and West : Renaissance humanists and the Ottoman Turks (2004); Jonathan Burton, Traffic and Turning: Islam and English drama, 1579-1624 (2005); Matthew Dimmock, New Turkes : dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in early modern England (2005); Daniel Vitkus, Turning Turk: English theatre and the multicultural

legacies, particularly in light of the attacks of September 11, 2001; and more recent interventions in Libya and the Middle East. However, in what might seem as an aphorism, Anglo-Islamic relations did come into play in the East Indies. During the early modern period much of the Indian subcontinent was ruled by the Mughals, who like the Ottomans adhered to Sunni Islam, and while they might not have aroused fears of "Turning Turk" or apostasy, the "moors" of India presented English travelers with a familiar religious alterity. Moreover, as Singh has shown, Mughal emperors, especially Jahangir shared with Elizabeth certain common iconographic symbols such as the terrestrial globe, suggesting that global fantasies were not confined to western powers alone (Singh 2009: 2). Nonetheless, Nabil Matar for instance, excludes India altogether from discussions on *Islam in Britain*, arguing that "The Mogul Empire in India was too far to reach except for indomitable diplomats-travelers such as Sir Thomas Roe" (3). But as we shall see, East India Company ships *did* ply to India, carrying in their bowels English merchants and crewmen, returning home with spices, calicoes, and actual Indians.

Significantly, travelers who noted seeing "Moors" in India also reported on the large numbers of "Gentiles," a group that included Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, and other religious sects. Thereby, the study of India and the East Indies trade enables us to venture beyond Anglo-Islamic

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Mediterranean (2006); Linda McJannet, The sultan speaks : dialogue in English plays and histories about the Ottoman Turks (2006); Gerald M. MacLean, Looking East : English writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800 (2007); Bernadette Andrea, Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature (2007) ; Emily Carroll Bartels, Speaking of the Moor : from Alcazar to Othello (2008); Adrian Tinniswood, Pirates of Barbary : corsairs, conquests, and captivity in the seventeenth-century Mediterranean (2010); Jane Hwang Degenhardt, Islamic conversion and christian resistance on the early modern stage (2010).

binaries, into a trialectics. India offered English travelers a common space where they could interact with Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The "Gentiles" particularly Brahmin priests often appeared as the subject of ethnographic inquiry in accounts of Ralph Fitch published later by Haklyut, and Henry Lord's *A Dicoverie of the Sect of the Banians. Containing their History, Law, Liturgie, Casts, Customes, and Ceremonies. Gathered from their Bramanes, Teachers of that Sect* (1630). But they also reminded English readers and travelers of gymnosophists in classical texts, re-inscribing India as part of the old world (Archer 1-2). The appearance of Brahmins in Stuart masques, and Henrietta Maria herself "becoming" a Hindu queen before a courtly audience helps us understand how real and imagined Indians began populating early modern England. These transitions of course were occurring at a time when English East India Company was attempting to create a stable base for its commercial interests in the East Indies. Founded on December 31, 1600 by a charter from Queen Elizabeth I, the Company proved to be one of the most important joint stock ventures of the seventeenth century. Even if we were to ignore its pivotal role later in empire building, the East India Company "formed a watershed in the evolution of English trading arrangements, which saw adjustments in the types and patterns of trade" (Chaudhuri 3). The repeated presence of the company in mercantilist debates suggests that in some respects it came across as a new phenomenon particularly owing to its ability to export bullion. The study of India and the East Indies trade therefore, becomes all the more important.

Literary scholarship on early modern English encounters with India brings out these commercial, proto-racial and proto-colonial implications. For instance, in *India inscribed: European and British Writing on India 1600-1800* (1995) Kate Teltscher positions herself in opposition to Said, tracing in the oscillating praise and condemnation for Mughal practices the

inherent instabilities of English identity (Teltscher 7; Murti 115-116). She also goes on to reveal how European travelers reacted to Muslim and Hindu women differently. While the seclusion of the former appeared to thwart male gaze, the latter specifically by performing sati emerged as examples of "courage and fidelity" (Teltscher 51; Murti 115-116). On the other hand, Jyotsna G. Singh in *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues* (1996) demonstrates how the trope of "discovery" functioned as "a privileged epistemological position" in English encounters in India. Beginning with seventeenth-century travel narratives, Singh goes on to explore the transculturation of eighteenth-century "nabobs," and the role of Shakespeare in consolidating imperial education, thereby providing a *longue durée* of English involvement in the Indian subcontinent. Similarly, Balachandran Rajan in *Under Western Eyes: India from Milton to Macaulay* (1999) examines the commercial and colonial advances of the East India Company beginning with the second half of the seventeenth century. In contrast Shankar Raman's *Framing India* (2001), returns to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, particularly to the geographical and lexical indeterminacies in situating "India;" contrasting English colonial fantasies with the colonial reality of the Portuguese *Estado da India*. By tracing fifteenth-century Iberian explorations and subsequent subjugation of natives sanctioned by the Catholic Church, Raman firmly situates early modern representations of the East Indies within a colonial context. Shorter studies on early modern India include chapters in John Archer's *Old Worlds* (2001) chronicling the long European legacy of conflating gymnosophists with Brahmins, as well as their involvement in the practice of sati. In *Before Orientalism* (2003), Richard Barbour juxtaposes the apparent transculturation of the English traveler Thomas Coryate with the attempts of Sir Thomas Roe to produce a spectacle of Englishness. Once again Englishness becomes something that is manufactured, and particularly vulnerable, overseas. The late seventeenth and early

eighteenth century textile imports form the subject of Gitanjali Shahani's "'A Foreigner By Birth': The life of Indian cloth in the early modern English marketplace" drawing out the infiltration of calicoes in a marketplace that once belonged to homegrown wool. And most recently Imtiaz Habib's *Black Lives in the English Archives 1500-1677* (2008) documents the presence of blacks in early modern England, a group in which he includes Indians taking cue from slippages in "blackamoor" and "Indian" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Lastly, a collection of essays to be edited by Jonathan Gil Harris, tentatively titled "Indography" intends to re-examine the plural ways in which Native Americans and East Indians mediated early modern texts and cultural practices.

Trading India builds on these foundational critical works. It shares several common concerns with this pre-exiting scholarship: the intersecting trajectories of trade, travel writing, and dramatic performances; emergent proto-racial taxonomies; representations of real and imagined "India"s and Indians both by travelers to the subcontinent as well as writers in England. However, what this project is particularly interested in is the way that "India" begins to infiltrate English domestic space symbolically and practically, thereby permitting us to recognize England itself as increasingly "Indianized" or transculturated. English perceptions of Indians were often mediated by older classical stereotypes of bodily deformity, that increasing took on sexual, moral, and political resonances under Judeo-Christian traditions. However, there was no uniform picture of India or Indians. Indeed as Teltscher argues such depictions were "diverse, shifting, historically contingent, complex and competitive" (2). If Ralph Fitch, part of the historic first voyage by London merchants in 1583 described Hindu gods as devils, then he also described the practitioners of that religion as peace-loving: "they will kill nothing, nor have anything killed; in the towne they have hospitals to keepe lame dogs and cats, and for birds" (14). But real and

imagined Indians also populated the streets of London, as well as the royal court. For instance, as Habib documents, public baptisms of natives such Peter Pope from the "Bay of Bengala" in 1616, or marriage records of "Samuel Mansur" even earlier in 1613 reveals that at least some Londoners might have seen actual East Indians (Habib 243). But it also suggests that English women living in England might also have married an Indian brought home by the East India Company ships. Miscegenation, therefore, was not just a phenomenon in the distant spice lands, but occurring within the heart of English domestic space. Similarly, if William Hawkins in Agra turned into an "English Khan," an employee of the East India Company, as well as a paid *mansabdar* of Emperor Jahangir, then Lord Mayor's shows turned parts of Cheapside into spice-islands populated by boys dressed as East Indians. The "discovery" of "India" in London street corners falls within the realm of what I earlier described as "domestic transculturation."

This dissertation charts this phenomenon through multiple dramatic genres that unfold against differing publics in London. By reading the East Indies alongside Post-Reformation publics, I argue, we can recognize the role of the "other" in shaping fantasies of the nation, court, and civic community. Following Hannah Arendt, public spheres, particularly in the context of privileged spaces and modes of speech have come to be intimately associated with the nation. More than anything else, public spheres are arenas of contestation. As Nancy Fraser argues they not only lead to "the formation of discursive opinion; in addition they are arenas for the formation and enactment of social identities" (16). As Peter Lake and Steve Pincus observe, the period from 1530-1630 saw "a series of public spheres" that were used by powerful interest groups including the monarchy and parliament to vet their agendas. Moreover, as Sandra Logan for instance suggests, public exchanges were in fact "fleeting, contingent opportunities […] that emerged, expanded, and collapsed unless they were temporarily sustained as sites of debate or

appropriated for representation through inscription" (Logan 16). The stakes of early modern publics in articulating distinct social and political identities were high. And for our purposes an examination of racialized bodies within these publics becomes a means of gaining new understandings about these debates on self-hood or the nation.

The idea of publics that this project uses as one of its moorings is distinct from a Habermasian bourgeois public sphere.[7] Instead, it predicates itself on more recent formulations that attempt to re-evaluate the role of women, racial and religious minorities, as well as economically underprivileged classes in proliferating public spheres. In particular, while for Habermas the public sphere constituted an arena distinct from the state and market economy, for subsequent feminist critics like Rita Felski this separation poses crucial problems. Felski argues that "one can no longer postulate the ideal of a public sphere which can function outside existing commercial and state institutions and at the same time claim an influential and representative function as a forum for oppositional activity and debate."[8] Taking cue from this formulation of publics that includes market forces, *Trading India* interrogates the role of the lucrative East Indies trade within ad hoc London publics, particularly those that sprung around lord mayor's shows, court masques, and commercial plays.

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[7] It is important to note that Habermas acknowledges the existence of multiple public spheres, although he privileges the bourgeois public sphere in his study. The bourgeois public sphere for Habermas marked a transition from older monarchical model of the "representative public sphere."

[8] as quoted by Robins xxii.

The journey that this project traces, is in many ways spatial; the publics it examines moored to specific locations: the Bankside liberties, Cheapside, Whitehall, and finally Blackfrairs. While acknowledging a plurality of publics, this project focuses primarily on three, the ones that formed around performances in public theatres, civic pageantry, and court masque. In so doing it principally deals with different Performative modes. But it is also deeply interested in the economic implications of these publics and dramatic conventions. The connection between the marketplace and the stage in early modern England has become somewhat of a critical commonplace. Jean Christophe Agnew for instance in *Worlds Apart* (1986) argues:

> the English stage developed formal, narrative, and thematic conventions that effectively reproduced the representational strategies and difficulties of the marketplace; how the stage then furnished its urban audience with a laboratory and an idiom within which these difficulties and contradictions could be carried out; how, in the course of these enactments, the deepened resonance between commerciality and theatricality transformed the ancient Stoic and Christian metaphor of the *theatrum mundi* from a simple, otherworldly statement on human vanity into a complex, secular commentary on the commodity world; (12)

The theatre and the marketplace instead of being contradictory institutions in fact shared certain similarities. As Douglas Bruster points out the establishment of the first public theatres in the liberties were roughly contemporaneous with the first efforts to construct the Royal Exchange (3-4). This project explores these economic and Performative implications of the East Indies trade. In so doing it ventures beyond the commercial stage into civic pageantry and court masques. While civic pageantry in the form of the Lord Mayor's shows had a clearly discernable mercantile agenda to the performances, the court masques similarly reflected the Crown's dependence on revenue from foreign trade. But these dramatic genres also reveal a new way of

imagining English bodies, and the English domestic space – a way that reverted to India, its people and commodities.

In explaining the recurrence of foreign bodies on the commercial stage, a space that he identifies as marginal, Steven Mullaney refers to the "rehearsal of cultures." He argues that "For Shakespeare and his contemporaries, to recite, rehearse, or perform were synonymous terms, fully interchangeable and appositely applied to almost any dramatic situation" (Mullaney 70). But we may go even further: in these public performances of ethnic Others, English bodies themselves were becoming something else. Even if these Performative "becomings" were transient, they nonetheless reveal the interpenetration of the foreign in the domestic, the transformation of the English body into something hybrid. The domestic transculturation that this project traces takes into account these multiple enactments in often differing publics. What is as stake is not only the depiction of East Indians at Whitehall or in the city streets but also the transformations of these spaces, and the participants into said Indians.

Trading India brings together these public stagings of India, and the "domestic transculturation" of the English space. It does so on an assumption that dramatic performances as well as their publics share certain common economic and nationalist concerns; and East Indies trade may help us with new ways of understanding these. My opening chapter, "Imagining India: Discourse of the East Indies," reads the domestic spat between Titania and Oberon over the Indian Boy in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* alongside Mandeville's *Travels*, early cartography and the arguments against the East Indies trade set forth by seventeenth-century pamphleteers like Robert Kayll and Edward Misselden. By asking three questions: "Where is India?" "Who are Indians" and "What happens when India comes to England," it traces the geographical indeterminacies in locating India, and the difficulties in

categorizing the exact nature and influence of Indians. I argue that during the early modern period, older stereotypes of India as a land of aberrations transformed from a discourse on physical or moral monstrosity to that of economic deviancy. Simultaneously, this chapter reads the transformations of climate and topography of the forest near Athens, and ultimately Bottom's own metamorphosis into an ass-headed monster, alongside these early images of Indians, and fears voiced by mercantilist pamphleteers, showing how in the play we might recognize a graduation process of "Indianization" and domestic transculturation.

The second chapter "Blackness, Spices and Civic Spectacle: Importing the East Indies in London's Lord Mayor's shows," turns to mercantile publics and the Grocers Guild. I am particularly interested in how questions of indigenous labor, religious conversion and spice trade play out in Thomas Middleton's *The Tryumphs of Honor and Industry* (1617) and *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* (1622). Furthermore, the Lord Mayor's shows transformed street corners of London into Spice Islands, leading spectators and later readers to "discover" India in the midst of England. Not just pepper plants but children pretending to be Indians, and a black Indian queen come to constitute an important part of these mercantile displays. Such civic spectacles help us recognize the growing importance of the East India Company in England's economic life. But the imagined Indians also remind us of real Indians displayed by the Company. For instance Peter Pope a native from the "Bay of Bengala" brought to London and there converted by the East India Company merchants (Habib 2006: 5), gave a speech outside of St. Paul's that much like the Indian Queen in Middleton's triumphs equated mercantile expansion with the spread of Christianity. However, such public spectacles show how real Indians had begun populating the city, as well as the dockyards of Deptford.

A racially ambiguous Indian queen and her troop of singing Brachmani priests form the subject of the third chapter, "Playing an Indian Queen: Neoplatonism, Ethnography, and *The Temple of Love.*" Focusing more on "becoming" Indian, this chapter analyzes William Davenant's masque for Henrietta Maria alongside the thriving new market of curiosities. The first botanical garden opened in London in the early seventeenth century, stocking up on exotic flora. Strange plants and animals also found their way into wonder cabinets across Europe. Simultaneously, treatises and public exhibits similarly "collected" natives, including East Indians. Henrietta Maria's appearance in Whitehall as Indamora, queen of Narsinga, surrounded by strange Indian objects and sects seems to replicate this appetite for eastern curiosities. Moreover, they allowed her to stage her own alterity as a French princess and Roman Catholic. After having examined the process of "Indianization" in the commercial stage and London streets, we now find a similar process of domestic transculturation in the Stuart court.

I conclude by returning to the commercial theatre, this time examining Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*. While no Indians ever appear on stage, the language of the play remains infused with references to the East Indies, mostly in conjunction with the fabled philosopher's stone. This final chapter "'And make them perfect Indies': Alchemy, transmutation and the East India Company," examines the conflation of roguery and East Indies trade in Jonson, charting how the fabulous riches of "India" transform into a metaphor for an elaborate hoax. These concerns have much in common with popular perceptions regarding the "alchemical" quality of England's balance of the trade, and the shortage of bullion, seen to be the direct result of an over-consumption of eastern goods. Sir Epicure Mammon for instance understands the alchemical dream of turning base metal into gold only in terms of changing all of England into the Indies. He declares: "Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall, /And make them perfect Indies!

You admire now? (II.i.34-35). As such this chapter tests the limits of "becoming" Indian, and the appetite for consuming spices, pearls and calicoes.

Examining these transformations may help us come to a better understanding of English depictions of India, and conversely the role of India in transforming England. This project argues for a transculturation of the domestic space itself brought about by early modern commercial encounters. As one of the most profitable enterprises the East India trade may enable us to better evaluate these transformations. *Trading India* extends our current perceptions of a "global Renaissance," arguing for the need to examine the domestic spaces of London while evaluating the effects of global trade. It examines the links between economic and cultural exchange showing how one often influenced the other – the changes in consumption reflective of a more cosmopolitan mode of behavior. With expanding trade networks Englishmen in the heart of London underwent subtle transformations – a form of economic and cultural hybridization that this project understands as domestic transculturation.

Chapter One

Imagining "India": Discourse of the East Indies in Early Modern England

I.

> But with thy brawls, thou hast disturb'd our sport.
> Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
> As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
> Contagious fogs; which, falling in the land,
> Hath every pelting river made so proud
> That they have overborne their continents.
> The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
> The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
> Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard.
> The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
> And crows are fattened with the murrion flock;
>
> (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* II.i.87-97)

Titania's confrontation with Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, cataloguing a series of natural calamities helps modern scholars effectively date the play's composition to 1595-96 – a period marked by foul weather and bad harvest (Patterson 165). The crop failures of the season, part of a prolonged phase of lean harvests that began in 1592, along with growing outrage against enclosures and hoarding, triggered the "abortive Oxfordshire rising of November 1596"

(Leinwand 149-151). The foiled rebellion led by artisans much like the "rude mechanicals" prompt critics like Annabel Patterson and Theodore B. Leinwand to situate *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the cross roads of early modern class tensions, agrarian reforms and floundering urban manufacturing centers (Leinwand 150; Patterson 165). Through crossed lovers, mischievous bungling faeries and vapors that trigger floods, Shakespeare's play chronicles a nation in the throes of wide-spread socio-economic shifts – changes that threaten to undermine gender and class order and invoke saturnalian carnage (Patterson 165). Thereby, we may read the play as more than just a fairy fantasy, and begin to recognize the economic underpinnings of the plot, underpinnings that might in turn lead us to evaluate the Indian Boy in the context of trade and commerce. By reading A *Midsummer Night's Dream* alongside early cartographies, travel narratives, and economic pamphlets this chapter will show the ways in which "India" appeared in late medieval and early modern geographical, proto-racial, and economic discourses, ultimately suggesting how we might begin to see in the climatic changes of fairyland and Bottom's physical transformation a way of "Indianizing" fairyland itself.

In many ways the play draws out a long lasting interest in the east at a time when England's own domestic space was rapidly changing; opening up to greater cosmopolitan influences. While pepper and other spices increasingly made their way into English kitchens, conflict over these imports arose amongst European nations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1580, more than a decade prior to the play's composition English spice fortunes suddenly underwent a drastic change. Following King Sebastian's disastrous expedition to chase off Muslim infidels in Alcazar, Philip II of Spain had taken over the throne of Portugal. Because of old hostilities, he prevented English ships from anchoring in Portuguese docks to replenish their spice supplies (Markley 30). In response as early as 1583 the first contingent of London

traders led by John Newberry set off for India, taking a ship as far as Syria – a journey that would be later chronicled by Shakespeare in *Macbeth*: "Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' th' Tiger" (I.iii.7).

My purpose here is not to suggest an allegorical reading of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* based on this first English expedition to the East Indies. However, I would like to argue that the presence of the Indian Boy in fairy world can be better appreciated in light of England's unstable pepper supplies, vagaries of transnational commerce, and the earliest attempts by London merchants to penetrate the spice trade. Moreover, later in the seventeenth century some mercantilist critics raised questions regarding the East Indies trade, especially its reliance on bullion, often turning to images of natural catastrophes similar to those iterated by Titania upon her initial angry meeting with Oberon. Therefore, we may begin to recognize that Shakespeare's play belongs to this moment of early English mercantile interest in the East Indies. For literary scholars, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* written before the establishment of the East India Company provides a crucial glimpse into the ephemeral discourse of the East Indies – one that predates England's direct access to the spice lands. For instance we may read Titania, sitting "in the spiced Indian air" as an enactment of England's fantasy of reaching and staking a claim to the spice producing regions. Nonetheless, her fondness for the East Indies culminates in dangerous challenges to male authority. The natural catastrophes occasioned by the Indian Boy, moreover, function as a foil for the social inversions that threaten to rip apart the sanctity of fairy land and the marketplace of Athens. The multiple, often conflicting desires for the Indian Boy seemingly problematize the comic love plot of the play, casting him as a disruptive influence. In fact, the eastern foreigner not only triggers inversions of gender and class hierarchies but ultimately culminates in humiliating reprisals against the desiring woman and artisan in the play:

Titania and Bottom. While the fairy queen finds herself drugged and tricked into sleeping with a "monster," Bottom gets his head switched with that of an ass. By looking at the complex ways in which "India" and the Indian Boy mediate the play, we might perhaps come to a better understanding of early modern perceptions of the spice lands and the role of Indian spices in English life.

Within the action of the play the miasma and ensuing catastrophes in nature result from a domestic spat between Oberon and Titania – a quarrel over the possession of the Indian Boy. However, the precise implication of this dramatic scenario remains greatly disputed in recent critical scholarship. As Margo Hendricks for instance argues, it would have made no difference at all if the boy had been English and not Indian: "Obviously the dramatic structure and characterizations would not have been affected by such a change" (41). For Hendricks the Indian Boy's ethnicity appears irrelevant. He is, of course, not given any lines by Shakespeare, and most productions conveniently omit him. In Shakespeare's play as well as in subsequent dramatic adaptations and critical responses, the Indian boy remains at the margins, a shadowy figure who does not speak, and whose physical presence on stage remains uncertain. In this, Hendricks implies, he differs from other non-European figures like Othello the moor, or Shylock, the Jew, who have their own lines and have a more substantial presence on stage. While dismissing the Indian Boy's ethnic status as incidental she chooses instead to read Oberon as an Indian king, the son of Caesar in the medieval *Huon of Bordeaux*.

However, other critics like Shankar Raman read the presence of the Indian Boy in the heart of fairy land alongside rising eastern imports. The Indian Boy, despite his "absent presence," becomes an important token of emergent English commercial and proto-colonial fantasies. Oberon's acquisition of the boy "instituted and stabilized" his imperial order "just as

the economy of mercantile colonialism in India itself rests upon the fiction of equal and just exchange" (244). Raman also argues that "Titania's refusal to surrender the Indian Boy to Oberon" adds to "the play's social crisis" (241). Economic transactions have lasting effects on other aspects of life in the forest of Athens, bringing out the gendered and social impact of desiring the Indian Boy. Raman describes the Indian Boy as "an absent center" contributing "crucially both as cause and resolution of the play's dramatic action" (242).

Both Raman and Hendricks take up the question of India, attempting to locate the Indian in the play. But they chose two different figures for this purpose. Hendricks' argument raises for us a number of questions: are there then two Indians and not one? And to what extent is Oberon actually an "Indian" instead of just a ruler of India? While Hendricks suggests that the Indian Boy becomes little more than a vestigial presence, the fact that he is the only one with a clearly marked ethnicity, complicates her argument. Moreover, although Hendricks attempts to cast fairyland as India, contrary to her formulation, the fairies in question could well stand for England (something that for instance Spenser relied on). In fact, as other critics have noted figures like Puck evoke a quintessentially English countryside.[9] If nothing else, Hendricks' article seems to reveal that "India" and the "East Indies" much like "English" continue to remain vexed categories.

This chapter, instead of attempting to chart Oberon's genealogy as an Indian, will stick with the Indian Boy – and "India" – in order to evaluate the ways in which the East Indies functioned in the English imaginary. It will do so primarily prompted by Shakespeare's own labeling of the Boy as "Indian" as opposed to Oberon's more open ended status as the king of

[9] Puck was traditionally associated with the English countryside in Old and Middle English folklore (Thurber and De Mile 185).

fairies. Specifically identified as "Indian," the changeling boy in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* conjures up a world of spices, travel, and exchange at a time that pre-dates the establishment of the East India Company. Performed during the last decade of the sixteenth century, at a time when demand for eastern spices and the need to establish direct trading relations with the spice-producing regions in the East Indies rose dramatically, Shakespeare's play offers us a glimpse into the economic and domestic stakes of bringing in Indian objects. As such the Indian Boy helps situate the larger history of "India" in English imagination prior to the trade expansion of the seventeenth century, a history that includes geographical, economic and proto-racial registers. At the same time Shakespeare's play belongs to a period of transition, where older perceptions on "India" were entering into dialogue with newer modes of interactions with Indian peoples and commodities; older trading patterns giving way to newer innovations in international commerce.

This mercantile logic remains important to the play: after all the Indian Boy is a changeling – a boy (surreptitiously) exchanged for another. To Titania, at least, he seems inextricably linked to this logic of exchange: she had first associated him while still in his mother's womb with rich cargo in merchant ships, and subsequently she initiated another form of exchange, switching the Indian Boy for a changeling. For us this constant substitution in the play raises important questions, not only for evaluating the Indian Boy, but also by extension for better understanding the place of "India" in English imagination. As Raman warns, "One must be wary of over-hastily granting "India" the status of a stable, already-given object defined by the geographical boundaries that we see when we turn our eyes to the modern map" (2). Instead, "India" or the East Indies included vast stretches of "real and imagined" lands in the east. Such a conflation of India as a geographical region and fantastical imaginings is evident in the earliest

classical and medieval accounts in which India came across as a land filled with monsters and precious metals. Herodotus (484- c.a. 425 BC) for instance claimed that Indians ingeniously plundered gold dug up by giant ants,[10] while according to Ctesias pigmies and cynocephali roamed the mountains near the river Indus. As the English clergyman and compiler Samuel Purchas later noted in *Purchas His Pilgrims*, the river Indus, of course, gave rise to the name "India." Therefore, India seems to convey verifiable geographical landmarks as well as wild mythical narratives of strange creatures and phenomena.

Nonetheless, as Hendricks argues, increasingly sixteenth-and seventeenth-century travel narratives functioned as a corrective to earlier "cultural mythology," and people "no longer expected to find anthropophagi or Amazons in the East (Hendricks 48)." In fact Dorothy Figueira sums up how in the period following Columbus' discoveries, the absence of physical specimens resulted in a re-orientation of monstrosity along a moral and spiritual plane (Figueira 81). Therefore, instead of physical aberrations overseas travelers could expect to find ethical and sexual perversions. However, this is not to suggest that early modern travelers no longer looked for marvels in "India." As Jyotsna G. Singh points out, "The generic expectations" of travel narratives led compilers to document "all that [was] curious and strange" (Singh 2). One of the things that this chapter will show is how sixteenth-and-seventeenth century perceptions of "India" included more experiential travel tales as well as older narratives of monsters and curiosities.

Apart from older texts like Herodotus, or *Mandeville's Travels*, early modern readers had at their disposal compilations of newer travel narratives such as Richard Eden's *Decades of the*

[10] Herodotus, Histories, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, ed. John Watson McCrindle (New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1979), 2-3.

New World (1555), Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589-1600), and Samuel Purchas' *Purchas His Pilgrims* (1616) where they could find accounts of India. As critics like Richard Helgerson suggest, such texts were instrumental not only in shaping English views of the world, but of the English nation itself (153). These journeys to India, as much as the voyages to the Ottoman Empire, or Italy, which have enjoyed greater contemporary scholarly attention, ultimately helped shape an English nationhood. But these were not the only sixteenth-and seventeenth-century texts which referenced India, although it is important to remember that most of these were often peripheral. In Shakespeare the word "India" occurs 7 times,[11] "Indies" 5 times,[12] and "Indian" 8 times,[13] "Inde" twice,[14] and "Ind" only once.[15] While in *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock's "India" becomes part of list of commercial destinations "From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,/From Lisbon, Barbary and India?" (III.ii.1644-5), Sir Toby Belch's estimation of Maria as "my metal of India" (II.v. 1040) denotes gold, and like the "mines of India" (III.i.1714) in *1 Henry IV* could well stand for the West Indies. Antipholus of Syracuse in

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[11] twice in *Troilus and Cressida* (I.i.130, I.ii.226), and once each in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II.i.438), *Henry VIII* (I.i.60), *Henry IV* part 1 (III.i.1714), *Merchant of Venice* (III.ii.1645), and *Twelfth Nigh*t (II.v. 1040).

[12] Once each in *Comedy of Errors* (III.ii.890), *Henry VIII* (IV.i.2464), *Merchant of Venice* (I.iii.341*), Merry Wives of Windsor* (I.iii.370), *Twelfth Night* (III.ii.1482).

[13] *Henry VI Part III* (1430), *Henry VIII* (V.iv.3304), *Merchant of Venice* (III.ii.1465), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II.i.389, 494, III.ii.1432), *Othello* (V.ii.3714), *Tempest* (II.ii.1119).

[14] *As You Like It (III.*ii.1199), *Love's Labors Lost* (1V.iii.1566).

[15] Tempest (II.ii.1149)

A Comedy of Errors cries out, "Where America, the Indies?" (III.ii.890). Shylock again used Indies to distinguish it from Mexico, aligning it with "Tripolis" in the east. On the other hand Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* calls out for "my East and West/Indies, and I will trade to them both" (I.iii.370). India could therefore be found in the east as well as the west. When we are talking of the "Indies" which one do we mean? And who are the "Indians" who inhabit English imaginary? Do they come from Virginia or Vijaynagara? West or East?

Moreover, as Ania Loomba for instance observes, medieval and early modern texts frequently conflated the "Indian" with the "Ethiop" (Loomba and Burton 13). While Thomas Palmer in his *Two Hundred Poosees* (1565) wrote of the impossibility of washing a "man of Ind" white, twenty years later Geffrey Whitney used a "blackamore" to exemplify the same emblem (Loomba and Burton 13). Therefore, the "Indian" conjured up images of blackness, which as Kim Hall for instance points out, became associated within Judeo-Christian traditions with evil and death (4). Nonetheless, the Indies could also be seen as high desirable possessions. For instance in *Henry VIII* "Indies" as metaphor came to describe Anne Boleyn. When the new queen enters one of the king's gentlemen comments: "Our king has all the Indies in his arms,/And more and richer, when he strains that lady" (I.i.60). While illuminating the queen's value, the metaphor also casts the "Indies" in explicitly sexual terms, where the straining of feminized geographical bodies produces greater pleasure as well as material riches.

As I will show, during much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "India" meant multiple things to multiple people, within a variety of settings and contexts.. The problems of staging the Indian Boy – his physical absence, and the conflicting accounts of desires for him (Titania's, Oberon's, even Puck's) resonate with the instability in accurately situating the Indies. Following travel narratives, cartographies, and trade pamphlets, artistic objects, and literary

works such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, this chapter will trace the multiple representations of "India." In order to achieve this I will pose three questions: where is India? who are Indians? and what happens when Indian objects come to England? These three questions will help us better understand the complex discourse of the East Indies that shaped English cultural, political, and commercial practices and policies, one that included not only difficulties of categorizing racial "others," but also raised the problem of encountering religious differences. These racial and religious discourses in turn penetrated later economic understandings of East Indian commodities. While the first question, "Where is India?," looks at medieval and early modern cartographies and the difficulties in geographically locating "India," the following section, "Who are Indians?," examines different classical and post-classical depictions of Indian natives, and the last section looks at the seventeenth century mercantilist debates around the East Indies trade. These questions allow us to not only follow early travelers and their maps out to the east, but also to return to England and study how Indian commodities and natives were increasingly filling up English streets and households. The concluding section on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* replicates this movement of going out, and returning with the Indian. It explores how the domestic space of fairy-land begins to change once Titania and Oberon, both seen as globe-trotters, return from India. While Titania returns with the Indian Boy, whom she identified before birth with precious Indian cargo, Oberon returns with a desire to acquire the boy in question. Their conflicting needs to hold and possess the Indian Boy seem to disrupt the very topography of the forest near Athens, with rivers that "have overborne their continents" and "Contagious fogs" that destroy harvest. The very landscape of the forest, the domestic space of Titania and Oberon, begins to change. But the transformations do not end here. Bottom's head gets switched with that of an ass. The weaver's metamorphosis, while certainly reminiscent of tales of

Apuleius and witchcraft, [16] also seem to embody a process of becoming Indian. I would like to suggest that Bottom's "translation" resorts to an iconography that would have been familiar to Shakespeare's audience, depicting Indians with physical deformities and animal heads. In fact soon after his transformation the weaver is labeled a "monster" by his fellow artisans (III.i.99) and Puck (III.ii.6). It is through these changes that that this chapter will read the quest for India, and a process of domestic transformation that seems to occur after the fairy travelers Titania and Oberon return with the India Boy to the forest near Athens.

II. Where is "India"?

Shakespeare's play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, helps us explore a range of attitudes towards the East Indies while exposing the difficulties in actually staging "India." The Indian Boy, the apparent root of the feud between Oberon and Titania never makes an appearance. For early cartographers, India posed a similar problem in "staging." After all, where exactly was "India" located? Was it in the east or west? More importantly, how could one access "India" and the spice lands? "Representations of space" according to Henri Lefebvre, "are certainly abstract, but they also play a part in social and political practice" (Lefebvre 41). The cartographies and treatises situating "India" similarly traversed the abstract, social, and political. What Lefebvre

[16] William Adlington's translation of *The Golden Ass* had already appeared in 1566, and could in turn be found in Scot's treatise, suggesting an interpenetration of sources. Of course, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* lends more to the play than just the plot of 'Pyramus and Thisbe,' setting up a world where all things seem prone to change. Harorld Fletcher Brooks, ed. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, (London: Arden Shakespeare/Thompson Learning, 2002), lix.

helps us understand is that every society "produces a space," (Lefevre 31) and by extension we can perhaps begin to see in early modern cartographies the practice of space that helped generate European ideas about India. The maps therefore signify more than geographical landmass. India's real or imagined location was in fact intertwined with speculations on the ethical life of its people.

For the seventeenth century clergyman and compiler Samuel Purchas, the term "India" required further clarification. In his introductory volume to *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrims* (1625), he included "A large treatise of King Salomans Navie sent from Eziongeber to Ophir", tackling the question of "India" head on. Speculating on the location of Ophir – the source of Solomon's gold, the treatise evokes the Portuguese writer Josephus Acosta to link up India, Tharsis and Ophir as mythical sites:

> Acostas […] who howsoever he thinketh that Salomons Gold, &c. came from the East Indies, yet conjectureth that Ophir and Tharsis signifie no certayne Regions, but are taken in a generall sense, as the word India is with us, applied to all remoter Countreyes. (76)

"India" signifying "no certayne Regions" emerges as a metaphor for *all* remote areas. Crucially this inherent instability in the term "India" did not simply evolve during the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Instead, as Dorothy Figueira for instance documents, even in classical accounts "the actual location of India mattered less than its symbolic function" (Figueira 76). This "symbolic function" not only denoted the geographic remoteness of India, but also conveyed the physical and moral strangeness of the inhabitants, as well as the untold riches of the east. Columbus' discoveries in 1492 only helped the semantic implications of the "Indies" to proliferate. Ironically, Vasco da Gama sailing round the Cape of Good Hope did not reach the

Malabar Coast on the Indian subcontinent until five years later in 1497; and by the end of the fifteenth century "India" denoted lands in the western hemisphere as well as the east (Raman 2).

Although "India" signified a metaphorical, even an allegorical site, it simultaneously held out the promise of an actual geographical space. In his treatise Purchas goes on to clearly enunciate this paradox between an "India" that signifies all distant spaces, and is by default present everywhere, and a tangible singular historical "India":

> But I can tell that India, received his name from the River Indus, still called Sinde, (which hath also foiled all our Geographers hitherto, making it to passé thorow Cambaya, which Sir Thomas Roes Voyage will confute, that it is lesse marvell if Ophir trouble us so much) and because the Countreyes beyond India, were so meanly knowne by their true names, and Indus came from so remote Regions, they continued and extended that name to them: and (as even now you heard) Colon by misprision called America, India, not dreaming of a Westerne, but supposing that by the West, he had arrived in Eastern India. (76)

Purchas sums up the confusion between the East and the West Indies resulting from Columbus' mislabeling. While insisting that "India" continues to denote remote countries, the treatise nonetheless seeks to locate an original geographical root for the term. The etymology of "India" that Purchas offers had appeared in a more rudimentary form in Mandeville's travels written during the fourteenth century. Purchas, however, citing the information provided by the English ambassador to the Mogul court, Sir Thomas Roe, revises popular misconceptions regarding the course of the river that gave "India" its name. Such emendations in fact constituted a crucial aspect of Purchas' collection. Throughout the early modern period Portugal, Holland and even

England relied on travelers to provide updates in an effort to accurately pin down the "Indies" in their treatises and maps.

Figure.1.1. Psalter Map, mid-thirteenth century. For interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this dissertation.

However, mapping India proved tricky. In fact cartographic representations of India repeatedly negotiated myth and geographic certainty. For the medieval T-O maps the location of paradise played as much importance as the quest for gold or spices. The thirteenth century Psalter Map (Fig. 1) for instance following the tradition of medieval *mappamundi* situated Eden on top in a space denoting the east. The Psalter Map moreover clearly outlined the river Ganges

as one of the four streams flowing out of paradise. This sacred river of course flowed through India. Thus although "India" derived its name from the Indus, in cartographic representations its precise location depended more often on this other river – the holy Ganges. For instance, Johannes Schnitzer's 1482 reproduction of Ptolemy's *Geographica* (c. A.D.150) called for "India extra Gangem" to denote regions outlying the subcontinent. Other charts like Laurient Fries' world map published in Strasbourg in 1522 or Jodocus Hondius' 1613 map of the East Indies printed in Amsterdam similarly distinguished between "India intra Gangem" and "India extra Gangem." "India" therefore was split not just between West and East Indies, but also fragmented internally between inner and outer reaches.[17]

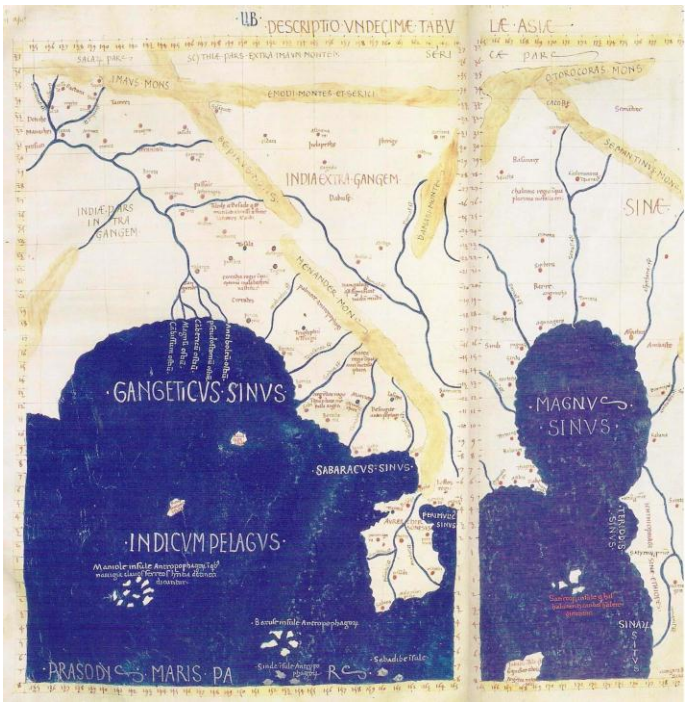

Figure.1.2. Ptolemy's map and India (redrawn in the fifteenth century, The British Library Harley MS)

[17] Interestingly, this internal fragmentation occurred before Columbus' discovery of America.

Not just the exact location or limit of "India", but the means of actually accessing the eastern land also emerged as a bit of a cartographic riddle. Schnitzer's Ptolemaic map showed a landlocked Indian Ocean with a huge island of Taprobana (Sri Lanka) beneath a truncated Indian subcontinent (Skelton 3, Harris 65). However, as R.A. Skelton documents the sixth century Greek geographer Cosmas Indicopleustes suspected the presence of a sea route all the way to China (Skelton 3). Later travelers added to or even amended these early cartographies. The Catalan Atlas of 1375 created by Abraham Cresques (Fig.4) for instance combined traditional medieval map features with new information gleaned from the travels of Marco Polo (Harris 49). Given to Charles V of France in 1381 by Pablo III of Aragon, the Catalan Atlas combined sketches of pearl divers on the Indian coast based on Marco Polo's accounts, with images of the Sultan of Delhi gleaned from Arab sources (Harris 49).

Figure.1.3. Ptolemaic Map, Johannes Schnitzer, 1482

Figure. 1.4. Catalan Atlas and India, 1375

But maps not only drew on voyages of "discovery" but also fed into early projects of colonial expansion (Raman 90). Charts detailing sea routes and ports reflected this double incentive of economic profit and territorial aggrandizement. As a result maps outlining latest European discoveries became fiercely guarded state secrets as well as prized gifts designed to seal friendships or royal patronages. For instance the Portuguese cartographer Diogo Homem on the run from a murder charge presented Queen Mary of England with a manuscript atlas in 1558 that prominently displayed the spice islands of Moluccas (Harrris 89).

However, despite cartographic mappings, the "Indies" could still pose problems when it came to substantially locating the Spice Islands or Moluccas. For centuries the old caravan route linked up European marts to the East Indies and China. However, by the fifteenth century Iberian powers seeking to break Arab, Venetian and Genoese monopolies over eastern commodities tried

to find alternate routes to the spice lands.[18] But reaching the Moluccas seemed to create new problems for Spain and Portugal – where *exactly* were the islands? And who owned them?

Access to "India," even ownership of the spice producing lands lay at the crossroads of commerce and religion. Not just Iberia but the Catholic Church itself became, symbolically at least involved in territorial aggrandizement – while searching for new souls to convert, and new spices to harvest. A rapid succession of Papal Bulls beginning from 1452 granted Portugal and Spain jurisdiction over all "discovered" lands inhabited by unbelievers.[19] All this of course

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[18] Skelton 24. Moreover, Raman highlights the collusion of internal economic upheavals precipitated to some extent by the Black Death and the perceived need to recover lands from the Arabs fueled Spanish and Portuguese empires (5).

[19] The *Dum Diversas* in 1452 granted Portugal the land and persons of all unbelievers they encountered in their voyages (Cook and Broadhead 109). The Church continued to play a direct role in Iberian proto-imperial desires, establishing from the onset an imbrication of religion and commerce in all Portuguese and Spanish discoveries. In 1455 the Papal Bull *Romanus Pontifex* granted Portugal a monopoly over lands already explored yet to be discovered, followed shortly after in 1456 by the *Inter Caerta* bestowing the Iberian nation with Spiritual jurisdiction (Cook and Broadhead 109).

In 1492 after Columbus' discovery the Spanish born Pope Alexander VI decreed a new Inter caerta that ran contrary to Portuguese interests. The Papal Bull un 1493 granted Spain with all lands "to the west and south of a line set and drawn from the Arctic or North Pole to the Antarctic or South Pole, the line to stand a hundred leaugues to the west and south of the so-called Azores and Cape Verde Islands" (Fletcher 258). In the Treaty of Tordesillas on June 7,

before either Columbus or da Gama had reached their respective "India"s in the west and east! Ironically these bulls often pitched the two Iberian nations against each other. Portugal's eastward expansion and Spain's westward penetration had collided in the East Indies over the control of the Spice Islands. In 1522 Spanish ships picked up cloves from the Moluccas, driving home the financial significance of the archipelago (Skelton 140). The feud over these islands, partly fed off the difficulties in determining longitude, casting the exact position of the islands in doubt. Both Iberian powers claimed the Spice Islands on their side of the globe. Older agreements like the Treaty of Tordesillas on June 7, 1494, designed to preempt such clashes, as the episode with the Moluccas shows, clearly did not really solve the problem, given the difficulties in accurate geo-positioning.

Not only the Catholic Church and Iberia, but other European countries also had stakes in figuring out the exact location of the Indies (East and West) and by extension the exact dimensions of the globe. As Shankar Raman notes, at least one English merchant in his correspondence commented on the Moluccas dispute with "an eye towards the English interests in the region" (Raman 7). In the 1529 Treaty of Sargossa, Spain gave up its claim over the Moluccas in favor of the Portuguese, settling for a compensation of 350,000 ducats (Raman 8).

1494 Spain and Portugal negotiated their claims, shifting the line of demarcation 270 leagues west. The Treaty of Tordesillas divided the globe prior to any actual Portuguese access to "India" by sea since Vasco da Gama reached Calicut on the Malabar Coast only in 1498. The treaty existed on the basis on an unsubstantiated notion of geography.

Portugal's control over the Moluccas and the Indian Ocean maintained by the Estado da India stationed in Goa transformed the Iberian nation into a major supplier of spices.[20] English ships docked in Lisbon returned laden with pepper, nutmegs and mace. However, English spice interests would soon be in jeopardy. In 1580 following the death of King Sebastian in the foiled expedition to Alcazar, Portugal passed into Spanish hands. Philip II of Spain, acting on old hostilities banned English and Dutch ships from anchoring in Lisbon thereby effectively cutting off their spice supplies. The results were sufficiently alarming for English traders – after all by the end of the sixteenth century spices had become staple commodities and King Philip's machinations raised the prices of the all important pepper (Markley 30).

Early English forays to India followed the Spanish prohibition on spice imports from Lisbon. The Levant Company formed in 1581, and just two years later a group of merchants set off for the actual spice marts of "India." Composed in 1595, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* comes at the heels of papal interferences, and rivalries amongst the European nations over "India". In the play Titania holds on to the Indian Boy who reminds her of the spice laden eastern air. Seen against ongoing European feuds, Oberon and Titania's quarrels over the effective possession of the Indian Boy appear especially disruptive to the political sanctity of fairyland. Moreover such disputes feed off one the central mysteries of the play – where exactly is the Indian Boy? And how can one hold on to a changeling?

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[20] While Vasco da Gama reached India in 1497, the Portuguese kept returning. In 1509, Francesco de Almeida, the first Portuguese Viceroy to India "destroyed the combined Egyptian-Gujarati fleet off Diu, the only force capable of withstanding Portuguese warships" (White xi). Goa fell in 1510, followed by Malacca in 1511, and Ormuz in 1511 (White ix).

III. Who are Indians?

If you were to stage an Indian Boy, what would he look like? After all, how did early modern England come to understand, even categorize East Indians? In classical texts Indians appeared as a group strangely different from Europeans: Herodotus claimed they "have intercourse openly like cattle," (Herodotus 41), Hippocrates insisted, "Asiatics are more unwarlike," a regional classification that undoubtedly also included Indians (Hippocrates 42). Pliny the Elder on the other hand wrote that "people have long hairy tails growing" and that "these things and others hath nature made monstrous" (Pliny 46). Later accounts recycled these images, continuing to look at the east in general and India in particular as a land of aberrations. In this section, I will examine two of the earliest English responses to "India" in pseudo-travel narratives and actual travelogues. While the medieval knight John Mandeville[21] provided sometimes fantastical descriptions, Ralph Fitch grappled with actual and fictional ways of describing "India." These accounts, like Shakespeare's play, predate the establishment of the East India Company and reveal popular stereotypes that circulated in manuscript and print.

The fourteenth century Mandeville's *Travels* identified the east, especially the Indies as a land of marvels, in contrast to the miraculous holy land. If Ind or India was washed by the rivers of paradise, then in a post-lapsarian world fertility of the land resulted in an explosion of aberrations. As in Pliny, Mandeville's accounts expose India as a hot-house of monstrosities.

[21] It remains uncertain whether "Mandeville" truly existed. As Margaret Meserve argues mostly likely this was the persona adopted by "a French Cleric, not nearly as well-traveled as he was well-read" (vii).

While Ind has cities filled with grain and rare riches, nature itself seems to have gone awry. Mandeville writes, “And in that country grow many strong vines. And the women drink wine, and men not. And the women shave their beards, and the men not” (Mandeville 115). Later he claims that on certain islands the natives possess both male and female reproductive organs:

> And they have but one pap on the one side, and on that other none. And they have members of generation of man and woman, and they use both when they list, once that one, and another time the other. And they get children, when they use the member of a man; and they bear children, when they use the member of woman. (134)

Gender binaries appear to collapse in far away Ind with women sprouting beard, and drinking wine. Physical deformities of the islanders go hand in hand with sexual promiscuity and an accompanying lack of morality. After all, they can chose at will a specific member and partake the pleasures of both sexes. For Mandeville the hyper-sexuality marking Ind does not remain restricted to humans – precious diamonds for instance also reproduce through intercourse (Mandeville 106). The islands of Ind abound in other deviants as well; cannibals, pigmies who “have no tongue; and therefore speak not”, and cursed headless men with eyes on their shoulders (Mandeville 120, 134). Almost all these deformities suggest a land whose innate fertility is cursed, generating sexual, physical, and by extension moral perversion in all things animate and inanimate.

Figure.1.5. Women with male genitalia Figure. 1.6. Headless men of Ind

While John Mandeville, the English knight, might not have actually visited the East Indies, later travelers who did, continued to record physical and moral deformities of the natives. In 1582 a group of merchants led by John Newberry set sail for Aleppo on the *Tiger* in an attempt to reach "India." The Spanish blockade of Lisbon and its pepper supplies had added a new urgency to the old quest for direct access to the east.[22] Ralph Fitch, part of Newberry's entourage penetrated as far east as Malacca (Foster 5). Published in Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1598-1600), Fitch's narrative traced the journey of the English merchants to Ormuz, their capture by the Portuguese followed by a swift deportation to Goa and the eventual escape into Mogul territories. His

[22] Since the reign of Henry VII in the late fifteenth century English travelers tried unsuccessfully to find routes to the east through the fabled northwest and the northeast passages (Lawson 6, Foster 1). The expedition in 1582, funded by London merchants, coming at the heels of the spice blockade deliberately sought to avoid the sea-route dominated by the Portuguese. Outlining the old Mediterranean route followed by the English travelers, William Foster speculates that Queen Elizabeth possibly hadn't given up on negotiations with the Spanish king (1).

account, hailed as the compilations of the first Englishman after the Jesuit Priest Father Stevens to set foot in India, functioned as a chronicle of national achievement as well as a roadmap for subsequent adventurers. Interestingly, as mentioned before, the perilous voyage of the *Tiger* made a cursory appearance in the opening act of *Macbeth* – clearly Shakespeare had read his Hakluyt.[23]

Despite Fitch's acknowledged status as one of the first English travelers to India, he freely borrowed from the Venetian merchant Cesare Federici whenever their travels happened to coincide (Foster 8). Federici had returned from Malacca in 1581, and an English translation of his *Viaggio* appeared in 1588, which then Hakluyt reprinted in his compilation, alongside Fitch's account. Fitch's unabashed reliance on this older text raises interesting questions – as one of the earliest Englishmen to visit "India" he chooses to focus not so much on the singularity of his experiences but on their repeatability and uniformity. For instance, he follows Federici in describing the inhabitants of Couche, the kingdom bordering Bengal as having "ears which be marveilous great of a long span" (25). Such reports suggest a fall back to medieval stereotypes of the aberrant east popularized by writers like Mandeville. Fitch's account, therefore, combines the newness of English access to the spice lands with the suggestion that "India" at least partially still exists as the land of marvels perpetuated by older texts.

Nonetheless, Fitch also reveals what Dorothy Figueira interprets as an internalization of the trope of monstrosity in the post-Columbian era. After all, by the late sixteenth century,

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[23] See for instance Poonam Trivedi , "Introduction." 13; William Foster, *Early Travels in India* 2.

> talk of the physically monstrous had to cease, since travelers could not produce specimens. The imaginary monsters were replaced by humans deemed monstrous on a moral, ethical, or spiritual plane. (81)

Not surprisingly, Fitch finds an abundance of moral corruption in the east. For the English traveler, the Hindu idols register as the most obvious manifestations of internal deviancy. In Cambaia or Khambat in Gujarat, he describes in detail the gentiles and their religious practices:

> And they have their idols standing in the woods, which they call Pagodes. Some bee like a cowe, some like a monkie, some like buffles, some like peacocks, and some like the devil. (15)

Later he claims that the shrines of the holy city of Benares, "have their images standing, which be ill favored, […] and some like the devil with foure armes and 4 hands" (20). Earlier Mandeville had also described the strange idols in Ind, dismissing them as idle "fantasies" and proof "that the paynims … have no good doctrine" (Mandeville 111). Such depictions of deities, as Partha Mitter argues in *Much Maligned Monsters*, rose from classical stereotypes that remained valid throughout the middle ages and beyond (Mitter 6-7). Moreover, for Christian travelers, demonization of alien gods also stemmed in part from "a clash of tastes involving two very different traditions, which were further reinforced by a total ignorance of Hindu iconography" (2). For Mitter then, not just religious differences, but also problems in artistic and iconographic translations led to the routine identifications of Hindu gods as devils.

Figure. 1.7. Idolatry in Ind (Mandeville)

However, these accounts may have helped strengthen popular perceptions of moral degeneration of East Indians. Moreover, these stereotypes conflated skin color, heresy, and deviancy to arrive at a proto-racial understanding of East Indians. Mandeville's *Travels* makes explicit this connection between religious practices, ethnic identity and Biblical curse. He openly aligns all Indians, especially "paynims" or pagans with the descendants of Cham or Ham:

> And these three brethren had seisin in all the land. And this Cham, for his cruelty, took the greater and the best part, toward the east, that is clept Asia, and Shem took Africa, and Japhet took Europe. […] And of that generation of Cham be come the Paynims and divers folk that be in isles of the sea by all Ind. (145)

Cham's cruelty and his greed appear interconnected with the lingering paganism in the East Indian islands. Moreover, to be branded as the descendants of Cham also implied a cursed legacy – after all Noah punished his son for his transgressions soon after the flood. However, tracing the lineage of Cham remained a bit of a mystery, and could be used to denote either East Indians or Africans. For Purchas writing in the seventeenth century, at a time when the English East India

Company was trading and actively attempting to gain a firm foothold in the east, the natives of Asia no longer register as descendants of Ham:[24]

> Africa fell to Chams part, with some adjoying Regions of Asia; Asia itself in greatest part to Shem, and Europe with Asia Minor, and the Northerne parts of Asia to Japeth. […]
>
> But for Joctans sonnes, we find in and neere to India, the prints of all their names. (83)

Purchas tries confining the race of Ham to Africa, although in popular adages, Indians and Ethiops had for long been interchangeable, their visible blackness an index of moral corruption. For instance, Thomas Palmer's *Two Hundred Poosies* (1566), substitutes Aesop's Ethiopian with the "man of Inde" to elaborate on the emblem "Impossible things:

> Why washest thou the man of Inde?
>
> Why takest thou such pain?
>
> Blackest night thou mayst as soon make bright
>
> Thou laborest in vain
>
> ….
>
> Indurate heart of heretics
>
> Much blacker than the mole;
>
> With word or writ who seeks to purge,
>
> Stark dead he blows the coal. (98)

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[24] My argument here is the exact reverse of Loomba's. In *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism*, she argues that the shift in identifying Ham with Africa rose from an increased importance of that continent in light of slave trade (36). While I do not dispute this, I believe that given the moral implications of Ham's lineage, the distancing of Asians from him must also be understood in light of shifting trade patterns and the need to forge relations with East Indians.

Much like Mandeville's *Travels*, the emblem highlights the link between heresy and Ind. In fact *The Bishop's Bible* (1568) similarly used "a man of Inde" as one "exercised in evil" (55). However, Palmer brings to the forefront the rhetoric of blackness to recognize inner evil, religious deviancy and racial otherness. The man of Ind is black inside out. It is this focus on skin color that takes us back to Ham. Sixteenth-century compilers like Thomas Best used the biblical myth to understand difference in skin color: "And of this black and cursed Chus came all the black Moores which are in Africa" (109). For Best, the lineage of Ham explains the "natural infection" that causes blackness irrespective of "the nature of the clime" (108). Likewise, George Sandys in *A relation of a Journey* (1615) stresses the co-relation of the degenerate Ham and blackness:

> These are descended of Chus, the son of cursed Cham, as are all of the soil as some have supposed; for neither haply, will other races in that soil prove black, nor that race in other soils grow to better complexion: but rather from the curse of Noe upon Cham in the posterity of Chus. (Sandys 192)

Black skin becomes a hallmark of past sins, and other races traveling to the lands of Ham or Chus remain immune to any physical blackening. Such discourses, while attempting to alleviate the possibilities of physical or moral "infection" for travelers, nonetheless rigidified racial binaries. But the questions remains – are East Indians black? If so are they the descendants of Ham?[25]

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[25] The reason why Ham was cursed seems to vary. According to the Bible, after the flood Noah planted vine and proceeded to get drunk. His son Ham instead of covering Noah like his brothers Shem and Japeth, laughed at his naked drunkenness. When Noah awoke he laid a curse Canaan, Ham's son. (Genesis 9.18-27). George Best on the other sees sexual transgression on the ark as

Although Fitch does not expound on the color of Indians, other Europeans like Alessandro Valignano, a Jesuit priest and author of *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compania de Jesus en las Indias Orientales* (1584), described the natives as "people, who are almost black and go half naked, are universally contemptible" (Rubies 7). As Joan-Pau Rubies argues, Valignano's outrage rose not only from a belief in the superiority of white people but also from the difficulties in finding converts in Southern India (8-9). Nonetheless, the Jesuit's accounts proved highly influential in late sixteenth-century Europe (Rubies 5). Later English travelers like Edward Terry, chaplain to the East India Company, provided more detailed descriptions of the natives for readers back home:

> For the stature of the Easterne Indians, they are like us, but generally very straight, for I never beheld any parts crooked. They are of tawnie or olive colour; their hair blacke as a raven, but not curl'd. (Terry 308)

Terry's account emerges as an early ethnographic attempt. Crucially, he debunks myths of physical monstrosity by claiming that the East-Indians in some ways resemble the English, and are without any 'crooked' parts. Moreover, he emphasizes how though superstitious Indians were welcoming, loyal, tolerant, great craftsmen (314). While Terry categorizes all East Indians as tawny, his tent-mate Thomas Coryate would describe the Mogul emperor Jahangir as having "complexion neither white nor blacke, but of a middle betwixt them" (Coryate 245).

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the cause of the curse – a theme that fits in well with racial stereotypes of sexually incontinent blacker races. According to Best, God had forbidden intercourse on the ark, but Cham "being persuaded that the first child born after the flood (by right and law of nature) should inherit and possess all the dominium of the earth," he "craftily went about, thereby to disinherit the offspring of his other two brethren" (109). So his son Chus was born "black and loathsome" (109).

If Fitch refrains from commenting on the skin tones of Indians, he does go into great details cataloguing their clothes and ornaments. For instance, in Ormuz the women go "very strangely attired, wearing on their noses, eares, neckes, armes and legges many rings set with jewels, and lockes of silver" (12) while their counterparts in Cambaya "weare upon their armes infinite numbers of rings made of elephants teeth" (13). These descriptions have great practical use – they provide readers with a handy list of commodities readily available in the east – silver, ivory, precious gems. After all, East Indies was meant to be a land of fabulous wealth. The natives appear to validate such preconceptions. However, in his eye-witness accounts Fitch reduces the natives, especially their women into commodities, juxtaposing exoticized bodies with prized luxury goods like ivory. Later while describing the Mogul's possessions, Fitch makes this conflation explicit:

> The king hath in Agra and Fatehpore (as they doe credibly report) 1,000 elephants, thirtie thousand horses, 1,400 tame deere, 800 concubines: such store of ounces, tigers, buffles, cocks, and haukes, that is very strange to see. (17)

The Mogul's concubines, listed along with tamed animals emerge as exotic markers of eastern wealth. Coryate, reporting from India in 1616, similarly fixated on the Mogul menagerie requiring "at least ten thousand pounds sterling a day" in order to speculate on the emperor's fiscal resources (247). Later, Terry also remarked on the great riches of India, particularly identifying commodities like coffee, cotton, and indigo, commodities that the East India Company would soon be importing into English domestic markets.

IV. Indian goods in England

While explaining her affection for the Indian Boy and his mother, Titania evokes "spiced Indian air" and cargo laden merchant ships. Pepper, as we have seen, constituted a crucial early English export, and trickled in by way of the old caravan routes prior to the Portuguese control over spice shipments starting in the fifteenth century. As mentioned before, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* predates the establishment of the East India Company in 1600. However, in its depiction of the desire for Indian merchandise and the domestic spat between Oberon and Titania it seems to anticipate later mercantilist debates over English trade with the East Indies. Therefore, the play seems to share in the later disputations on the effects of bringing Indian objects within a domestic space. Spices of course constituted the bulk of East Indian imports – pepper from Malabar, Calicut, Sumatra; cloves from Moluccas; mace and nutmeg from Banda; ginger from Calicut; cinnamon from Ceylon; camphir from China and Bengal (Malynes K3v-K4r). However, Titania also mentions the sundry "trifles" her voteress would fetch her, much like the merchants on their large ships. The East India Company established by a charter from Elizabeth I on December 31, 1600, by the end of the century traded in a wide array of goods including calicoes, indigo and porcelain. In addition the East Indies trade brought in diamonds from Borneo; pearls and sapphires from Malabar; and rubies, pearls, diamonds, as well as Bezoar stones from Cochin on the Coromandel coast (Lenman 101-102).

Although, as Robert Markley notes, by the end of the sixteenth century spices became staples for urban elites and middle class consumers (Markley 30), most East Indian goods still fell within the larger category of luxury commodities – a status they had enjoyed since at least Roman times. The most common charges leveled against East Indian imports therefore replicated familiar criticisms against *all* foreign luxury objects. As such they seemed effeminate; morally

corrupting the consumers.[26] Interestingly, these allegations seem similar to the older anxieties regarding the degeneracy and gender-ambivalence of ethnic others – stereotypes we have already seen in the previous section. After all, for the stoics and other classical commentators, luxury goods originated primarily in Africa and Asia, and carried with them subversive forces of these lands. For medieval and early modern moralists, these older proscriptions provided a ready made schema of understanding not only the role of luxuries within a moral economy, but also the influence of dangerous outsiders.

However, unlike any other group of foreign imports – luxury or otherwise, commodities from the East Indies triggered a new range of anxieties – apprehensions which mimicked the rhetoric of strangeness and deviancy that had for so long come to define the spice lands. The root of this economic aberration lay in the role of bullion in the East Indies trade. From the onset English commerce with the East Indies relied on silver, specifically Spanish rials procured from France and the Low Countries (Chaudhuri 33). This deviation from an exchange based on "Wares for Wares" idealized by the seventeenth-century pamphleteer Edward Misselden resulted from twin factors: the lack of demand for English cloth in the east and a disparity in the value of silver.

In many ways, this discrepancy in the exchange rate of silver rose from Iberian territorial aggrandizements and arbitrary cartographic divisions sanctioned by the Catholic Church in the mid-fifteenth century. As K.N. Chaudhuri argues, the influx of silver from the American mines into Spain made the metal cheaper in Europe than in Asia. This "marked and wide disparity in the value of gold and silver in terms of commodities in the two Continents" fuelled the East Indies trade (Chaudhuri 27). Moreover, the Asian markets only accepted Spanish "piastra fuerte"

[26] Deng 247.

or rials of eight, a testament to the influence of longstanding Iberian activities (Chaudhuri 30). In an effort to counter the monopoly of Spanish rials Elizabeth I tried minting her own coins prior to the First Voyage of the East India Company. However, as Chaudhuri documents, "only £6,066 of the new pieces were coined for the First Voyage and the rest of the silver provided in rials, bullion and plate" (31). Rials for this inaugural voyage came from a number of sources including privateering expeditions in the West Country (31). The English coins did not win favor with Indian traders and the East India Company, recognizing the importance of securing Spanish rials, set up a "Committee for Rials" dedicated to acquiring the coins at a reasonable rate (23).

In the early decades of the seventeenth century, these concerns regarding East Indies trade found the loudest outlet in the mercantilist pamphlet wars. Detractors like Robert Keale or Kayll, Gerard Malynes and Edward Misselden sparred with East India Company supporters like Dudley Digges and Thomas Mun: at stake were not only the bullion stores of England, but also its altering of the domestic market space.

Not just the dependence on bullion, but also trade with non-Christians, raised concerns for mercantilist pamphleteers. For instance, Misselden after condemning imports such as "*Wines of Spaine*" and "*Cambricks* of *Hannault*," proceeds to spell out how eastern commodities differ from their European counterparts:

> For although the trades within *Christendome* are driven with ready Monies, yet those Monies are still *Contained* and *Continued* within the *Bounds* of *Christendome*. There is indeed a *Fluxus* and *refluxus*, a *Flood* and *Ebbe* of the monies of *Christendome* traded within itselfe: for sometimes there is more in one part of *Christendome*, sometimes there is lesse in another, as one countrey wanteth, and another aboundeth: It commeth and goeth, and whirleth about the *Circle of Christendome,* but is still contained within the

> Compasse thereof. But the money that is traded out of Christendome into the parts affore said, is continually issued out and never returneth again. (19-20).

Misselden constructs Christendom as a unified body, its silver circulating through the various nations like blood through the veins. In this familiar conflation of blood and money, all of Christendom bleeds out to feed frivolous domestic demands. Ultimately, the drainage of bullion distinguishes the East Indies not only from Europe but also from West Indies which Sir John Wolstenholme described as "the fountain of silver" in a memorandum to the Privy Council in 1621 (Chaudhuri 28). The East India trade therefore not only engages in seemingly unnatural trading practices but also strengthens pagan economies at the expense of Christendom. Trade with the East Indies emerges as contrary to commercial as well as religious law.

If seventeenth century mercantilist pamphlets recycled the discourse of religious deviancy so central to a lot of travel narratives, they also resurrected the old charge of the East Indies being strange, even unnatural. In 1615 Dudley Digges in *The Defence of Trade* fended off charges leveled against the East India Company by Robert Keale or Kayll. Earlier that year Kayll's *Increase of Trade* named after the ill fated Company ship that floundered in Bantam, caused quite a stir drawing the attention of the Privy Council as well as the Archbishop (Ogborn, 107, 110). Digges, a stake holder in the East India Company, prefaced his own counter-arguments with Kayll's criticisms. In his first objection to the East Indies trade Kayll highlights the increased use of timber by the Company for building new ships and repairing old ones. Kayll interprets this deforestation as "extraordinarie," as inherently strange and unnatural:

> Let us examine that which may moove patience, that our Woods are cut downe, and the Ships either lost or not serviceable: Our woods I say, cut downe in extraordinarie manner, neither do the Ships die the ordinarie death of Ships. Our Woods, extraordinarily cut

> downe, in regard of the greatnesse of the Shipping, which doth as it were devoure our Timber. […] that Timber is raised in the Land five shillings, and more […] (8)

The East India Company, as Andrea Finkelstein for instance documents, dwarfed even the royal shipbuilding efforts (64). Kayll attributes the price hike in timber to the increased consumption by the East India Company. For the most part, however, the pamphlet appears invested in reiterating how the East India trade results in "extraordinarie" deaths – of woods, ships, and later even mariners.

On the one hand such charges of rampant deforestation recycle older criticisms against all luxury consumption. The anonymous play *Thomas of Woodstock* (c. 1591) for instance chastises Richard II for squandering his nation's wealth on foreign fashions: "A hundred oaks upon these shoulders hang/ To make me brave upon your wedding day" (I.iii.95-96). Moreover, these allegations drew upon Scholastic divisions between agricultural and manufactured commodities (Finkelstein 40), and pamphleteers such as Gerard Malynes openly distinguished between "naturall or artificiall" riches, between land and silver (Malynes 5). Nonetheless, Kayll's denunciation, while resorting to stock images, repeatedly brings up the "extraordinarie" aspect of the East Indies trade. The East India Company's ship-building activities result in an "extraordinarie" deforestation; men and ships die similarly "extraordinarie" deaths. For Kayll eastern trade seems to further aggravate an already unnatural and aberrant practice of cutting vast quantities of trees for building vast quantities of ships. Even the mortality of crews, an inevitable aspect of long voyages, appears to be higher on routes to the east. Later he goes on to brand the deforestation as "parricide of Woods" suggesting an even more sinister connotation, making us view the destruction of trees within a more familial and domestic context (9).

Defenders of the East India Company like Dudley Digges or Thomas Mun attempted to counter these attacks by claiming that trade with the east in fact benefited Christendom, and commodities like pepper or indigo bolstered the domestic economy. In *A Discourse of Trade* (1621) Thomas Mun openly approves of the Company's direct access to the markets in the East Indies. He argues that the old caravan route filled the coffers of Turkey. Instead, the sea-route undertaken by the East India Company lowered costs for England while dealing a financial blow to "the common enemie of *Christendome* (the *Turke*)" (9). Similarly in countering charges against the export of bullion, Mun reminds his readers of the stupendous profits actually raked in by the Company:

> So to conclude this point, I will only add, that the East-India Trade alone (although it be driven in no amplier manner then is afore written) is a meanes to bring more treasure into this Realme then al the other trades of this kingdome (as they are now managed) being put together. (27)

Mun suggests that the East Indies trade instead of draining England of bullion, in fact enriches it. Moreover, like Digges, he tries to re-label eastern commodities as "necessities" in an attempt to salvage their reputation as frivolous luxuries. For instance he contrasts spices "most necessarie" for the preservation of health with the debilitating effects of alcohol, notably wine imported from continental Europe (6). Similarly he claims Indigo helps England's wool market by supplying ready dyes, and calicoes provide a cheaper option to cambric and linen imports (8). He also attempts to make a case for English exports stating that the Company did in fact manage to vent broadcloths, kersies, lead, and tin in the East Indies (20). Interestingly, by listing primarily agricultural products (pepper, mace, indigo) and their "necessarie" uses, Mun implicitly at least

aligns the imports of the East India Company with the natural riches under the Scholastic schema.

Significantly, if Company supporters projected spices, indigo, or calicoes as beneficial to Christendom, then they also attempted to "naturalize" the East Indies trade as a whole. Sir Thomas Roe, in his defense of the East India Company before the Parliament, stated:

> Nothing exported of our own growth hath balanced our riotous consumption at home but those foreign commodities which I call naturalized, that is the surplus of our East India trade, which being brought home in greater quantity than are spent within the kingdom, are exported again and become in value and use as natural commodities (as quoted by Levy Peck 10).

East Indian imports, alien to England, become "naturalized," absorbed within the economic system and the body politic. Trade with the East Indies no longer remains an aberration, a monstrosity, but instead emerges as transformative process, converting the foreign into the domestic, an import into an export that rejuvenates the nation's resources. Spices re-sold to European nations or even to Turkey emerge as intrinsically English.

Mun had hinted at a similar conversion while discussing the Port to Port trade or the "country trade" in the East Indies designed to reduce silver exports (22). English ships attempted to off-set bullion exports by participating in the well-established intra-port trading, selling calicoes from Bengal to Java for spices. Mun identifies these and the re-exports to Europe as intrinsically English "in the nature of our Cloath, Lead, Tinne, or any other native commodities" (28). For Mun and Roe, eastern imports "become in value and use as natural commodities;" pepper and nutmegs compensating for the loss of forests, calicoes for wrecked ships. But of course, the Company imported more than just spices and calicoes. The early seventeenth century

in fact witnessed the presence of living, breathing, East Indian men and women in London who often demanded the Company's succor, perhaps to the consternation of detractors like Robert Kayll. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in many ways anticipates such transformations, the exchange of the Indian Boy between Titania and Oberon and his implied "naturalization" as the fairy king's henchman, ultimately guarantying the prosperity of the forests near Athens.

V. A Midsummer Night's Dream

"India" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries carried multiple resonances: distant lands, strange people and customs, mart for spices, silks and calicoes. As such, as we have seen it evoked both desires and fears in the early modern English imagination. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* seems to similarly traverse proliferating contexts and depictions of India and Indians. However, in many ways Shakespeare's play also engages with the problems of encountering a stranger within a domestic space. Significantly, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* does not offer the expulsion or slaughter of the Indian Boy as a means of restoring order. Instead the play stages a transfer of ownership – from Titania to Oberon. The Indian Boy, firmly placed under patriarchal supervision, and assimilated as the fairy king's henchman paves the path to future harmony. Nonetheless, before such a resolution is possible, the play explores these multiples desires triggered by the memories and objects coming out of India.

One of the first characters to fully articulate her attachment to the east is the fairy queen Titania. Her metaphor linking the Indian Boy as a fetus to the cargo of trading vessels, casts her as an avid consumer of eastern commodities:

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive

And grow big bellied with the wanton wind;

Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,

Following (her womb then rich with my young squire)

Would imitate and fetch me trifles, and return again,

As from a voyage, rich with merchandise. (II.i.124-134)

The Indian mother, much like Sycorax in *The Tempest*, conveniently dies soon after childbirth, leaving her son vulnerable to the designs of fairyland. On the other hand, Titania, in associating her "young squire" with the riches the merchant ships carried back, comes to resemble the increasingly prominent female buyers of the sixteenth century. As Linda Levy Peck documents, while England's demand for luxuries imported from Europe as well as Asia grew rapidly from the 1540's, women emerged as the most visible consumers, often incurring criticism and charges of promiscuity from moralists (2). In an age when women remained constrained under coverture, "which, interpreted strictly, meant that women could not make contracts," Levy Peck argues that "married women, who had no standing in common law, were allowed to buy increasing amounts of luxury goods" (21). It is noteworthy to remember that Titania longingly remembers the "trifles"that her Indian vot'ress fetched her – resurrecting older Stoic fears of the dangers of an over-dependence on frivolous luxuries. Alarmingly, as a married aristocratic woman she pitches her desires against those of her husband – her ability to acquire commodities challenging, even subverting Oberon's domestic control.

Furthermore, Titania's refusal to relinquish the Indian Boy to Oberon translates into a repudiation of his patriarchal power. The fairy queen, linking up anxieties of female consumption and sexual autonomy, triumphantly announces, "I have foresworn his bed and

company" (II.i.62). Her actions threaten an inversion of gender hierarchies – reversals associated with an east marked by weak men and hypersexual women.[27] Eastern objects infiltrating English markets therefore appear imbued with the power to transform the moral and social fiber of the nation.[28] Such concerns, while channeling Stoic and patristic anxieties, also anticipate the seventeenth century mercantilist attacks against the East Indies trade by Misselden and Malynes. Fairyland and the fairy queen herself seem to be on the brink of becoming something else, something Other.

However, the quarrel in fairy land not only raises doubts about changing consumer attitudes and rising foreign imports, but also interrogates the viability of traveling to strange and morally depraved lands. After all during their initial acrimonious exchange it becomes clear that both Oberon and Titania have in fact traveled to "India." Their desire for the Indian Boy, therefore, springs directly out of their experiences in the east. Titania makes this connection quite clear. She informs Oberon:

> The fairy land buys not the child of me
> His mother was a vot'ress of my order,
> And in the spiced Indian air, by night,
> Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
> And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands, (II.i.123-27)

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[27] See Mandeville's travels for example

[28] Levy Peck older Stoic and patristic anxieties surrounding luxury goods especially eastern imports which were considered "decadent, effeminate, sinful" and tainted "with the subversive influence of the 'other': women, favorites, foreigners, and upstarts" 6.

Instead of a mere domestic consumer, Titania emerges as a globe-trotter as well, raising the fears of transculturation. In defending her rights over the Indian Boy she describes herself as a pagan goddess – lavished with gifts and attention by a doting voteress. Her powers of fertility therefore no longer remain confined to killing "cankers in musk-rose buds" (II.ii.3) in the forests surrounding Athens but extend to the far shoes of the East Indies. Instead of the familiar fairies populating an English countryside, Titania begins to resemble the native deities that Fitch documented in his travels – sinister idols which similarly attracted gift-bearing votaries.

Oberon's longing may also be attributed to his sojourn in India. During their quarrel Titania upbraids him by questioning his return to the forests of Athens:

> Why art thou come here
> From the farthest steep of India?
> But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
> Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
> To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
> To give their bed joy and prosperity. (II.i.68-73)

It remains unclear where exactly Hippolyta and her Amazons resided – in Europe or Asia.[29] Mandeville writes about passing through Amazonia on the way to Ind (97). In any case, Oberon clearly has visited the "farthest steep of India," and now seeks ownership of the Indian Boy. While he might have returned to bless Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding bed, his own desires for

[29] For instance Bartolomeus Anglicus (c. 1230-40) claims "Amazonia, the woman's land, is a country part in Asia and part in Europe" (63). Hippocrates on the other hand understood them as Scythians (43). Later of course they were associated with the new world as well (Loomba 2007, 4).

the Indian Boy might suggest a homo-erotic undertone. After all, he wishes to remove the boy from all female company and transform him into his henchman (II.i.121) and knight (II.i.25). As Loomba and Burton argue, "Gender reversal as well as 'abnormal' sexualities – intemperance, hermaphroditism, lesbianism, and 'sodomy' in its various forms – were systematically attributed to people across the globe" (Loomba and Burton 18). Early travelers reported sodomy in the new world, Africa and the east, especially Turkey.[30] If Oberon comes across as a globe-trotter then might he not hace returned with "aberrant" sexuality, his desire for the Indian Boy interrupting his conjugal life, making him a willing cuckold?[31]

The fairy king's retaliation, calculated to inflict "torment" for his "injury" (II.i.147), only aggravates the initial discord. Using Puck he drugs Titania with "a little western flower," forcing her to relinquish all claims over the Indian Boy. Instead of a harmless prank, Oberon's actions need to be seen as inherently violent. It becomes clear from his gleeful narration to Puck that the king of fairies recognizes Titania's violation:

> orient pearls,
> Stood now within pretty flouriets' eyes,
> Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.
> When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
> And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
> I then did ask of her her changeling child;
> Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent

[30] For instance Thomas Candish (124), George Abbot 149

[31] Hendricks 54.

To bear him to my bower in fairy land. (IV.i.547-65)

The fairy queen's longing for eastern objects culminates in her public humiliation. She finds herself drugged, and having engaged in sexual intercourse with a "monster" that she finds repugnant once she regains her sobriety. The restoration of the Indian Boy to Oberon's patriarchic supervision comes at a heavy price for the desiring woman.

However, the feud affects other desiring subjects as well. Spilling beyond a domestic feud, Oberon's machinations disrupt the activities of the artisans. Bottom, a weaver by trade and therefore implicitly associated with England's export-based textile industry, finds himself at the center of Oberon's war games over what may well be described as eastern imports. In fact, Bottom's presence in fairyland has been interpreted by modern scholars in a number of ways, including as "a parodic fantasy of upward social mobility" (Montrose 218). But we may also read such inclinations alongside changing sumptuary laws and greater availability of luxury commodities. Much like Titania, Bottom offers up a spectacle of changing consumerism – a transition that gave greater outlet to women and skilled urban workers.

Under such circumstances, Bottom with his head exchanged with that of an ass, also seems to highlight the plight of indigenous workers at a time when foreign imports, especially that of eastern goods, rose exponentially against fluctuations in international demand for English products.[32] Throughout the sixteenth century, exotic imports remained confined primarily to aristocratic consumers and wealthy burghers, prompted primarily by high prices and sumptuary

[32] For more on the collapse of the export trade in East Kent and clothmaking towns in 1587 see Leinwood, 150.

laws.[33] Entangled in a domestic feud between fairy aristocrats, and rudely shunned by both Titania and Oberon at the end of the play, Bottom stages the perilous position of indigenous craftsmen. If on the one hand he seems to stand for the upstart worker who might attempt to subvert class hierarchies and sumptuary codes, then on the other he also seems to embody the perilous position that such indigenous workers in fact occupied. Later, in the final act, Theseus' willingness to watch the artisans' play draws Bottom and his friends within the circle of aristocratic patronage. However, as Theodore Leinwand observes, the artisans repeatedly voice their fears of staging swords or lions – props that could be mistaken as real and seen as threats of rebellion (147). Fears of miscommunication and violent reprisal remain an integral part of the artisans' relationship with their superiors.

Within this climate of latent class hostilities, Bottom's coupling with the fairy queen, Titania, doubles up as a dangerous violation of established hierarchies. Moreover, as Louis A. Montrose observes, Bottom in fact functions as "a substitute for the changeling boy" as Titania's "child and her lover".[34] Titania resurrects for a domestic audience the fantasy and horror of inter-racial coupling. If the play refrains from actually staging the mixed race couple (the Indian Boy being curiously absent throughout), it offers a substitute. The bungling weaver suffering from an acute case of malapropism finds himself in Titania's bed, his head decked in flowers in a

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[33] P.J. Marshall. Sumptuary laws – Levy Peck

[34] Montrose, 217. For similar opinions see Shirley Nelson Garner "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: 'Jack Shall Have Jill;/ Nought Shall Go Ill'". *A Midsummer Night's Dream: Critical Essays*. Ed. Dorothea Kehler. New York and London: Routledge, 2001. (165).

scene oddly reminiscent of Puck's primary evaluation of the fairy queen's infatuation with the Indian Boy ("Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy").

Figure. 1.8. Mandeville – people of Ind with tails

The ease with which Bottom can substitute the Indian Boy raises deeper questions regarding the imbrication of race and class hierarchies. In fact, Oberon initially had hoped for a bestial surrogate: "Be it a lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,/ On meddling monkey, or on busy ape" (II.i.180-1). Oberon's emphasis on the monkey is quite revealing since "Ethiops," Indians, and apes often registered as analogous even interchangeable categories (Loomba and Burton 19). Bottom's presence in the chain of substitution places class squarely within the discourse of race. In fact, as Ania Loomba speculates, citing James' *Basilikon doron* written around 1599, the basic concepts of race – heredity and bloodline ultimately derived from class divisions. Moreover, the term "'race' as it was most widely used in this period" functioned "as a synonym for class" (Loomba 2002: 14). Such linguistic ambiguities, suggest that even if ethnicity and class constituted discrete categories, they nonetheless tended also to often overlap.

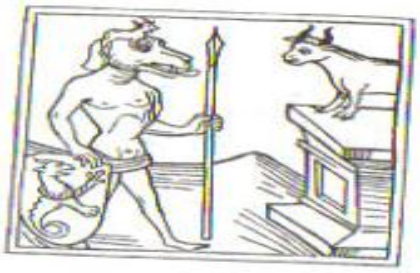

Figure. 1.9. Cynocephales in Mandeville

Figure. 1.10. Worship of man-beasts in Ind

Moreover, Bottom's transformation into a man with an ass's head, a half-human half-animal hybrid has much in common with the strange creatures that reputedly populated India. Mandeville, apart from describing idols with "four heads, one of a man, another of an horse or of an ox, or some other beast" (Mandeville 110), also describes natives who are either headless or "have hounds' heads, and they be clept Cynocephales" (Mandeville 130). Puck's gleeful announcement to Oberon: "My mistress with a monster is in love" (III.ii.6), recycles this trope of monstrosity that came to define early stereotypes of "India". On a metaphoric plane, Bottom's transformation and Titania's obsession with the ass-head-man may be seen as an injunction against foreign consumption, especially eastern luxuries. Such internalizations of monstrosity would channel not only Stoic prejudices, but also Church condemnations against luxuries (Levy Peck 3). However, Bottom's "translation" also enacts a process of transculturation, whereby a weaver of Athens grows an animal head, bringing him close to the mythical monsters who were said to inhabit India. We might perhaps begin to see how Bottom, briefly, for an enchanted Midsummer's Night "becomes" Indian.

In forwarding this reading I argue for the need to venture beyond the better known texts such as *The Golden Ass* of Apuleius or Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) while explaining Bottom's transformation. While I do not dispute the numerous precedents of

metamorphoses, both magical and miraculous, in these conventional texts, I am arguing for the need to include popular iconographic depictions of Indians in current critical conversations on the play. Given the importance of India in driving forth the actions of fairyland, perhaps it is not unreasonable to claim a more "Indian" explanation for Bottom's transformation. The weaver, of course, is not the only one who seems to have undergone a change. Titania and Oberon, as we have seen, also seem affected by their journeys to India. But the fairy queen's return with the Indian Boy disrupts the domestic space of fairyland: Titania quarrelling with Oberon forsakes his bed, the climate has grown distinctly wetter, and the torrential rains swell the rivers ultimately altering the very landscape of the forest. More over, the feud over the Indian Boy affects those who have never traveled to India, most notably Bottom. But even he becomes something else altogether, growing an ass's head before taking the place of the Indian Boy in Titania's bower. Unwittingly Titania becomes an adulteress, and Oberon a willing cuckold. In these transformations we may begin to recognize what can be described as domestic transculturation, a process of becoming "Other," in this instance an Indianization of non-Indian characters. While the initial changes might have begun in India, on the farthest mountain step, or the shores of the Indian Ocean, they achieve culmination in the forests of Athens, in the bower of the fairy queen, in that most private of domestic spaces. At the end of the play the Indian Boy remains in the forest, helping us understand how mixed the inner recesses of fairyland truly are (Hendricks 55).

VI. Conclusion

Shakespeare's play holds up multiple reasons for desiring the Indian Boy (lover, tribute, henchman), and enacts numerous resolutions (union with Bottom, return to Oberon). The Indian Boy comes to mean different things for different people. For instance, Puck, Oberon's lowly

henchman, identifies the Indian Boy as stolen goods (II.i.22). He goes on to describe Titania's fetish – she "Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy" (II.i.27). Titania herself in her argument with Oberon refrains from describing the Indian Boy and instead fixates on his deceased mother. Oberon in turn tries to appropriate the living boy as a knight of his order.

If these references do in fact stand in for "India," then spectators and later readers are confronted with a crucial question: What is the authoritative version of the East Indies? In Shakespeare's play India fluctuates between genders (pregnant mother and Indian Boy), even visual registers (the Indian woman decked with rich trifles and her son crowned with flowers). Moreover eastern commodities circulate within regular mercantile exchange and also slip into a counter-economy based on stealing and violence. The East Indies, in other words, much like the Indian Boy, registers as a "changeling" – as an inherently unstable category (II.i.23).

The plurality of possible scenarios suggests that no single, standard form was available for early modern understanding of or interactions with the East Indies. This heterogeneity can be found not only in play-texts, but also across a much wider array of treatises, travelogues and visual accounts. Moreover, these texts do not stand in isolation but form a much wider print public where the East Indies was being constantly negotiated. "India" existed at the cross-roads of these multiple genres. As the following chapters will show each of other dramatic forms and their individual publics projected their own distinct ways of understand India and becoming Indian, opening up different transculturated spaces.

Chapter Two

Blackness, Spices and Civic Spectacle: Importing the East Indies in the London Lord Mayor's shows

I.

For as you see upon that solemne day,
When as the Pageants through Cheapside are carried,
What multitudes of people thither sway,
Thrusting so hard that many have miscarried;
If when you marke when as the fire-workes flie,
And elephants and unicorns pass by,
How mighty and tumultuous is that presse,
Such were those throngings, and no iot the lesse (49)

- *Cornu-copiae, Pasquil's night–cap: or Andidot for headache* by William Fennor (1612)[35]

It was a chaotic mixture: dotards; insolent youths and children, especially of that race of apprentices I described earlier; beribboned serving wenches; lower-class women with their children in their arms: all were out to see the beautiful show. We saw few carriages about, and fewer horsemen; only a few carrying ladies to watch the procession from the

[35] Fairholt identifies this passage as a reference to the Lord Mayor's shows 33.

houses of close friends or relatives on the street, because the insolence of the crowd is extreme.

- Orazio Busino (1617)

On 29th October 1617, the morning after Simon and Jude's Day, the new Lord Mayor of London, elected the previous Michaelmas Day from the twenty-six city alderman, set sail for Westminster on a barge to take his oath of office.[36] George Bowles, the Lord Mayor for that year traced a well worn civic ritual, one that celebrated the power of the guilds over the city. Usually, London's liveried companies accompanied the new mayor upstream, in barges decked with "dyvers peces of ordenance, standards, penens, and targets of the proper armes of the sayd Mayor, the armes of the Citie, of his Company, and of the marchaunt adventurers."[37] After his oath at the Royal Exchequer – a gesture the Crown stipulated in the thirteenth century – the Lord Mayor returned to the City of London.[38] Elaborate pageants on river and land marked his

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[36] Bergeron *Thomas Middleton* 965; Fairholt informs that until 1752, the 29th of October remained the official Lord Mayor's Day, 10.

[37] "A briefe description of the Royall Citie of London, capitall citie of this realme of England" manuscript by William Smith (1575), as quoted in Fairholt 20.

[38] For more on the morning routine of the Lord Mayor see Bergeron *Thomas Middleton* 965. The new Lord Mayor began his official festivities at 8 am greeted by his aldermen at his house. In 1208 when King John allowed the position of the Lord Mayor to become an elective office rather than an appointed one "the King insisted that the new mayor annually take his oath of

triumphant progress from Westminster to the Guildhall in Cheap Ward.[39] Nymphs, rhinoceroses, lions, king of the moors, figures representing Justice or Mercy waited at strategically appointed places in St. Paul's churchyard or Cheapside to greet the new mayor. In 1617, "Indians" dancing around spice trees, part of Thomas Middleton's *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*, entertained George Bowles and the onlookers. Fireworks exploding above the river, and the crowded streets, ushered in the new civic head of the city. The pageants, deliberately called triumphs, reminiscent of Roman victories, drums, musicians, and ordered procession of the richly clad guild members, marked the Lord Mayor's shows as public testaments of London's mercantile history.[40]

In 1617, Orazio Busino, chaplain to the Venetian ambassador Pietro Contarini, peering out of a goldsmith's glazed window, watched with growing fascination the slow journey of George Bowles, recording the episode for the amusement of Contarini's brothers back in Venice (Levin 1264). In his account Busino quickly describes London as "a republic of merchants" (1264), elaborating on the importance of the guilds in early modern civic life. Deftly picking up on the ritualistic and commercial aspects of the pageantry, he observers: "The incumbent [Mayor] made his progress with the greatest possible pomp alluding to his line of trade with the greatest expenditure, which in truth exceeds that of a petty or medium Duke" (1265). The "line of trade" in question was that of a grocer, a profession whose members in the past had been known as "Pepperers" (Ditchfield 80). At the time of Bowles appointment as Mayor, the Grocer's guild

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office administered by one of the king's officials, at the Exchequer in the royal government offices in Westminster" (Bergeron *Thomas Middleton* 964)

[39] Stow writes the Guildhall stood on the north side of Catteten Street in Cheap Ward (243).

[40] For more on the fireworks and celebrations see Orazio Busino's account (1264-1270).

still dealt in, amongst other things, pepper, cinnamon, nutmegs, and mace. And the guild counted as its ally and shared common members with the newly minted merchant body that prided itself on ferrying back spices across the perilous seas – the English East India Company.

Not surprisingly, the civic pageantry, designated in part at least as advertisement for the guild's wares prominently featured spices, particularly pepper plants. But this "First Invention" of the show also included a group of naked Indians, working and dancing amidst the prized pepper crops. Some years later, Middleton's second pageant for the Grocer's guild *The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* (1622), included a Black Queen on a bed of spices, representing India. In both instances Middleton chooses to stage not just Indian commodities, but also Indian bodies. Such imaginative enactments, of course, belong to a much larger tradition of recreating exotic animals and subjects for the Lord Mayor's shows. We can read in these parades not only the wares that the guilds peddled, but also the increasingly cosmopolitan forces that came into play in the city. The presence of the Venetian chaplain as one of the witnesses of the triumphs further attests to this increasingly globalizing process. Many of the guilds, like that of the Grocer's relied on transnational commerce – something that becomes evident in the spectacles that they financed. Middleton's *Triumphs* belong to this moment of commercial expansion, one that nonetheless seem to also involve a transformation of the domestic space of the city: imagined Indians dance in Cheapside, spice plants spring up, and the Lord Mayor is invited to "discover" India in the heart of London. All the while a Venetian chaplain sits and watches from a goldsmith's window.

Written and performed for the Grocer's guild, Middleton's *Triumphs* openly allude to the highly profitable East Indies trade through their depiction of pepper harvest, dancing boys and a Black Queen, all purporting to be Indians. Not surprisingly, as entertainments designed for

commercial propaganda they celebrate industry, merchandize, and traffic. However, we may read in the exchanges celebrated in the *Triumphs* a traffic that extends beyond pepper and the rarer spices. As this chapter will show, these civic spectacles, particularly the Black Queen's speech, sets up a chain of exchanges, whereby while trading *in* Indian goods, England seems to be trading *out* its bullion as well as the lives of young English sailors. If the Black Queen seems to have acquired (Protestant) Christianity, then she has done so in exchange for spices. If England has lost its native crewmen then it has acquired a set of Indians. These sequences of exchanges swap commodities, native and foreign bodies, as well as religion. Thereby, they permit us to read the Lord Mayor's shows alongside early seventeenth-century mercantilist debates on bullion drainage, rising mortality of English crewmen, and the growing presence of actual East Indians in England's streets. Through these imaginative performances in the *Triumphs*, where English boys hired by the Grocer's guild became Indians, and elaborate floats turned Cheapside or St. Paul's courtyard into India, we can begin to see a process of domestic transculturation, whereby, however briefly, London's streets became "Indianized," symptomatic of a *real* transformation of English urban landscape where shops began to store more and more varieties of spices, chintz, and calicoes, indigo became a favored ingredient for dying local wool, and English men and women consumed in ever greater numbers eastern commodities while East Indians stepped off the ships in Deptford. If the arriving Indians, baptized and given new names were becoming more English, then their presence was also transforming the English domestic space. Seen from within the ad hoc publics of Simon and Jude's day, Middleton's civic pageantry allows us to access the economic and social stakes of the flourishing East Indies trade.

II. The London Public

Busino's narrative, while describing London's civic pageantry, much like William Fennor's verses quoted earlier, fixates on the chaos, the seemingly hidden subversion of the throng. Commenting on the "insolence" of the plebeians on the street – the rowdy youths, "serving wenches; lower-class women" – Busino relates the rampant practice of mud-slinging, targeted primarily at "the beautiful livery" of offending coachmen (1266).

In his descriptions the Venetian chaplain seems acutely aware of the social stratifications of the London public on 29th October 1617. In contrast to the "huge mass of people" comprising mostly apprentices, children, and workers, "surging like a sea, moving here and there in search of places to watch or rest," the wealthier ladies filled the upper casements of buildings lining the streets, flaunting their "varied headtires and rich clothing of every colour, including silver and gold" (1266). Lovers often lurked in these recesses, while foreign diplomats paid local householders as much as £3 for using the windows overlooking the parade.[41] Constables on horseback and footmen regulated the crowds, providing protection to the marching liveried guildsmen (1267). Busino, observing from his goldsmith's window, projects Cheapside as a grand theatre – one that involved multiple levels of spectating and performance.[42] The pageants

[41] Levin states that when the king paid for these seats, the fee usually rose to £5 (1266).

[42] For instance Bergeron notes that pageant-writers frequently used the term "stage" and the royal entries of Elizabeth I did in fact transform the whole city, rhetorically at least, into a stage (5-6).

themselves, staging exotic discoveries in the heart of London, appeared to have transformed the city itself.

Although the powerful Grocer's guild on this occasion paid for the triumphs celebrating their prized imports, the pageants clearly catered to a heterogeneous public, comprising wealthy burghers, aristocrats, domestic workers, laymen and foreigners. Moreover, as Busino's account reminds us, London's pageantry also catered to an international public, operating within what Richard Gilman-Opalsky terms a "trangressive public sphere" – one that *simultaneously* negotiated domestic and foreign frameworks (xii). In other words, the mercantile public within which the Lord Mayor's shows operated contended with internal dissentions, while reaching out to other broader national and transnational disputes and publics. Plurality clearly ruled the day. Simultaneously, as Geoff Eley and Nancy Fraser alert us, individual, contingent publics formed an interconnected system, a matrix where multiple publics negotiated with each other. Therefore the publics that rose around civic pageantries also co-existed with various reading publics, courtly publics, as well as publics of the commercial stage. Therefore, the Lord Mayor's shows provide us with one of many possible ways of interacting with East Indian commodities and subjects. Moreover, given the ritualistic elements of civic pageantry, Middleton's *Triumphs* also appear to present a fantasy of English trade, one that included a fiction of equitable exchange and co-operation. But read alongside mercantilist pamphlets, we may locate in the unfolding descriptions of *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry* (1617) and *The Triumphs Honor and Vertue* (1622) concerns over domestic and foreign labor, fears of contamination and religious anxiety.

Of course Middleton was not alone in referencing the East Indies in his triumphs. Other writers for the city like George Peele and Thomas Heywood also turned to the East Indians for celebrating the appointment of a new mayor and the merchant companies. However, Middleton's

The Triumphs of Honor and Industry (1617) and *The Triumphs Honor and Vertue* (1622) present London audiences with figures representing "India" or the "Indian Queene." More than his fellow triumph writers, Middleton seems to imagine the East Indian body as female. It is also noteworthy that amongst all other pageant contributors it was Middleton who later became the city chronologer – an official status that suggests a greater understanding between the writer and the corporation. His triumphs clearly did not offend the city officials and most likely won their favor. We may, therefore, understand Middleton's *Triumphs* as enjoying a rather distinct relationship to the city and its publics.

III. Writing about the Lord Mayor's Shows

Citizens of early modern London, as well as its visitors, at times at least documented the civic pageantries that rolled down the crowded streets, including the ones for the Lord Mayor's shows. One of the early accounts of the festivities of the morning after Simon and Jude's day can be found in the manuscript entitled "A brief description of the Royall Citie of London, capitall citie of this realme of England" (1575) by William Smith, a haberdasher (Fairholt 20). Much like the Venetian chaplain Orazio Busino's eyewitness account of Middleton's *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*, Smith focuses on the strange spectacles as well as the sumptuous attire of the new corporation. If Stow in *The Survey of London* outlined the temporal powers of the city, then contemporary descriptions of the Lord Mayor's shows provide us with the flamboyant display of such civic authority.

Later discussions on the Lord Mayor's shows mostly concentrated on recording the numerous pageants, an archivalist endeavor at preserving civic spectacles. For instance, Frederick W. Fairholt's two part *Lord Mayor's Pageants* (1843-44) chronicles most of the extant pageants from the late sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. Fairholt links up English civic pageantry with its European counterparts, primarily *Ommegank* in Antwerp (ix-xii). Although civic pageantry has not received as much scholarly attention as the public theatres or even the court masques, investigations into the origins and inspirations of the Lord Mayor's shows remain pertinent even for modern literary critics. In contrast to Fairholt, David M. Bergeron in *English Civic Pageantry* (1971) turns a closer eye on the indigenous English roots of pageantry, charting the evolution from religious didacticism to "mythology, history and moral allegory" (138). Nonetheless, Bergeron focuses not just on pageants, but also on pageant writers like Anthony Munday, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton and Thomas Heywood. In *Practicing Renaissance Scholarship* (2000), Bergeron returns to investigate the rivalry and collaboration between Thomas Middleton and Anthony Munday, providing almost four centuries of recorded commentaries on this artistic relationship.

Writing after Bergeron's foundational scholarship on civic pageantries, Daryl W. Palmer's *Hospitable Performances* examines "the real political negotiations taking place during hospitalities," thereby recognizing pageantry as a legitimating tool for the exercise of authority. The role of the Lord Mayor's shows as a manifestation of mercantile power also emerges as focal concern in Nancy E. Wright's essay "'Rival traditions': civic and courtly ceremonies in Jacobean London." Wright, moving away from parallel civic performances, turns instead to masques and other entertainments in order to understand the political and economic factors informing the Lord Mayor's shows. Kate D. Levin in her introduction to *The Triumphs of Honor*

and Industry in Gary Taylor's recent edition of *The Complete Works of Thomas Middleton*, has a similar focus. Levin contrasts Middleton's triumph with the work of fellow pageant writer Anthony Munday, as well as the court masques of Ben Jonson. However, questions of audience response, particularly Busino's account constitute an equally important aspect of her critical commentaries. Taylor's edition also contains one of the most sustained postcolonial readings of the triumphs. In her introduction to *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue*, Ania Loomba isolates the latent "colonial possibilities of trade and commerce" (1714). She specifically traces the iconographic sources of India or the Black Queene in earlier pageantries, Ben Jonson's masques, travel narratives and cartographic representations.

Although this chapter visits similar post-colonial terrain, it is more particularly interested in the exchanges that Middleton's triumphs set up, swapping Indian spices for Christianity; English crewmen for Indians; the Indian queen's external blackness for inner light brought about by Protestant merchants. As such this chapter combines earlier critical inquiries into the role of civic pageantry as a political tool with the more recent proto-imperial investigations of such mercantile self-imaginings. *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry* and *The Triumphs Honor and Vertue* help in accessing a mercantile public, enabling us to better understand how the language of commerce and profit intersected with emergent proto-racial and colonial categories. In Middleton's pageants, "India" or the Black Queene comes to signify the wealth of the East Indies. Simultaneously the parade of Indian commodities and bodies reveal English attitudes towards consumption and open up London as a cosmopolitan space. The civic triumphs catering to a heterogeneous public had to contend not only with potential supporters of the East Indies trade, but also with vocal mercantilist detractors like Gerard Malynes and Robert Kayll. In contrast to some of these pamphleteers, the civic pageantries, while attempting to advertise their

exotic wares also sought to redeem them both morally and economically. Thereby they not only negotiated the impact of foreign trade but defined the urban space as a cosmopolitan mart.

IV. Lord Mayor's Triumphs and the Guild City

> You (honourd Sir) amongst the chiefe are nam'd,
> By whose commerce our nation hath beene fam'd.
> The Romans in their triumphes had before,
> Their chariots borne or lead (to grace the more
> The sumptuous show), the prime and choicest things,
> Which they had taken from the captive kings;
> What curious statue, what strange bird or beast
> That clime did yeeld (if rare above the rest),
> Was there expos'd; entering your civill state,
> Whom better may we strive to imitate?
>
> - the Indian's speech in Thomas Heywood's *Porta Pietatis* (1638)

While praising the newly appointed Lord Mayor and the clout of the London guilds, the Indian in Heywood's triumph alludes to acquisitions of exotic plants, animals, even human subjects. Later in the pageant the Indian evokes the "huge Rhinoceros (not 'mongst us seene,/Yet frequent where some factors oft have beene)" (73). The guilds' capacity to access and collect strange beasts, therefore, depended on yet another mercantile body – the fledging East India

Company and its contingent of factors stationed across the subcontinent and the Spice Islands. By the seventeenth century, the Lord Mayor's shows, ostensibly celebrating the London guilds, often paid simultaneous tribute to new ventures like the East India Company or the Levant Company. This section examines the role of the traditional guilds in regulating urban life and the significance of the Lord Mayor's shows as a public expression of their grip over London. Simultaneously, it will trace the growing influence of the East India Company and its penetration of the guilds and the city council – an infiltration that the civic pageantry repeatedly acknowledged. Such a survey will enable us to better situate Middleton's *Triumphs* within the context of London's growing dependence on foreign trade.

London's civic pageantry, celebrating the appointment of a new lord mayor, laid claim to several often rival traditions. As Heywood's 1638 text makes clear, the triumphs at the center of these festivities consciously aligned mercantile prosperity with Roman imperial glory. In fact, these spectacles not only looked to a lost past, but also manipulated, and often rivaled genres that catered to contemporary monarchic aspirations. For instance, the Lord Mayor's shows – pageants or triumphs greeting the new civic head, mimicked the royal entries designed to re-invest cities like London or Bristol with the sovereign's authority.[43] Busino, writing to the Contarini brothers in 1617, hints at this rivalry between royal and mercantile agents. "You need to know," Busino

[43] For more on royal entries see Bergeron *English Civic Pageantries*. Elizabeth I's entry into London of 14 January 1559, set the pattern for later entries into Bristol and Norwich (11-12). Hester Lees-Jeffries in "Location as Metaphor in Queen Elizabeth's Coronation Entry (1559): Veritas Temporia Filia" traces in the progress marked by halts at specific points in the city orchestrated around the tableaux, enactment of "the complex relationship between crown and city" (65).

insists, "that in addition to the absolute power of His Majesty the King, there exists in London a head of that city's government" (6-8). He adds that "idlers are banished, and noblemen and foreigners are excluded from its government" (9-11), emphasizing the extent of mercantile control.

Paradoxically, while merchants excluded aristocrats and foreigners from participating in civic government, the guilds depended on both these very groups to ensure their own prosperity and that of the city. As Nancy E. Wright suggests, instead of an unambiguous animosity, the court and the city strove to supplement all lurking rivalry with active co-operation and reciprocity. This trend finds its fullest expression in the civic pageantries which while competing against the courtly forms also drew on common motifs. Moreover, the Lord Mayor's Day, as Busino notes, attracted a richly varied cross-section – aristocrats and foreigners willing to (and often paying to) witness these mercantile displays. The triumphs themselves, as Heywood's verses suggest, specialized in staging the exotic – bringing to the heart of London the "spoils" of England's expanding trade. Imperial aspirations, global commerce, and flaunting of mercantile clout went hand in hand at the Lord Mayor's triumphs. In other words, Middleton's pageants while staging the East Indies followed a well-established tradition.

The pageantries on 29th October not only rivaled royal entries, but also the summer progresses of the monarchs, which aimed at instilling awe in subjects residing in outlying counties.[44] But on the other hand, much like these courtly performances the Lord Mayor's shows also emerged as sites which negotiated the roles of the chief participants – the monarch or mayor and the civic audience (Anglo 1-5, Lees-Jeffries 66-67, Logan 35). Under the Tudors, and later

[44] For more on royal progresses and entertainments and the way in which they negotiated power and subversion see Logan (39), Elizabeth Archer (1-13).

the Stuarts, pageants served as "mobile 'mirrors for magistrates'," forcing the leaders to publicly confront pertinent questions regarding the state or the city (Bergeron *Civic Pageantries* 7). Apart from speculations on Elizabeth's marriage, questions on succession, or religious affiliations; royal entries and progresses also reminded the rulers of their responsibilities towards the subjects through allegorical figures like Nobility or Truth.[45] The Lord Mayors shows similarly resorted to older medieval pageantry, resurrecting these allegorical figures on a secular stage to admonish the new city Corporation.

In re-appropriating mystery plays, the Lord Mayor's triumphs not only emulated the court, but in fact continued a vital guild tradition. Across major European urban centers, guilds had for long resorted to pageants to advertise their wares and flex their economic and political muscles.[46] Medieval mystery plays financed primarily by the guilds from the fourteenth century, later midsummer festivities or elaborate pageantries in Antwerp, all catered to a civic public – one that recognized the role of these mercantile ventures even while the audience crowded to see

[45] Anglo for instance argues that "Civic pageantry, in particular, for all its apparent naivety, often carried meanings far beyond anything which its surface tedium might suggest" (3). Pageantry clearly allowed for dissent (Logan 35).

[46] Fairholt argues for instance that the English Lord Mayor's Shows owed their origins, partially at least, to the "den grooten Ommeganck" – processions held by guilds in Antwerp (ix). Fairholt links this display of pageantry to Antwerp's rising position as "the grand emporium of the world" (vi).

the staging of biblical incidents, or the procession of saints and giants.[47] By the seventeenth century, however, the Lord Mayor's shows gained pre-eminence for showcasing the prominence of London's ruling guilds.

In order to understand the role of the Lord Mayor's pageantries we must recognize that these spectacles not only reminded the public of the wealth that could be accumulated through trade, but ultimately performed for the audience the real authority of the guilds over the city and its daily governance. Orazio Busino, chaplain to the Venetian ambassador, was not alone in describing London as "a republic of merchants" (1264). John Stow, in his *Survey of London* (1603), recognizes the temporal government of the city in the hands of the Mayor and the Aldermen. Stow chronicles the sheriffs and mayors of London from the end of the twelfth century down to the opening years of the seventeenth to drive home the "antiquity" of the municipal structure (443). The mayor, sheriffs as well as the aldermanic bench in charge of the twenty-six wards came from the twelve liveried guilds of London, which as Bergeron informs, by 1538 had fallen into a rigid order of precedence: Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Taylors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vinters and Clothworkers.[48] Stow includes forty-eight other minor fraternities attending the feast at

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[47] Bergeron in *Civic Pageantries* (123) and Unwin (274) make the connection between the decline of midsummer festivities and the increasing popularity of Lord Mayors shows. Also see Bergeron for the influences of the medieval mystery plays on later civic pageantry (7-8).

[48] Bergeron informs that the mayor generally chose one of the two sheriffs from his own the guild, the second being elected at the Common Council (1260n, 1265n). For the rank of the guilds see Bergeron *Thomas Middleton*, 964.

Guildhall on Lord Mayor's Day during the reign of Henry VIII (476-78).[49] The Lord Mayor and aldermen adjudicated and settled differences amongst the companies, preserving the overall economic fabric of the city (Ditchfield 41).

The Mayor's governance of the city in turn reflected and magnified the well established structure of individual guilds. The guilds regulated their individual trades, often under Royal sanction in the form of charters (Ditchfield 39). Apart from protecting their monopolies, the guilds organized under a master or wardens: its liveried court, assistants, yeomen or bachelors

[49] Stow's list includes Dyers, Leather sellers, Pewters, Cutlers, Armourers, Wax Chandlers, Tallow Chandlers, saddlers, Brewers, Scriveners, Butchers, Bakers, Poulterers, Stationers, Innholders, Girdlers, Chirurgeons, Founders, Barbers, Upholders, Broiderers, Bowyers, Fletchers, Turners, Cordwainers, Painters-stainers, Masons, plumbers, Carpenters, Pouch-makers, Joiners, Coopers, linendrapers, Woodmongers, Curriers, Foystors, Grey Tanners, Tillers, Weavers, Blacksmiths, Loriners, Spurriers, Wire sellers, Fruiterers, Farriers, Bladesmiths. Ditchfield also includes the following while discussing London's minor companies: Clockmakers, Coachmakers, Cultlers, Distillers, Fanmakers, Feltmakers, Framework-knitters, Glass-sellers, Glaziers, Glovers, Gunmakers, Horners, Musicians, Needlemakers, Patten Makers, Plaisterers, Playing card makers, Shipwrights, Spectacle Makers, Tylers and Bricklayers, Wheelwrights, Woolmen. Unwin points out that the Twelve Liveried Companies were often seen as "Greater Mysteries", the word 'mistery' like 'craft' or 'art' being synonymous and implying trade (62).

and apprentices, also engaged in internal surveillance.[50] Ditchfield argues that the fraternities also undertook charitable enterprises – for instance the Fishmongers "had a grant of power to hold land for 'the sustentation of the poor men and women of the said commonality'" (42). The Goldsmiths' Charter similarly made provisions for those "crazed and [made] infirm" by mercury poisoning (42). Although the guilds often perpetuated economic inequalities amongst its ranks (between the masters and the apprentices for instance), its regulatory and charitable activities nonetheless fostered a sense of community – one that culminated in the election of the Mayor and aldermen.[51]

London, as a guild city, nonetheless witnessed rivalry amongst the fraternities, especially on the day set aside for celebrating the appointment of the new mayor. After all, the triumphs ultimately advertised the achievements of the current Lord Mayor's guild overlooking all others. Each year the London Companies tried to out-do each other, paying for lavish spectacles, hiring noted playwrights like Anthony Munday, Thomas Middleton, John Webster or even Thomas Dekker. Printed texts offered a crucial afterlife for these pageants, the guilds once again financing the usual run of 500 copies (Bergeron *Thomas Middleton* 965). The elaborate pageant carts and processions delivered a calculated message regarding the economic clout and splendor of the fraternity. Thomas Middleton, for instance, in *The Triumphs of Honour and Industry*, which marked George Bowles' mayoralty in 1617, praised the munificence of the Grocers' guild

[50] See Ditchfield for more on the guilds' "domestic tribunals" (38). In addition guilds frequently checked members for dishonest trading activities and doled out punishments (45).

[51] Kahl argues for the guilds preparing the way for an abstract community in the towns (xxix).

"to whom cost appeares but as a shadow" (A4r). Ostentatious display or even magnificence clearly played an important role in mercantile as well as courtly imaginings.[52]

The pageantry on the barges accompanying the Lord Mayor, or those waiting at St. Paul's Churchyard and Cheapside, usually elaborated upon the guild's activities (Fairholt 40). For instance, *Metropolis Coronata* (1615), written for the Drapers' guild featured Jason and the Argonauts on a quest for the Golden Fleece – a rather obvious metaphor for clothing.[53] In 1616, *Chrysanaleia*, paid for by the Fishmongers, showed fishermen drawing their nets, and "bestowing them bountifully upon the people."[54]Similarly, Businо informs us that at the celebrations for George Bowles there were "lions, camels, and other equally large animals, laden with bales from which the children threw various confections to the crowd" (72-4). The Grocers own records show that they paid five pounds, seven shillings and eight dimes "for 50 sugar loaves, 36lb. of nuttmeggs, 24lb. of dates, and 114lb. of ginger, which were throwen about the streets by those which sate on the griffyns and camels."[55] The Grocers, dealers in eastern spices, much like their fellow fraternities, used the Lord Mayor's show to advertise their wares. But their actions also publicly displayed English access to the spice lands and the wealth that could be obtained by trading with India.

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[52] See Anglo (2-4) for magnificence and ostentation as part of monarchic attribute. The London guilds clearly wanted their share of the glory, hinting at a tinge of continuing rivalry with the court.

[53] Fairholt 38. The Draper's guild frequently relied on this metaphor.

[54] As quoted in Fairholt 41. See also Bergeron *Thomas Middleton*, 1268n.

[55] See Fairholt Appendix, 165.

While on the one hand recurrent motifs like the Golden Fleece, or spice bearing islands fed into the self-imaginings of individual guilds, fabricating elaborate myths to valorize their trades, on the other hand the Lord Mayor's triumphs also attempted to re-interpret the city – its past, and contemporary status. London frequently appeared in these pageants as a character much like Truth, or Error, or India. The speech as well as the iconography of "London" differed substantially from pageant to pageant, leaving the city open to multiple appropriations and redefinitions. For instance while George Peele's 1585 triumph "The Device of the Pageant borne before Woolstone Dixi, Lord Maior of the Citie of London" linked London's prosperity with its hinterland – the "honest franklin and the husbandman" laying down "his sacks of corn at London's feet/And bring[ing] such presents as the country yields;" – Anthony Munday in 1605 envisions the city as a port and market for "spices, silks, and indigo."[56] This is not to suggest a

[56] In George Peele's 1585 pageant, a moor praising London links the city's prosperity with its hinterland:

> The honest franklin and the husbandman,
>
> Lays down his sacks of corn at London's feet,
>
> And brings such presents as the country yields. (A1r)

In Anthony Munday's *The triumphs of re-united Britania*, the Master of the ship Royal Exchange says:

All hayle faire London, to behold thy Towers,

After our voyage long and dangerous:

> Is seaman's comfort, thankes vnto those powers.
>
> That in all perils have preserved us.
>
> Our Royall Exchange hath made a rich returne,

simple binary of the city as a domestic space as opposed to a cosmopolitan hub – after all in Peele's triumph it is a moor who sings praises for the home-grown corn. Nonetheless, these fluctuating images suggest that London itself appeared to be expanding – negotiating multiple domestic and international forces. The guilds mediated this terrain, juxtaposing local concerns with the global.

Moors, Indians, Dutchmen, crowding the civic triumphs drew upon England's increased access to foreign lands – journeys chronicled by Hakluyt or Purchas and circulating in the print market. Simultaneously the Lord Mayor's shows documented the nation's trade expansion, a phenomenon that benefited most of the liveried guilds. Within this context of emergent global trade, the printed texts of London's pageants frequently referred to yet another mercantile force – one that worked in conjunction with the guilds and benefited from their grip over the civic structure. In *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* (1622) Middleton records that the allegorical figures carried the arms of the East India Company alongside those belonging to the Grocers' guild and the new Lord Mayor (C2r). Not only the Grocers, who dealt with eastern condiments, but other fraternities as well openly acknowledged their links with this new trading enterprise. For instance, Thomas Dekker's *London's Tempe or the Field of Happiness* (1629) included devices calculated to please the East India Company of which the mayor James Campebell, an Ironmonger, happened to be a "free and great adventurer" (45). In other words, the East India Company had thoroughly penetrated the existing network of London's guilds.

Laden with Spices, Silkes, and Indico (A4v)

It's interesting to remember that the Royal Exchange (after which Munday names his ship) of course functioned as this great mart for traders and trade goods from all around the world. See Levy Peck (31). Significantly Munday this year writes for the Merchant Taylors.

This imbrication of the Company and the London guilds, in fact, began at the very inception of the joint-stock venture. In autumn of 1600 a group of merchants led by the Lord Mayor himself petitioned the Crown for starting up a new Company to combat Dutch incursions into the east (Lawson 16). The East India Company, established on 31st December 1600 by royal charter, tapped into the resources and demands of the city guilds much like Muscovy Company, Levant Company, and other trading corporations (Lawson 1-16, Marshall 264-285). Moreover, in 1640 approximately half of the Aldermanic bench had stakes in the East India Company or Levant Company (Marshall 268). The East India Company members, therefore, doubled as power brokers in the London civic system.

For the East India Company, London functioned as an indispensable base. While West Country ports dealt primarily with Atlantic expansion, London merchants handled Asian trade (Marshall 268). The growth of the city as a port and financial centre to begin with had allowed its merchants to invest in the long and arduous voyages to the east (Lawson 9). A ready consumer base for exotic commodities, cultivated by fraternities like the Grocers since the middle ages, helped absorb a bulk of the imports of the East India and Levant Companies. London as guild city, therefore, also needs to be recognized as a hub of sixteenth and seventeenth century English trade expansion, and as the headquarters of the fledging, though extremely profitable East India Company. The prosperity of London merchants in many respects depended on trade with the east, a reliance made clear by the frantic efforts since the reign of Henry VII to directly access the spice lands.[57]

[57] Lawson 6, Foster 1. London merchants in 1599 also reacted to the Dutch incursions into the East Indies – direct access which threatened English merchants. Lawson claims "The return of six Dutch ships from the East Indian islands in 1599, laden with a vast array of oriental

London, as a market for eastern imports protected by powerful monopolies from the Crown, aroused the bitter resentment of merchants in England's outlying ports (Lawson 9). In addition, pamphleteers like Gerald Malynes, Robert Kayll and Edward Misselden openly criticized the nation's over-dependence on eastern commodities. However, the principal economic objections against the East Indies trade had to do with the drainage of bullion. In *Free Trade or The Meanes to Make Trade Flourish* (1622), Edward Misselden tries to assign causes and remedies for the shortage of bullion in England. He at first blames England's consumption of *all* foreign imports for the deficit. However, Misselden soon goes on to isolate the East India trade as the "Speciall remote cause of our want of Money" (13). He blames the lure of profits from the East Indies trade for funneling funds away from of all other possible enterprises. These resources tied up in the long delay on returns – a hallmark of the seventeenth century East Indies ventures – further deplete England's bullion supply (13-14).

Misselden makes explicit that he blames the East India Company over all other trading ventures, including the Levant Company, because it outstripped them all in its scope and profit. As he grudgingly admits, the East India Company "hath set on foot a very Mightie Trade, farre beyond any other Company of this Kingdome" (78). Given the volume of eastern trade, Misselden raises concerns regarding the economic, moral and religious aberrations that tainted the new venture. He argues that trade with the east predicated on an exchange of bullion for commodities unabashedly flouted the rule of "Wares for Wares according to the Law and nature

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commodities, set off what could only be described as panic amongst London traders connected with the Levant and its products" (16). The profit from this early Dutch voyage amounted to nearly 400 percent (Prakash 2). The creation of a company directly trading with the East Indies, therefore, transformed into a matter of economic survival in light of the Dutch activities.

of Commerce" (112). Thereby the East Indies trade registers as unnatural and illegal, violating sacred principles of commerce.[58] To this litany of accusations, Misselden adds a religious component: unlike trade amongst European nations, commerce with the East Indies sucks bullion out of Christendom (19-20).

These commercial, religious, even legal objections to the East Indies trade drew upon, and in turn stoked moral charges against eastern commodities and races. The Lord Mayor's shows staging the East Indies before a heterogeneous public comprising supporters as well as dissenters of eastern imports negotiated these moral and economic criticisms. In so doing the pageants also interpreted London itself – as a cosmopolitan city, teeming not only with European traders or diplomats, but also inhabited by East Indians, and English subjects willing to mark their bodies with foreign objects. The English marketplace boasted of a wide array of imported commodities such as velvet, lace, and taffeta meant for aristocratic clothing. However, during the seventeenth century Indian textiles also started appearing. And for the first time England gained direct access to the Spice Islands, importing pepper as well as the rarer spices in far greater quantities than ever before. Middleton's triumphs seem to belong to this moment of transition in England's relationship to its spices and other Indian commodities. Simultaneously these spectacles revealed popular conceptions of the East Indies – racial and religious stereotypes which the triumphs either attempt to negate or replicate.

V. *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*: Commerce, Empire and the Question of Spice

[58] Misselden argues that it is a divinely ordained duty to trade among nations (25). So commerce becomes a religious imperative, violations of commercial laws must in effect be seen as sacrilege.

> And now we see London an Indian Mart, and Turkie it selfe from hence served with Pepper, and other Indian Commodities, […]
>
> - Samuel Purchas. *Purchas His Pilgrimes,* 122.

Thomas Middleton's *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry* celebrating the mayoralty of George Bowles, a member of the Grocer's Guild, predictably referenced the lucrative spice trade which supplied the guild with some of its principal commodities. In the very "first Invention" awaiting the Lord Mayor's return from Westminster, Middleton includes a pageant of East Indians:

> A company of *Indians*, attired according to the true Nature of their Country, seeming for the most part naked, are set at worke in an Iland of growing Spices, some planting Nutmeg Trees, some other spice trees, of all kinds, some gathering the fruits, some making up bags of Pepper, every one severally imploide; These Indians are al active youths who ceasing in their labours, dance about the trees, both to give content to themselves and the spectators. (A4v)

The pageant claims a "truth" despite its artistic representation – an accurate depiction of the East Indians, their attires or nudity a crucial testament to fledgling ethnographic projects that appeared to validate actual access to the far flung spice lands. Moreover, the many pounds of precious nutmeg freely distributed by the guild (Fairholt, 1. 165, Bergeron *Thomas Middleton* 1268n), and the Indians in the pageant, seem to announce England's claim over spice producing regions of the East Indies. Such claims made before a public that comprised domestic and foreign members – including arch-rivals the Dutch, the Spanish and the Portuguese – appear invested in staking

the mercantile rights of a new English company. While Middleton's naked East Indian youth and later the "rich personage, presenting *India*" follow familiar civic pageantry traditions where foreign kings were often shown bearing the rich produce of their lands, we might also identify in these mercantile imaginings glimpses of the Roman triumphs which displayed actual kings after military victories. As Jonathan Gil Harris for instance observes, given the "hazards" of trade, the merchant "adventurers" often appropriated other, non-mercantile images to describe their activities (Jonathan Gil Harris 9-10). The triumphal pageants of Lord Mayor's shows similarly seem to conflate mercantile and older Roman imperial victory.

Nonetheless, the triumphs on 29th October, 1617 laid rhetorical claims to England's trade incursions into the east. Memories of Rome often willfully evoked at these civic shows betray other imaginings – of territorial aggrandizement and dreams of *translatio imperii*.[59] In fact, to many contemporaries trade and empire appeared inter-connected, shifts in commercial centers prompting the other all important transition.[60] Middleton's triumphs for the new lord mayor combine mercantile, proto-imperial and religious concerns, attempting to justify or reconcile one through the others. While many scholars dismiss England's frequent claims of possession in the east as idle fantasies,[61] the East India Company *did* at this time make certain short-lived

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[59] Armitage: "the rise and fall of empires and the consequent translation imperii from Assyria to Rome and from Rome to the multiplicity of contemporary polities" (44).

[60] See for instance "A Large Treatise of King Solomons Navie sent from Eziongeber to Ophir", included in Purchas or A discourse of the diverse voyages" by Galeatus Brutrigarius, published in Richard Eden's *Decades of the New World* (1555).

[61] See for instance Markley 48, Matar 10.

acquisitions. In other words, England's constant myth-makings did not always preclude actual territorial gains. In 1616, for instance, the Banda Islands of Run and Ai, attempting to escape Dutch persecutions, pledged allegiance to the East India Company. As John Keay documents, James I would come to be styled as "King of England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Puloway (Pulo Ai) and Puloroon (Pulo Run)" (4).[62] The English monarch clearly did not consider the control of the tiny East Indian islands as baseless fabrication! We may, therefore, read Middleton's *Triumphs* alongside expanding English trade networks, proto-colonial incursions into the east, and the fantasy of a Roman *translatio imperii*.

Within this context it is worth noting that both London and Pulo Ai appeared to share a common interest in spices – an interest that manifests itself in elaborate ritualistic performances. The natives of Pulo Ai and Pulo Run while surrendering to their new English overlords presented them with a nutmeg seedling crusted in the island soil. As Keay explains: "As well as the symbolism, it was an act of profound trust. Seedlings were closely guarded, and destroyed rather than surrendered" (4). In 1615 in his letter to Keeling, the East India Company factor at Bantam, the Bandanese governor re-stated his pledge to the English, specifying that "all spice, that all our Ilande shall yeald, we will only sell to the King of England, and to no other nacion in the world" (Bird wood 492-3). He reassures the Company merchants that only the English would be supplied with the rich produce of the land – spices that as we have seen included not only pepper but also the rarer nutmegs and mace. While the Bandanese staged their surrender around nutmeg saplings, the Grocer's Guild in London scattered nutmegs to the awaiting crowds and staged "Indians" running around spice trees. We can read in these performances a common appreciation for nutmegs as an economic and symbolic commodity. The staging of nutmegs and pepper on

[62] See also Wild, 26-28.

triumph carts, deliberately or unwittingly echo the surrender of Pulo Run and Pulo Ai. In any case, the pageant performs for the London public England's acquisition of eastern spices, and symbolically of "India" itself.

However, much like in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*, "India" fluctuates between genders, as well as class registers: we get the naked Indian youth and an Indian queen. Moreover, as Busino's account from1617 helps illuminate, the Indians in question wearing "bird feathers" also might have taken on the iconographic elements of the American-Indians. Watching from his window the Venetian chaplain describes in detail the thoroughly entertaining dance of the Triumph's first invention:

> The first car represented a very beautiful wood with fruit atop its trees, peopled by children dressed like Indians, with long hair on their heads and tinted faces, as if naked, with a little apron from which hung plumes, or more exactly red and variously coloured bird feathers. […] They [two other figures in feathers and tiger skin] played very well in the Indian manner as the children danced with much grace and many varied gestures, using their entire bodies – hands, head and feet – turning in good measure around the trees, changing from one position to the next in a way that amazed everybody. (175-188)

The "Indians" in question were actually young English boys in blackface, the Grocers on this occasion having paid "George Newball, keeper of Blakwell hall" £2 to house them (Fairholt 165). These "Indians," much like the spices displayed and distributed during the pageant, testify to the "Honor and Industry" of the English merchants that made English spice trade possible. Although initially Middleton's text specifies that the "Indian" youth "are set at work" planting nutmegs and bagging pepper, they soon, "ceasing in their labours," dance around the trees for pleasure. As a spectator Busino clearly found the dance quite enjoyable, noting the "grace and

many varied gestures" of the children. The dance itself, though part of long-standing pageant tradition, in this context enables us to view the spice trade as something enjoyable. After all, Middleton's text *and* Busino's account specify that the children dressed as "Indian" were in fact dancing. Running between spice trees, the Indians appear to inhabit an almost pre-lapsarian order that involved very little hard labor.

Earlier in 1583, Ralph Fitch, part of John Newberry's historic first mission to the East Indies, had described pepper as a marvelous plant that required little care:

> The pepper groweth in many parts of India, especially about Cochin; and much of it doeth grow in the fields among the bushes *without any labour*, and when it is ripe they go and gather it. The shrubbe is like to our ivy tree; and if it did not run about some tree or pole, it would fall downe and rot. (46 emphasis mine)

In this account, pepper, one of the most prized commodities of the medieval and early modern periods, grows miraculously in the open fields of India. Fitch insists that pepper bushes thrive "without any labour," although he goes on to add that the plants rot if unsupported by a tree or *pole*. The English traveler in his eagerness to praise the exotic plant, glosses over the indigenous labor that evidently tended the crop – propping feeble stems on poles, clearing fields for its cultivation. As Middleton would do a few decades later by showing dancing Indians who stop bagging spices, Fitch projects spice cultivation as essentially enjoyable. As we have seen in Chapter 1, early travel writers and commentators frequently associated India and the diversity of its flora and fauna with paradise. Fitch's description of pepper plants that need very little tending, and Middleton's Indians dancing around spice trees seem to belong to this tradition of regarding India as paradisal. However, such gestures also reveal the centrality of spices in English life.

In sixteenth and seventeenth century England the "miracle" of pepper extended beyond its amazing growth in the fields "without any labour." Spices were miraculous in other ways as well. They not only helped flavor or preserve meat, but also served as ingredients in medical mixtures. *A rich store-house or treasury for the diseased* (1596) lists pepper as a cure for four types of ague, colic, and bad breath. [63] It also apparently stimulates the brain and when administered with nutmegs, relieves migraines.[64] The Grocers guild, known earlier as the Pepperers of Sopers Lane (Ditchfield 80), fiercely regulated the quality of spices, forbidding any dealings in the "garbell" of pepper, or "evil" pepper, especially during the plague years (Rees 74, 94-5). The Grocers in fact fought furiously to retain their control over the apothecaries, even after King James granted them a separate charter in 1617 (Rees 142-151).[65] Spices, in other words performed multiple functions – churning in profits for the Grocers guild, and the East

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[63] Pepper mixed with beaten eggs or red sage and sugar cured ague (5-6); the Quotidian ague needed a pennyworth pepper (8); for Tercian and Quartaine ague see 9; with cumin and sugar pepper cured colic (51); for relief of bad breath see 67.

[64] Ibid. 28, 60.

[65] In 1614 the Grocers, hoping to prevent the creation of the fraternity of Apothecaries wrote to King James warning him that "many imperfect and unskillful persons do make and sell without restraint corrupt, and false medicines in and about London, and do likewise send them throughout your Highness' Kingdoms to the disgrace and prejudice of the noble science of physic and of the learned physicians and of such as are skilful in the art of apothecaries, and to the imminent danger of your subjects healths and lives" (as quoted in Rees 145).

India Company, making meat palatable, and last but not the least, miraculously curing a range of ailments.

Middleton's triumph builds on these benefits of trading and consuming spices, ultimately presenting spice-production as pleasurable rather than laborious. If *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry* problematizes Indian labor, then it also reveals an uneasy relation with staging the contributions of ordinary English sailors and workers, praising instead the London guild merchants. In fact Middleton includes a 'Pageant of severall Nations' to stress the unity and harmony attainable through 'Trafficke' and trade with the East Indies. A Frenchman and Spaniard stand in line to congratulate the new Mayor and the Grocers guild. Later, other nations – an Englishman, Irishman, Turk, Jew, Polander, Barbarian, and Russian – join the procession, greeting George Bowles. Such obviously idealistic, even Utopian depictions of global commerce ran contrary to the brutal realities of trade wars waged by European nations over the control of spices. India, doubling up as the Spice Island, did not promote amity among nations, but instead triggered bitter feuds. Even within London, pamphleteers like Robert Kayll or Gerald Malynes, as we shall see, churned out detailed criticisms against the East Indies trade – dissents which the elaborate fabrications of the civic show sought to overcome.

The 'Pageant of severall Nations,' even the East Indian youths dancing in the heart of London, symbolically at least, underscored the potentially cosmopolitan nature of the civic space. The prospect of "discovering" India in a corner of Cheapside, transformed London, inverting tropes of travel narratives wherein Englishmen ventured outside to encounter an exotic landscape. Instead, the 'invention' of spice plants and naked Indians subverted London's urban space, inviting its new Lord Mayor to identify the foreign within a familiar domestic frame. Moreover, by blackening their faces, English children hired by the Grocer's guild for the

duration of the pageant "become" Indian. In fact, these transmutations during the Lord Mayor's shows reflected the quotidian reality of seventeenth century London – a reality, that as Linda Levy Peck documents, was marked by increasing numbers of new shops which stocked up on luxury commodities from around the world (2). An increase in population, coupled with the lapse of sumptuary laws, initiated a new era of wants – desires for consumption, conspicuous or otherwise that shops in Cheapside, the Royal Exchange, and London Bridge catered to.[66] Expensive silk from Naples, assorted wines, tobacco along with spices, calico, precious gems, even plants from the East and West Indies made their way into England.[67] London, the guild city, therefore also saw itself as a global mart, a cosmopolitan urban space. But we may also see in these consumption trends and civic pageantry a process of domestic transformation whereby what is English also includes the other.

VI. *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue*: East Indies, English mariners, and the question of luxury

In 1615, Robert Kayll's pamphlet *Increase of Trade*, far from valorizing English cosmopolitanism and rising foreign imports, had instead turned to mourning the decimation of

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[66] See Levy Peck 1, 14, 45.

[67] Levy Peck 225. Sukanta Chaudhuri points out that "About this time, scores of exotic plants were being introduced from America and the East, and the first Botanical Garden in England was opened at Oxford in 1621" (174). Bacon in his essay 'Of Gardens' isolates the hyacinthus orientalis as one of the imported plants, which as Chaudhuri notes came from the Near East (177).

natural resources, especially timber for purposes of the East Indies trade. The two of course were inter-related, for as we shall see, his condemnation of logging for ship building purposes went hand in hand with his growing alarm at the arrival of East Indians onboard the Company vessels. Of course the influx of Indians, in part at least, was the result of high mortality rates amongst English sailors who set out for the east. The returning ships short on crew took on board natives from the Indian subcontinent as well as the spice islands. If Kayll blames the East India Company for deploying more ships than any other trading venture, and thereby almost single-handedly destroying the nation's prized woodlands, then he also links up the loss timber with yet another indigenous resource – English sailors – that the Company seemed to be recklessly squandering:

> Now then as wee have said before, that the Indian ships die not an ordinary death of ships: and that wee have shewen likewise before, that men doe die extraordinarily in this Voyage, which is almost incredible: they are distressed likewise after their death, and that is very apparant [sic] by the mean account made to their heires of what they had in possession in their lifetime, by what should otherwise be due to them in their purchase, by the calamities of their wives, children, and friends, after their death. (as quoted in Digges 14)

The pamphleteer draws attention to the high rate of mortality on the long voyages, and the plight of the ordinary sailors, who to begin with often belonged to the "unsettled" rural or urban population that Patricia Fumerton speaks of (Fumerton *Unsettled* 81, 100; Rediker 16-17).[68] In

[68] As Rediker observes agrarian reforms like the enclosures displaced rural population who then often took to the seas for employment. Although medieval Laws of Oleron guaranteed crewmen a portion of the cargo space, quarrels often broke on amongst the crew, as the extent of room for

answer Dudley Digges a supporter of the East India Company, observes that "His Maiestie was loth to have our Timber spent on Beggars nests (that growing scurse [sic] upon this Citie)" (28). Digges's comment suggests that the timber in question was in fact put to better use – building ships for trade that would generate profit for merchants and revenue for the Crown, instead of tenements for the poor. However, implicit in his retort is the idea that perhaps the lives of poor sailors were similarly put to better use. Other advocates for the Company also attempted to explain away all objections to rising mortality rates by referring to the growing riches brought home by the enterprise. For instance Thomas Mun in *A Discourse of Trade* (1621), trying to stymie persistent outcries against the high mortality of East India Company sailors and the impoverishment of their widows, holds out a vision of untold eastern riches which even the meanest sailor could with due diligence acquire. Mun insists, " the wife receiveth all that is found due vnto her husband (if hee doe not otherwise dispose it by will:) and this often happeneth to be more money then euer they had of their owne together in any one time" (43). If the widows find themselves destitute, then Mun suggests that the dead husbands are to blame, not the East India Company.

In *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* (1622), celebrating the mayoralty of Peter Proby, yet another freeman of the Grocer's guild, Thomas Middleton sets up an exchange oddly reminiscent of Kayll's diatribe against the loss of English woods and sailors. In the triumph, "A blacke Personage representing *India*," reclined on a bed of spices, sums up trading relations with the East India Company:

Of Gummes and fragrant Spices, I confesse

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private trading depended ultimately on your rank onboard the ship. For more see Rediker 130-132.

My Climate Heaven do's with abundance blesse,

And those you have from me, but what are they

Compar'd with Odors whose sent ne're decay,

And those I have from you, plants of your youth,

The Savour of all eternall Sweet Truth,

Exceeding all the odiferous sent,

That from the beds of Spices ever went (B2r)

India, or the 'Blacke Queene' in this Triumph alludes to multiple exchanges – spices for saplings of English youth, odoriferous gums for eternal Truth. The truth in question was Christianity, in particular Protestantism, distinct from Henrietta Maria's Catholic Humanism that we will encounter in the next chapter. However, the chain of exchanges set up by the Black Queene deserves closer attention. Her "Gummes and fragrant Spices" are the main tokens of exchange. However, while initially praising them as gifts from heaven she quickly goes on to devalue their aroma. Instead what appears far more valuable is what the English bring: the "eternal Sweet Truth" or Christianity. However, this exchange seems mediated through the "plants of your youth" that India also acquires in the process. But what might these plants be? I would like to argue that these "plants of your youth" could well stand for the young English sailors and merchants who lost their lives to the arduous voyage east. The triumph appears to evoke a logic familiar to critics of the East India Company: the bartering of English sailors for pepper, nutmegs and cinnamon. For instance, the epigram 'Currit mercator ad Indos' included in *The House of Corrections* (1619) by I.H. set up the opposition between worthless East Indian trifles and the loss of English lives and bullion:

Some fondly think our great East-India trade

Hath all our other Merchants beggars made;

And that they carry men, and money store,

To kill our mariners and make us poor.

These are confuted all, and held as vain,

In eighteen months they now return again:

Return a *gain* said I? Nay, but a loss,

If they lose men and money, but for dross.

I.H.'s epigram joins the raging debate on the depletion of bullion from the country, especially at the onset of the trade depression of the 1620's. The insistence that the East India Company, ultimately, did not provide any sustainable gain found credence in pamphleteers like Gerard Malynes. In *The Centre of the Circle of Commerce* (1623), Malynes opposing Misselden's new found support for the East Indies trade, argued that in fact "we find no center" or gain in such undertakings (114). Much like the mercantilist critics, in his epigram, I.H. conflates the drainage of money – often viewed as the life blood of the nation in mercantilist discourse – with the death of the sailors (Gil Harris 3). William Vaughan in *The Golden Fleece* (1626) makes a similar point, adding yet another factor to the list of grievances against the East Indies trade:

If Englishmen, which Indias Coast doe range,

May not have Spice for English goods exchange:

Far be it for a Christian to transport

Our Treasure hence to a Heathnish port.

'Tis better with plaine cheere to make our Feasts

Then with repentance late to welcome Guests.

……

Beware, lest whilst greate bulkes of ships yee raise,

In hope of Gaine, yee reap not more dispraise.

How many men have Fevers to our cost,

Bred of suns heat, and salt meates have we lost? (57)

Religion, as much as bullion loss or mortality of sailors, appears to be a cause for concern in Vaughan's satire. After all, English treasure and English sailors dissipated in non-Christian ports, the ships returning with commodities that enriched the heathen's coffers. Vaughan desperate to rectify this two-fold loss to pagan lands advocates shunning spices altogether, preferring a bland "plaine cheere" for seasoning at feasts instead of the wide array of spices available in early modern kitchens and banquet houses.

Middleton's triumph similarly seems to imbricate the death of soldiers and religious concerns with the exchange of bullion for spice. The Black Queene's proud advertisement of "Gummes and fragrant spices" which her "climate do's with abundance blesse" in fact appears to allude to the major mercantile objections against the East Indies trade. Middleton's "India" offering multiple exchanges deftly avoids mentioning bullion, resorting instead to more general terms like "blest Commerce." India's reluctance in specifically naming money in a pageant aimed at displaying the wealth of the London guilds reveals anxieties as well as criticisms unique to the East Indies trade. The East India Company of course, relied heavily on bullion exports, going against the mercantilist cry, "Wares for Wares according to the Law and Nature of Commerce."[69] The reason for this blatant violation of natural and commercial codes lay in

[69] Misselden, *Free Trade* 112. As Gil Harris observes in *Sick Economies*, trade amongst nations ultimately came to be seen as the will of God, especially in Misselden. Simultaneously, England by joining other nations and following universal laws of commerce, also adhered to "the doctrine

England's inability to vent its manufactures, especially wool, in the east. Low demand for English products coupled with a disparity in the value of silver between Asia and Europe, drove the East India Company merchants to rely on Spanish *piastra fuerte* or rials of eight for trade.[70] Nonetheless, although the Company sent large shipments of bullion to the east, it also attempted to vent commodities – indigenous lead and tin, iron imported from Spain, African ivory, coral from Marseilles, Leghorn and Venice (Chaudhuri 1965: 114; Lawson 24). In fact, as Chaudhuri observes, the East India Company depended on an intricate international trade network – accessing Spanish silver mined in the Americas from marts in Middleburg and Amsterdam, and engaging in 'country trading' in the East Indies – selling textiles from the subcontinent to purchase rarer spices from the Indonesian islands.[71]

For critics of the East India Company, its export of assorted commodities paled in comparison to the drainage of bullion which sustained the bulk of the spice trade. In 1621, a

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of cosmopolitan universal economy advanced by classical writers from Plato to Plutarch" which advocated "dispersal of necessary resources and commodities around the world" (7). See also Fumerton *Cultural Aesthetics* 175.

[70] Chauduri 1965: 120. See also Chaudhuri 1963: 30. The Asian markets only accepted the Spanish 'piastra fuerte' or rials of eight "made familiar by the century-old trading activity of the two Iberian powers" (30). The East India Company therefore, had to negotiate territorial as well as commercial legacies of Iberian empires. See also Farrington 39.

[71] Chaudhuri 1965: 114-123; 1963: 23-32. For more on country trading see Wild 22; 41. The rarer the most expensive spices – nutmegs, cloves, mace came from Moluccas or the Spice Islands (Wild 14).

memorandum presented by Sir John Wolstenholme to the Privy Council outlined three routes by which "Christendom is drained of the greatest part of the silver that comes out of the West Indies" (Chaudhuri 1965: 120). One of these channels served Aleppo for raw silk, the other Mocha for calicoes, while the third fed Surat and the Spice Islands for "indigo, pepper, cloves, mace and nutmegs."[72] What is important in Wolstenholme's formulation is that bullion gets drained not just from England, but from a unified Christian body. Trading with Indians was after all trading with non-believers. Even at Privy Council meetings then, the East Indies trade raised concerns – not simply because it drained England of its bullion, but because such exchanges ultimately enervated Christendom as a whole. Unlike the new world which supplied and arguably aided Europe with bullion, the old world sapped the life-blood out of Christian nations.

In *The Centre of the Circle of Commerce* Gerard Malynes clarifies this specter of eastern greed. Hinting at a sinister conspiracy he argues: "The King of Bantam and other Princes of the East doe the like, selling their corruptible Wares for silver to hoard up the same" (133). For Malynes then, the flow of bullion eastwards results not from the vagaries of commerce or international demand, but instead stems from the evil machinations of avaricious potentates. Thereby, East Indian commodities emerge as pawns in these plots – corruptible not simply because they comprised in part perishable goods, but also because of their impact on the very economic fabric of England. Not only Malynes, but almost all dissenting pamphleteers interrogated the moral as well as fiscal implications of foreign imports.

Early modern discourses on commodities, or economic systems, ultimately not only drew on contemporary theories of disease, but also fed into debates over race and religion. The effects

[72]Chaudhuri 1965: 120. Chaudhuri notes that Wolstenholme estimated that England exported £1,500,000 worth of bullion to Asia annually.

of the East Indies trade came to be increasingly understood in pathological terms. As Jonathan Gil Harris argues, mercantilists understood the depletion of bullion in terms of a blood disorder – more specifically as a hemorrhage arising from internal as well as external causes. As we have seen the East Indies trade was driven not only by the stupendous profits but also by domestic demands for eastern commodities. The term "consumption," implying the wasting or burning up of humors and "ills of the blood," often summed up pathologies of the body and the economic system (Gil Harris 165). Not surprisingly consumption also implied attitudes of domestic spending, especially conspicuous consumption. Englishmen, by recklessly consuming foreign commodities, wasted or even vented essential bullion. Malynes insists on this humoral interpretation of the economic depression: "the said body (by a surfet, or overbalancing of forreine commodities) is fallen into a consumption" (129). A gluttony or "surfeit," – excesses in appetite prompts a disorder – a dangerous purgation or flux. Malynes outlining a remedy insists "First, That the continual Flux of exportation of our moneys must be stopped" (130). Flux, of course, an early name for dysentery, denoted "an abnormally copious flowing of blood, excrement, etc from the bowels or other organs" (OED). English consumers gorging on spices and other eastern commodities threatened to undermine the domestic economic body by excreting streams of bullion.

Moreover, as Malynes' proscription on "surfet" suggests, conspicuous consumption not only threatened the nation's economic condition, but had moral, even spiritual implications. After all, an over-indulgence of appetites, or gluttony, amounted to a cardinal sin. For Malynes, eastern goods, corruptible – in fact corrupting, tempt English consumers to their moral and economic doom. This religious dimension of conspicuous consumption or indulgence in luxury attracted a fair amount of attention from early Christian fathers. In *City of God*, Augustine

identifies "luxuria" as lust, opposing it to sobriety and chastity (Berry 88). However, as Christopher J. Berry argues, in addition to Saint Augustine's formulations, medieval imagery drew on Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (c. A.D. 400) to understand epic battles between virtues and vices as well as the role of the seven deadly sins (94-95).

Middleton's nubile "India," richly attired or reclined on a bed of spices, tempting the London public, has interesting iconographic resonances with Luxury familiar in medieval manuscripts, church paintings and pageants.[73] Prudentius, unlike Augustine distinguished *Luxuria* from Lust, although she retained her seductive attributes (Berry 95). In *Psychomachia*, Luxury, riding a golden chariot, nearly wins the battle for the Vices, effectively winning over all Virtues, except for Soberness, with her charms. In her tirade Soberness isolates not only expensive possessions, but also excessive consumption as the hallmark of Luxury. Later Prudentius describes Luxury as gluttonous "Luxus edax," gorging on her own remains (423-25, 455). Greed, taking the center stage after Luxury's defeat, picks up the baubles and gold left behind by her predecessor. In medieval imagination, then, luxury had links with at least three of the seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony and greed. Moreover, in Prudentius, Soberness identifies the effects of luxury as effeminacy – a charge that implicates gender as well as racial stereotypes.[74]

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[73] See for instance Woodruff's *The Illustrated Manuscripts of Prudentius*

[74] Soberness exhorting the other Virtues cries, "Is it to chains like these you will give up hands trained to war, with these bind your stout arms, to have your manly hair confined by a gilded turban" (303-304). As S. Georgia Nugent observes, although the Virtues are allegorized as female figures, "they are dressed as and comport themselves as males" (16). Even when

As S. Georgia Nugent argues, Prudentius most likely had in mind older associations of luxury with eastern emasculation (17). For the Greeks – Aristotle as well as Plato – luxury resulted in a softness, one that left the individual incapable of defending himself. Later Roman writers built on this idea of effeminacy, aligning luxury and its castrating effects with an exogenous source – especially the east (Berry 69). Moreover, Roman moralists worried that eastern luxuries might ultimately ruin the empire, subverting social hierarchies (Levy Peck 6). Commodities from the east, acquired either as part of conquest or trade, ultimately threatened to corrupt functioning empires and pious individuals, making them weak, effeminate like the eastern races which produced them. Pliny the Elder, who condemned Roman use of eastern luxuries, also described India as a land where "nature made [things] monstrous" (46). Stereotypes of East Indians as physically, even morally inferior drew not just on Classical sources, but on the Bible as well. Often seen as the descendants of cursed Cham, the East Indies emerged as shorthand for religious and physical aberrations in medieval texts like Mandeville's *Travels*.[75] By extension eastern commodities appeared as tainted, threatening to infect consumers on moral, religious as well as economic fronts.

Soberness delivers an anti-effeminate speech, she is in fact still addressing women – a paradox that complicates the allegory (18).

[75] Mandeville repeated discovers the monstrous in India or 'Inde'. He later goes on to claim:

> And these three brethren had seisin in all the land. And this Cham, for his cruelty, took the greater and the best part, toward the east, that is clept Asia, and Shem took Africa, and Japhet took Europe. […] And of that generation of Cham be come the Paynims and divers folk that be in isles of the sea by all Ind. (145)

The question that obviously arises, however, is how could spices, seen as essential for preserving meat, and even bestowed with medicinal properties fall into the category of corrupting commodities? Gil Harris offers one possible answer, arguing that within a humoral discourse of the economy, foreign drugs were often regarded as spurious, or as "lethal agents" of infection (109). In *The Description of England* (1587), William Harrison interprets the transplantation of exotic herbs in terms of contamination and conspicuous consumption. He contrasts the abject neglect of indigenous flora with the proliferation of "strange herbs, plants, and annual fruits […] daily brought unto us from the Indies, America, Taprobane [Ceylon], Canary Islands, and all parts of the world, the which, albeit that in respect of the constitutions of our bodies they grow not for us, because God hath bestowed sufficient commodities upon every country for her necessity" (265). Harrison blames the aristocracy and mercantile community for violating divine dictates in consuming and collecting the foreign, and for failing to utilize England's natural resources.

It is important to note that Mandeville implicitly links up the innate cruelty of Cham with the false religion of the "Paynims" or Pagans. Purchas, writing in the seventeenth century, attempted to redeem East Indians, and arguably eastern commodities, by insisting that after all they descended not from Cham but from Shem:

> Africa fell to Chams part, with some adjoying Regions of Asia; Asia itself in greatest part to Shem, and Europe with Asia Minor, and the Northerne parts of Asia to Japeth. […]
>
> But for Joctans sonnes, we find in and neere to India, the prints of all their names. (83)

Interestingly, Purchas still associates African with the cursed race of Ham. However, Indians as descendants Joctan – Shem's grandson, no longer appear doomed. Clearly economic factors played a role in the decision to align different races or geographical regions with Biblical figures.

Moreover, spices, as ingredients in sweat-meats served between courses, or at the end of feasting in banquet houses, stimulated already over-active appetites. As such eastern food-stuff not only fed into the discourse of excess and gluttony, but also triggered fears of strange, even monstrous cravings. As Fumerton observes, the strangeness of the East Indies trade – its long delays in returns, as well its dependence of bullion violating "natural" laws of commerce, translated into aberrations of consumption – more specifically into metaphors of cannibalism (Fumerton *Cultural Aesthetics* 169-206). If Pliny or Mandeville understood the east as monstrous, then imports of the East India Company threatened to corrupt the English body, transforming the domestic into the alien, the natural into the deviant. In addition, not only spices, but other eastern imports – calicoes, indigo, precious gems – went against Christian proscriptions against gluttony, lust, and luxury. English aristocracy and the mercantile community, consuming and trading in these products replicated the cycles of eastern excess and effeminacy, corrupting, enervating the domestic economy as well as the religious community.

Middleton's *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* appears to position itself against both these rival traditions, celebrating conspicuous consumption, yet leaving open the possibility of critiquing the tolls of foreign trade. On the one hand the Black Queene, India, dressed in splendid attire sits on the chariot evoking all the wealth and luxuries of the east. We can also presume that on October 29th 1622 as on previous occasions spectators attired in "rich clothing of every colour, including gold and silver" watched from the buildings lining the street, and children hired by the Grocer's Guild scattered spices to the crowd. However, on the other hand, we may also read in the Black Queene's speech the plight of the English sailors seen here as plants of the nation. This rhetorical move triggered by the exchange of dead sailors for spices, threatens to undermine all claims to "Vertue" either by the guild or by the East India Company which joined

the mayoral procession on this occasion – displaying its arms alongside those of the city and Peter Proby.[76] Nonetheless, once again "India" offers a possible solution, signaling a second strand of exchange – one that not only promises to redeem a misguided pagan (the Black Queene herself) but also alleviate the moral objections to the luxury trade, especially to East Indian commodities. In her opening speech, "India" insists that she trades spices for Christianity, thereby sublimating the East India Company's profits as well as the conspicuous consumption of the aristocrats and the mercantile community. Such exchanges not only attempted to redeem East Indian commodities but ultimately attempted a metaphorical whitening of a dark India.

VII. The Whitening of India

Waiting for Peter Proby at Saint Paul's Churchyard, the first pageant in Middleton's *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* featured fragrant spice plants and "A Blacke Personage representing India, call'd for odours and riches, the Queene of Merchandize" (B1 v). In his earlier spectacle for George Bowles in 1617, Middleton had similarly described India as "the Seate on Merchandise" (A4v). Such essentialized metaphors evoke the almost mythic status of the East Indies in European imagination as the land of untold riches and commodities. Simultaneously, the label and the pageant cart stage for a heterogeneous audience England's access to the fabled lands in the east. If Cleopatra in Shakespeare's play escaped the fate of being paraded in a Roman triumph, then "India" succumbs to greeting the newly appointed Lord Mayor in Middleton's triumphs (Loomba 126).

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[76] See *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue* C2r.

Unlike *The Triumphs of Honour and Industry*, in *The Triumphs of Honor and Vertue*, the Black Queen actually delivers a speech to the new mayor and the London audience. In the printed text Middleton describes how "Commerce, Adventure and Traffique, three habited like Merchants" reveal a bright figure representing Knowledge to "India" reclined on a bed of spices. Soon after this dramatic moment, "India" formally explicates her transformations through Knowledge:

> You that have the eyes of Judgement, and discerne
> Things that the best of Man and Life concerne,
> Draw neere, this blacke is but my native dye,
> But view me with an intellectual eye,
> As wise men shoote their beames forth, you'le then find
> A change in the complexion of the mind;
> I'me beauteous in my blacknesse, O yee sonnes
> Of Fame and honor, through my best part runnes
> A Spring of living Waters, cleere and true,
> Found first by Knowledge, which came first by you,
> By you, and your examples, blest Commerce,
> That by Exchange settles such happinesse, (B1v-B2r)

"India" sets up an opposition between outer appearance and inner virtue – a binary that can be breached only through Knowledge. Although initially she gestures towards a more general, philosophical faculty, later the Black Queene slips into the rhetoric of discovery made familiar by travel narratives. The ability to see through the "native dye" translates into a geographical enterprise – mapping India's streams, evaluating the terrain. Such journeys through the heart-

land of the East Indies hold out the promise for happiness – made possible through "blest Commerce" and Exchange. Not surprisingly for a pageant celebrating mercantile clout, Commerce emerges as a panacea.

Nonetheless, "India" acknowledges a hurdle that must be overcome – a visual repulsion standing in the way of the joys that await any merchant willing to penetrate her inner reaches. The blackness of the Queen, not simply as a dye, but also as a racial, religious and moral index in early modern vocabulary threatens to jeopardize erotic, territorial as well as mercantile possession of the East Indies, ultimately casting aspersions on the commodities sold by the Grocer's guild and the East India Company.

Although India, much like the bride in the biblical Song of Songs declares her beauty in the face of blackness, she acknowledges the short-comings of her outer dye, asking the London audience to recognize the altered complexion of her mind. In portraying "India" as a sumptuously attired black queen, Middleton both replicates and departs from contemporary representations of eastern bodies in cartography. Title pages of Gerard Mercator's *Historia Mundi or Mercator's Atlas Englished* (1635) or Peter Heylyn's *Cosmographie* (1652) distinguished Asia, – fully robed and white from nude or scantily clad America and black Africa. The medieval Catalan Atlas (1375) by Abraham Cresques had earlier inserted pale faced figures including the Sultan of Delhi to signal important landmarks in Asia, coloring in the legendary African king Messe Melly.[77] This is not to suggest that India or East Indians inevitably featured as white in early modern imagination. Instead, "India" as a category was often conflated with Africa as well as the West Indies, appearing alternately white or black, descendants of the deviant Cham or as the lineage of righteous Joctan (Hall 85). Nonetheless, Middleton's decision

[77] For more on cartographical depictions see Harris 48-53.

to adopt the Black Queen for his pageant publicly stages the racial, gendered, and by extension the moral difference of the East Indies – deviations which can ultimately be whitened by conversion. "India" declares that closer examination shall reveal "A change in the complexion" of her mind. But a complexion changed to what? While her subsequent language of discovery suggests a transition from obscurity to light, indecipherability to decipherability, ignorance to knowledge, such transformations also evoke the older investigations of changing the skin color of Indians and Ethiops. To wash the Ethiop was to make him clean, and pure. But it was also intended to wash away his physical blackness to reveal *another* complexion – a complexion which, when read within emergent proto-racial categories, would be white.

Middleton's "India," eventually links up the light of Knowledge shown on her with Christianity, combining the logic of religious transformation with economic exchange:

> All wealth consists in Christian holynesse,
> To such celestial knowledge I was led;
> By English merchants first enlightened,
> In Honor of whose memory, onely Three
> I instance here, all of this Brotherhood free (B2r-v)

The triumph places English merchants at the heart of the conversion activities in India, overlooking England's belated arrival in the spice lands and the Jesuit presence protected by the Portuguese. Instead, Middleton offers a uniquely Protestant version of Christianity, one that presumably causes the split between India's outer darkness and inner light, triggering "A change in the complexion of the mind." As Kim Hall suggests in her discussion on black ladies in early modern sonnets, such transformations fed into proto-colonial desires, ultimately marking the male poet "as the final arbiter of 'fairness'" (114). However in Middleton's Triumph the Black

Queene speaks, demanding for herself an inner beauty despite her blackness. But this beauty still remains reliant on the English merchants' ability to convert her to Christianity.

Nonetheless, "India" resurrects for the London public the well worn problem of whitening the Ethiop or "the man of Inde." Commentaries seeking to explain blackness drew on diverse myths and legends, often attaching moral overtones to physical differences. While some linked blackness to over-exposure to the sun, or the result of Phaeton's rash incompetence, others understood darkness as an infection, transmitted through seminal fluids, tainting subsequent generations.[78] Whitening or washing the Ethiop as a trope in the Geneva Bible (1560) or Bishop's Bible (1568) questioned the limits of moral transformation. In *Two Hundred Poosees* (1566) Thomas Palmer conflates Aesop's fable on the impossibility of altering the hue of an Ethiop with biblical overtones, transforming blackness from a physical characteristic to a religious marker:

> Why washest thou the man of Inde?
>
> Why takest thou such pain?
>
> Black night thou mayest as soon make bright
>
> …….
>
> Indurate heart of heretics
>
> Much blacker than the mole;
>
> With word or writ who seeks to purge,
>
> Stark dead he blows the coal. (98-99)

[78] For more on discussions of race, India and blackness during the early modern period see Singh *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues*, Hall, Loomba.

Palmer's epigram, easily substituting the Ethiop with the "man of Inde," associates blackness with heresy and a moral obduracy. Such stereotypes question the possibility of conversion and spiritual reclamation, especially amongst groups which had for long been associated with physical and often gastronomical monstrosity. So the very possibility of a true conversion remains suspect. The persistence of these religious and racial stereotypes becomes evident in Orazio Busino's account of Middleton's earlier civic show, *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*, where he had misidentified "a golden ball" held up to India by Industry as "the Indians religion of the sun above the grouping of various other figures" (190-91).[79]

Despite her public declaration of new-found faith, in the *Triumphs of Honor and Vertue*, Middleton's "India," still black on the outside, negotiates this pre-existing terrain of physical and moral incapacity. As such the true extent of her conversion remains suspect. Do the English merchants and the Grocer's guild really succeed in performing the impossible – converting and whitening the woman of Inde? The Black Queene's allusion to the Song of Songs offers one possible solution. Interpreted by later commentators as an allegory of Christian conversion, these references to the biblical poem in Middleton's triumph, attempt to recast the gendered East Indian body as pliant – suited for religious as well as proto-imperial transformations. In fact, as Hall argues, Solomon often associated with the biblical lyric emerged as "an important subtext for English colonialism" (108). Such appropriations of Solomon tended to justify mercantile and territorial aspirations through religion.

For instance "A Large Treatise of King Solomons Navie sent from Eziongeber to Ophir" in Purchas' *Pilgrimage*, which links up London with older eastern marts and empires, ultimately

[79] It's interesting to note here that the Venetian chaplain also appears to conflate East and West Indians – a conflation presumably motivated by religious as well as racial stereotypes.

seeks out Solomon as an archetype. Ships sent out by Solomon to the East Indies or Ophir for untold riches not only enrich the king's coffers but also adorn the Temple (6). The search for India therefore combines material wealth with the logic of conversion. As early as the fifteenth century, Spain and Portugal used religion to justify their efforts at disrupting existing trade routes to the East Indies (Rubies 8). In fact as Shankar Raman argues the Portuguese explorers to India came seeking for Christians and Spices, attempting to expand the scope of the *reconquista* (64). Such endeavors drew on the legends of "Prester John, Emperor of Ind" – the fabled Christian ruler whose fertile and rich lands medieval writers like Mandeville vividly described.[80] Biblical

[80] Mandeville 122, 178. For Mandeville Prester John emerges as the undisputed monarch of all Ind. It is undoubtedly curious as to why Mandeville insists on a Christian ruler for Ind or India. Subsequent generations of travelers, right down to the early modern age repeatedly embarked on quests to track down Prester John. Mandeville in his prologue posits the Holy Land as a Christian inheritance. He claims: "And if we be right children of Christ, we ought for it to challenge the heritage, that our Father left us, and do it out of heathen men's hands" (4-5). Christ's associations with the Holy Land leaves it open for later appropriations by Christendom. Prester John fulfills a similar function in the East Indies. He registers as a Christ-like figure keeping the flame of Christianity alive amidst all the monstrosities of Ind. The very presence of a Christian monarch legitimizes European quests for Ind. Prester John establishes a legacy, an inheritance much like Christ which all subsequent Christians can claim. Just as Mandeville predicates the crusades on a perceived right, the penetration into the Ind seems validated by the welcoming vision of the benevolent Christian ruler maintaining his authority over all the surrounding monstrous creatures. For more on Prester John see also Raman 62.

and mythical figures like Solomon, or Prester John provided Europeans with religious prototypes and excuses to journey east-wards conflating commercial desires with religious quests.[81]

Despite difficulties faced by Jesuits as well as English merchants and chaplains in converting stubborn monster-worshipping East Indians,[82] religion remained a valid public motive for investment of resources in the spice lands. In fact, when East Indians embraced Christianity it turned into a grand spectacle – one staged in the heart of London. As Imitiaz Habib documents, contrary to common misconceptions East Indians did in fact walk the streets of early modern England. Robert Kayll keenly aware of this influx mourned that whereas East India Company ships "carried forth with Christians, they are brought home with heathen" (Digges 11). East Indian crewmen appeared with increasing frequency at the Company's shipyards in Deptford throughout the seventeenth century (Habib 5), often seeking financial compensation from the trading enterprise.[83] Any conversion of reprobate East Indians therefore quite naturally presented Company supporters with a great public relations opportunity.

In December 1616, at St. Dionis Backchurch, the East India Company proudly presented for baptism Peter Pope, an East Indian from the region near the Bay of Bengal (Habib 1-15).

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[81] For more on the imbrication of commerce and religion see Loomba's Introduction to *The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* (1716), Hall 64. Also, Fuller highlights the "disavowal of profit" as a strategy for English expansion to the Americas (12). Arguably we need to recognize religion as a motivating factor – real or rhetorical – for commercial and territorial expansion not just for the East Indies but elsewhere as well.

[82] See Partha Mitter *Much Maligned Monsters*. Fitch's account. Rubies on Muslims

[83] For more on the East India Company's growing responsibilities see Habib, Barbour.

Almost two years earlier he had been brought by Captain Best to London, and the Company noting his "apt to learne" decided "to have him kept here to schoole to bee taught and enstructed in religion."[84] His baptism at St. Dionis was a culmination of these united evangelical efforts of the Company. As Habib points out the "carefully orchestrated, demonstrative public spectacle" at the hub of London's mercantile district, included King James, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Privy Council, city Aldermen and members of the East India and Virginia Companies (Habib 2-3). The staging of the real-life conversion brought together the mercantile, as well as religious heads of the nation, revealing the nexus of economic profit and territorial and symbolic gains underwriting the East Indies trade. Patrick Copland, chaplain to the East India Company, and the man responsible for shipping Peter Pope back to England for baptism and to learn English and Latin,[85] writing to his superiors in 1615 requested directions for the conversion ceremony, "being of opinion that it were fit to have it publicly effected, being the first fruits of India."[86] The pliant, converted East Indian, known only by the Christian name King James selected for him, joins the spices, exotic plants and animals imported out of India. As "first fruits" Peter Pope symbolically performs an early instance of English proto-colonial possession and conversion – a transformation which, as Copland insists must be made in public.

Middleton's *Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* in many ways restages in St. Paul's courtyard the conversion that took place in St. Dionis Backchurch in 1616. "India" in the Lord Mayor's pageant publicly testifies to her conversion, offering herself and her spices as "first fruits" to the

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[84] Court BK III. 202. British Library

[85] Habib 3.

[86] Calendar of State Papers 421.

East India Company and the Grocer's guild. Moreover, India's speech outlining her faith in Christianity sets up an estimation of wealth that ultimately overturns the logic of economic exchange. Towards the end of her speech India declares "All wealth consists in Christian holynesse," effectively rendering eastern spices, calicoes, even indigo as worthless. If this rhetoric edges dangerously close to that of satirists who wailed the loss of English sailors for Indian "dross," then it is religion which restores the East India Company's enterprise sublimating all profit incentives into desire for the religious salvation of heathens.

For Middleton's "India," Christianity – not bullion emerges as England's principal export. Chronicling English explorations Richard Hakluyt had suggested a similar exchange in his dedicatory epistle to Sir Francis Walsingham. Hakluyt declared: "I doubt not in time shalbe by us carried the incomparable treasure of the trueth of Christianity, and of the Gospell, while we use and exercise common trade with their merchants" (xxi). Before the domestic and transnational public of the Lord Mayor's show, "India" performs this ideal transaction, offering herself and her spices for Knowledge attained through Christianity. The Black Queen metaphorically journeys from ignorance to light, from outer darkness to inner fairness – her willingness to convert transforming her into a cooperative subject. Significantly, unlike Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness* where King James brings about the transformation of blackness to fairness, here in Middleton's triumph it is the merchants wielding the magic of Christian knowledge who affect the change.

Moreover, Christianity effectively offers to overrides all objections to the East Indies trade in a mercantile public. Eastern imports recognized as luxury commodities now become an indispensable part of the grand proselytizing mission undertaken by English merchants abroad. In fact for the Black Queene, by the end of her speech spices seem less like commodities

involved in an equitable exchange and more like a tribute: after all true "wealth consists in Christian holynesse." In other words, Christianity by becoming an important factor in this exchange, ultimately disrupts all rules of commerce by rendering all commodities valueless. Under such circumstances spices, calicoes, even gems no longer function as trade goods but as offerings of gratitude or submission. Therefore Middleton's triumph stages a scene of "native compliance" which legitimizes English claims to India, despite its belated arrival in the subcontinent and the Spice Islands.[87]

Christianity in Middleton's triumph not only whitens "India" but also implicitly attempts to similarly morally bleach eastern luxury, England's conspicuous consumption and the profit incentives of the East India Company and the city guilds. Moreover, criticisms against the loss of English life – particularly of "unsettled" mariners evoked earlier by the Black Queene – find similar sublimation in the Company's religious mission. Middleton's "India" joins the ranks of eastern princesses familiar on Elizabethan and Jacobean stage who embrace conversion.[88] Much like the European merchants who marry these royal converts, legitimizing their stakes in the land, the triumph presents London guild members as evangelizing heroes. The pageantry on October 29th 1622 moves on to the "Throne of Vertue, plac'd neere Saint Laurence-Lane end"

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[87] Raman 10. In *Framing India*, Raman highlights the existence of two sets of legal codes for territorial acquisitions: "possession by virtue of discovery (the pre-emptive code) and effective possession (dominative code)." While the pre-emptive code privileged discoveries, the pre-emptive code looked for signs of actual possession – including signs of submission from the natives (10).

[88] For instance Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Island Princesss*; John Dryden's *Amboyna*.

investing the new Lord Mayor and the mercantile community with both honor and virtue. After all, by converting heathens London merchants participate in a project that is both honorable and virtuous. Much like the *Tryumphs of Honor and Industry*, not the natives but the guild members emerge as practitioners of the moral qualities hailed in the pageantry.

Despite its efforts at redeeming eastern commodities and the activities of the East India Company, *Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* also reveals the limits of whitening India within the civic public of the Lord Mayor's shows. Although the Black Queene claims that she has joined the Christian community, – a move that brings her inner light, externally she remains dark – visually still distinguished as a racial other. Thereby, she becomes a split subject, white and black all at once. Yet her presence much like the naked dancing Indian youth in the earlier *Tryumphs of Honor and Industry* reconstitutes English civic space to symbolically include East Indians.

VIII. Conclusion

The Lord Mayor's shows traced a crucial civic ritual – one that publicly reestablished the mercantile bonds of the city. As Edward Muir speculates the walled space of the city sparked "a high level of civic consciousness […] often competing with and outlasting loyalty to religion, king, political ideology, faction and even community" (232). This often confined civic space fostered a sense of community – one that nonetheless negotiated the limits of insiders and outsiders, of locals and foreigners (Muir 233). Middleton's triumphs as part of the civic ritual drew on these plural identities and entities within the city. In fact in 1620 Thomas Middleton became the City Chronologer as a reward for "his services performed to this City" – specifically

his contributions to the Lord Mayor's pageants.[89] The pageants on the morning after Simon and Jude's day clearly occupied a vital position in the self-imaginings of early modern London.

The repeated references to India or the East Indies not just by Middleton, but also by other pageant writers betray the importance of spices, indigo, calicoes, exotic plants and animals in the flourishing consumer culture of seventeenth century England. As such the Lord Mayor's shows staged the merchant's access to the spice lands, and attempted to answer persistent criticisms against the East Indies trade while simultaneously negotiating the extent to which racial others could enter, inhabit and perhaps even participate in the imagined community of London.[90]

The London publics constituted just one amongst several possible venues for forming national, transnational or even cosmopolitan identities. The heterogeneous public that Busino alluded to in his report to the Contarini brothers leaves open multiple possibilities of interpreting Middleton's triumphs by disparate interest groups. The explicit and implicit references by these pageants to other genres like travel narratives or pamphlets, and hence to other publics reveal Middleton's awareness of the diverse mix of audiences and agendas for his shows. Nonetheless, the Lord Mayor's shows presented for the contingent public deliberately orchestrated representations not only of the East Indies, but also of the mercantile ventures of the guilds themselves in an effort to woo, temporarily at least, the domestic and foreign spectators and participants.

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[89] Steen 37-38. After Middleton's death the position of City Chronologer was given to Ben Jonson (Steen 4).

[90] I am thinking here of "imagined communities" (Anderson 5).

Chapter Three

Playing an Indian Queen: Neoplatonism, Ethnography, and *The Temple of Love*

I.

As cheerful as the morning's light,
Comes Indamora from above,
To guide those lovers that want sight,
To see and know what they should love.

- William Davenant's *The Temple of Love*, 1636 (289)

Il quale tanto in apparato di scena quanto ne' superbi abiti di varieta di danze riusci veramente degna d'una tanta grande Regina.
[This as much for the staging as for the magnificent clothes, the variety of dances succeeded in being truly worthy of such a great Queen]

- Amerigo Salvetti, February 1635 (Calendar of State Papers, Venetian 334n).

On Shrove Tuesday 1635, one year after Charles I danced in Thomas Carew's *Cœlum Britannicum*, Henrietta Maria dazzled audiences as Indamora, queen of Narsinga in Davenant's *The Temple of Love*. The printed text of *The Temple of Love* clearly identifies the Banquet House at Whitehall as the site for its staging, despite growing concerns over the smoke from the torches

damaging the Rubens ceiling during the performance of masques.[91] Not surprisingly, these masques performed during the heyday of Charles's personal rule have subsequently been identified as either "the greatest theatrical expression of Caroline autocracy" (Orgel, *Illusion of Power* 83) or else as Henrietta Maria's most ambitious self-representation yet (Lewalski 311). On February 23, the Venetian ambassador Anzolo Correr in his routine dispatches to the Doge and Senate wrote favorably on the new masque which the English Queen had already performed four times (334). The Caroline court, he reported had been exceedingly preoccupied with festivities and entertainments, especially the latest masque. A fellow Italian, Amerigo Salvetti of Tuscany also praised Henrietta Maria's grand spectacle, commenting on "the magnificent clothes, the variety of dances" that "succeeded in being truly worthy of such a great Queen." Clearly *The Temple of Love* mostly found an admiring audience.

However, one of the dissonant voices came from within the ranks of English courtiers. Sir Thomas Roe, King James' former ambassador to the Mogul court, notorious for his immaculate English wardrobe as well as his reluctance to learn native languages, confided to Bishop Hall that "The masque was yesternight performed with much trouble and wearisomeness" (510). The grand spectacle of Henrietta Maria as an Indian queen with her own troupe of loyal priests evidently did not sufficiently entertain the former ambassador. Although Roe diplomatically desisted from explicating in his letter why he found the performance so

[91] Susan Foreman writing the history of Whitehall notes that concerns over the preservation of the Rubens ceiling prompted a search for alternate venues for masques – primarily the Masque House built in the Preaching Place in 1637. Earlier the redesigned Cockpit also served as a location for royal masques. Incidentally, the Banquet House itself was designed by Inigo Jones in the Palladian style and completed in 1622 (14-15).

troublesome, what stands out for our present purposes is that on this occasion Henrietta Maria appeared before a courtly public as Indamora, sovereign of the Hindu kingdom of Narsinga. Her predecessor Anne of Denmark was not the only Stuart queen to present herself before a courtly audience as an exotic subject, a black-faced daughter of Niger in *The Masque of Blackness*. The stakes of such mediations were high, for as Stephen Orgel observes, masques relied on establishing a co-relation or authenticity that went beyond mere impersonation (Orgel, *Illusion of Power,* 39). Henrietta Maria therefore did not just *play* the part of an Indian queen, but in some respects *was* her.

The Temple of Love presents us with an instance of "Indianizing" not ordinary Englishmen in the streets, but the English court. This chapter will examine this "strange" phenomenon of "becoming" Indian at Whitehall on Shrove Tuesday 1635. As we have already seen in Chapter One, the earliest natural histories and ethnographies beginning with Herodotus identified India with a different sort of monstrosity – an incontinence of bodily functions and gender characteristics. In the economic discourse of the early seventeenth century, trade with India, given its reliance on bullion, seemed similarly "strange," an aberration of the natural law of "Wares for Wares" (Fumerton 174, Misselden 112). At first glance *The Temple of Love* seems to replicate this older vocabulary by repeatedly marking Indian plants, animals, and peoples as "strange." This strangeness affects our understanding not just of early modern representations of India but also of the Stuart queen herself. Strictly speaking, Henrietta Maria was a foreigner – a stranger; the daughter of Henry IV of France; and a Catholic. However, perhaps it is fair to suggest that a masque designed to uphold the fantasy of political stability and virtue at the Stuart court might be doing more than channeling just these troublesome associations. Perhaps by

reading the masque's invocation of the "strangeness" of India alongside an expanding market-place for curiosities we may recognize a new mode of engaging with the Indian.

Throughout the seventeenth century, despite arguments against trading with India, imports from there rose steadily, fed by demands not just for spices and calicoes, but also for exotic beasts and curiosities that filled Europe's wonder-cabinets. Indeed during this period the strange had emerged as a much desired commodity, especially when attached to aristocratic and mercantile collecting. As Steven Mullaney, Marjorie Swann, and Paula Findlen for instance argue, wonder cabinets, or *kunstkammeren*, as well as popular broadsides and travelogues, celebrated the strange objects brought home by merchants from abroad.[92] Moreover, this was also the time when the first Botanical Garden opened in England (Chaudhuri 174). Indian objects increasingly made their presence felt in England as part of this growing marketplace for curiosities.

Within this context *The Temple of Love* seems to replicate the circulation of strange Indian objects and people, ultimately exposing the English court and the Stuart queen herself as members of an increasingly globalized, even cosmopolitan world. I will show how in the masque this "strange" appeal of India – its exotic flora, flauna and singing Brachmani priests –

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[92] Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press: 1988), 61; Marjorie Swann, "Introduction." *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 26; Paula Findlen, "Inventing Nature: Commerce, Art, and Science in the Early Modern Cabinet of Curiosities." *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen (London and New York: Routledge: 2002), 299.

intersected with other court ideologies, especially Caroline Neoplatonism, transforming conventional approaches to beauty and virtue. As such not just Indian plants and animals, but natives too seem to become "collectables." While her Indian performance allows Henrietta Maria to stage her own religious alterity as benign, they nonetheless transform her as Indamora into a "mixed" or even hybrid subject: ambiguously Indian and European all at once. Through this formulation I hope to situate the masque in its historical moment, when commodities and people from the India were making their presence felt in English life, and "becoming Indian" was surprisingly easy.

II. Courtly Public and *The Temple of Love*

The courtly public for the Stuart masques of Twelfth Night and Shrove Tuesday generally included a section of the nobility, foreign ambassadors and other dignitaries as well as presumably a host of palace workers pulling at the stage machinery or keeping the torches burning. However, the chief spectator for *The Temple of Love*, was none other than Charles I himself, seated in "state" on the raised platform facing the stage (Orgel 1975: 42). Nonetheless, despite the distancing of the proscenium from the audience, any easy differentiation between performers and observers at Whitehall repeatedly collapsed – a confusion marked by the joining of the masquers with the onlookers at the end. Moreover, as Stephen Orgel notes, during the actual performance "no house lights were dimmed," leaving no one in doubt that "the spectators' own costumes were part of the show" (1975: 30). The court masque after all retained and even

heightened the aura of publicness that the court, but more specifically the monarchic body, exuded – an aura manifest through repeated performances of splendor and authority.[93]

Despite such associations of publicness with the sovereign himself or even the aristocracy, the extent and true nature of this publicity has provoked much discussion in recent times. For instance although Jurgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* initially categorizes monarchic or even feudal representation as *inevitably public*; he later distinguishes the public sphere from both the market economy and the state. Thus although the monarch's every activity is rendered *public*, it remains suspect as to what extent the court or the manor house can be recognized as a *public sphere*. Early on Habermas alludes to this confusion between the public and private in the High Middle Ages – an imbrication that arguably remains pertinent during the early modern period (5). Later, writing about the social structures that brought about the bourgeois revolution, Habermas holds out the possibility of the court as a public sphere, claiming that "Only with the reign of Philip de Orleans, who moved the royal residence from Versailles to Paris, did the court lose its central position in the public sphere, indeed its status *as* the public sphere" (31). Nonetheless, the question remains: to what extent can we recognize the court, so much a part of the state apparatus, as a legitimate public sphere?

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[93] For instance Habermas states that "not by accident did the English king enjoy "publicness" – for lordship was something publicly represented" (7). Habermas goes on to speculate that the manorial lord (and one might argue that the king himself as an embodiment of god)

> displayed himself, presented himself as an embodiment of some sort of "higher" power." The concept of representation in this sense […] can "occur only in public … there is no representation that would be a 'private' matter." (7)

cf: Linda Levy Peck and splendor as something that is specular and needs to be staged.

Subsequent theorists, especially feminist critics like Rita Felski, have challenged the exclusion of state and commercial institutions from the realm of public spheres (Robins xxii); while others like Nancy Fraser insist that Habermas' formulations revolve around just one possible public – to the exclusion of all others. Riding this wave of recent emendations to Habermas, Ann C. Dean in *The Talk of the Town: Figurative Publics in Eighteenth-Century Britain* persistently argues that despite being associated with the state, "through print, … and through larger and larger circuits of communication the eighteenth-century courtly sphere amplified it's performances for a growing audience" (22). By extension, seventeenth century, or even sixteenth century court performances which were routinely printed, as a matter of course inevitably entered the public sphere, and therefore must be recognized not just as public documents in a limited sense but as constitutive of a larger public – or a public sphere.

Participation in a public, in this second sense, not only implies an arena or mode of communication, but also a space for political action and identity formation – at communal, national or even transnational levels. Given the high stakes of identifying modes of speech or performance as publics, James Van Horn Melton for instance lashes out against the hegemony of print. Instead, while writing about early modern German lands, Melton argues:

> [P]rint was only one medium through which individuals and institutions constructed publics and communicated with an audience. Religious iconography and ritual, sermons, songs, civic architecture, court ceremony, street gossip, acts of violence were also forms of communication […] (2)

For Melton, not just print culture, but other verbal, visual or performative stances could and did constitute bonafide publics. Under these formulations, even without their subsequent appearance as printed texts sold near Whitehall, the masques demand to be recognized as catering to or even

creating a contingent public. As an indispensable part of a public sphere, most specifically as a courtly public, the masques contributed to crucial discussions regarding identity, individual agency, and national policy.

The masque itself, as recent critics have observed, functioned as a vital component not only of monarchic power, but also of courtly negotiation, permitting members of the royal family or the aristocracy to publicly stage their personal agendas or grievances.[94] Almost inevitably the public of the Stuart masques recognized this topical urgency, leading to squabbles amongst ambassadors over seating orders. James I often found ways of insulting foreign dignitaries by means of the seating arrangement – for example, banishing Venetians to the back of the royal box – while on other occasions masques like *Neptune's Triumph* had to be cancelled because of ambassadorial bickering (Orgel 11, Evans 171). Moreover, as Orgel argues, the level of actual comprehension of the masque in part also depended on the closeness of the observer to the royal dancer – texts were presumably handed out in advance to select few, explicating the significance of the elaborate spectacle. The printed copies available at stalls near Whitehall replicated this hierarchy of access to the monarch and textual meaning.

Davenant's *The Temple of Love*, like most other masques, nominally at least forwarded the political aspirations of the royal dancer. Henrietta Maria as Indamora, the Queen of Narsinga, purges the lasciviousness triggered by the evil Persian magicians of the anti-masque, restoring chaste love, order and harmony to the court. The performance of the English Queen's masque coincided with the visit of Gregorio Panzini, the first accredited representative from the pope (Lewalski 311). Henrietta Maria's unabashedly overt religious practices – her visit to the Tyburn

[94] For more on masques as tools for voicing grievances and monarchic restrictions on their staging see Martin Butler "Courtly Negotiations."

gallows where she knelt and prayed for the souls of executed Catholics, her efforts to intercede on behalf of those imprisoned for their Roman faith, in many ways culminated in the creation of her chapel at Somerset House.[95] The queen laid the foundation stone of this chapel or "temple" in September 1632, an event witnessed by over two thousand people. Veveers argues that given Inigo Jones' penchant for alluding in his masques to buildings which interested him, the mist covered Temple of Love could well be a topical reference to the still incomplete chapel (136-7). The actual inscription of the chapel referred to the building as "Templum Hoc," and Jones himself, known for his crypto –Catholic leanings, had undertaken the task of designing the interiors (137).

Therefore, *The Temple of Love* celebrated the Queen's power to purge all evil, especially in the anti-masque, even as a more permanent temple slowly rose at the Somerset House. The Capuchin priests, favored by Henrietta Maria, had already been assigned to the unfinished chapel. Davenant's masque then, not only marked the marital bonds between Henrietta Maria and Charles or even their sovereign authority through neoplatonic images, but also publicly staged the English's Queen's religious allegiances – affiliations which ran contrary to her husband's Anglicanism or her subject's Puritanism. It is within this context that Henrietta Maria and her ladies-in-waiting "become" Indian in the course of the masque, presenting a spectacle of "strange" habits, customs, and religious priests before a courtly public.

III. *The Temple of Love* in critical discourse

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[95] White observes that at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on 26th June 1626 Henrietta Maria made a pilgrimage to Tyburn (25); for more on her efforts to intervene for the Catholics see 31.

From the time of its first performance Davenant's masque has elicited a range of responses, from the admiration of the Italian ambassador to Sir Thomas Roe's petulant dismissal. For modern scholars *The Temple of Love* appears appealing because of its ability to shed light on the Caroline court. Erica Veevers for instance in *Images of Love and Religion* draws out the indebtedness of Henrietta Maria's neoplatonic ideals to prevalent French fashions of préciosité that flourished in salons and later at the Bourbon court. Veevers argues that the court circles dominated by Henrietta Maria's mother Marie de Medici combined préciosité with Devout Humanism, a milder form of Catholicism, giving prominence to the concept of *honnêteté* as a model for guiding feminine behavior (2-3).

As an ideal *honnête* emphasized traditional qualities of "piety, chastity, compassion, beauty, and modesty, but at the same time insisted that women take a lively part in the activities of society, helping it by displaying both virtue and attractive grace" (27). Therefore, Henrietta Maria, as Divine Love or Divine Beauty in the court masques, ultimately helped exemplify these virtues not only as an ideal representation of monarchic power, but also as emblematic of her individual perfection as a woman. Such self-representations which stressed beauty and love more over found favor with the Stuart queen's Capuchin priests who along with the Franciscans emphasized the senses, imagination and emotion in contrast to the more sterner Jesuits (22). The masques of the 1630s coming before the political turmoil of the next decade celebrated the wedded bliss of the royal couple as well as their collective authority over England. As Veeers points out, Henrietta Maria's personas in these masques much like Elizabeth's self mythologization as the "Virgin" Queen aimed at consolidating her role during the years of Charles' personal rule.

Moving away from the French influences on these royal entertainments, Barbara K. Lewalski turns instead to the Puritan reception of the masques. In "Milton's *Comus* and the politics of masquing" she sets Milton's masque for the family of the Earl of Bridgewater in opposition to the court performances of Charles and Henrietta Maria. Lewalski argues that Milton not only critiques Cavalier licentiousness, Laudian rituals and Charles' reintroduction of the *Book of Sports* through the figure of the arch-masquer Comus, but ultimately offers a model of virtue that runs contrary to Henrietta Maria's own self-imaginings. Milton portrays his Lady as virginal in direct contrast to the Queen's performances of Divine Beauty or Divine Love as exemplifications of wedded bliss. More specifically, Lewalski interprets *Comus* as a possible reaction to Davenant's *The Temple of Love*, a masque that made "the largest claims yet for the power of the Queen's Neoplatonism to reform both poetry and court ethos" (311). Performed three years after William Prynne's denunciation of "Women actors, notorious whores" in *Histriomastix* (1632), Davenant's masque included in its audience the first accredited representative of the Pope to England, Gregorio Panzini (311). Lewalski, therefore, places both *The Temple of Love* and *Comus* within a brewing debate and unease over growing Puritanism on the one hand and the Queen's openly Catholic agendas like the building of a chapel in Somerset House on the other.

Todd Butler in *Imagination and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* follows Stephen Orgel or Martin Butler in categorizing the masque as an instrument of royal power. Nonetheless, Butler re-inserts the poet as an important component, one whose will enters into dialogue and often conflict with the royal patrons, opening the door to subversion. He specifically draws attention to Davenant's *Temple of Love*, performed in the middle of Charles' personal rule as being populated by unusually threatening forces in the anti-masque – Persian

sorcerers whose emphasis on materiality and physicality appears to hold true in the end, even after the emergence of Henrietta Maria as Indamora. The Queen's attempts at controlling the magicians not only amount to a repudiation of personal passions but also symbolize "mastery over the passions of a commonwealth" – a move that remains suspect at the end (83).

Stephen Orgel himself, apart from speculating on the immediate political impact of *The Temple of Love*, crucially draws attention to its eastern setting. In "Plato, the Magi, and Caroline Politics: A reading of The Temple of Love," he closely examines the attires and designs to highlight the misrepresentations and conflation inherent in Inigo Jones' depictions of the east. Axel Stähler in "Between tiger and unicorn: The Temple of Love" similarly turns to investigating Inigo Jones' influences for the masque. Stähler argues that Jones ultimately derived the main plot of *The Temple of Love* from the 1616 entertainment *Guerra d'Amore* staged in Florence. The spectacle planned by Guilio Parigi included as its chief participants Cosimo II de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany in the guise of Indamoro, King of Narsinga, as well as his younger brother Lorenzo de' Medici as Gradamento, King of Melinda (179). Both brothers competed for the love of Lucinda, "Regina dell'India." Stähler goes on to list the iconographic borrowings and deviations of the Stuart masque.

Although more neglected than Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* for instance, Davenant's *The Temple of Love* has received a fair amount of critical attention. However, most of these studies (with the exception of Orgel and Stähler) either completely ignore or underplay the eastern setting of the masque. Even Stephen Orgel and Axel Stähler while providing valuable readings of visual culture, do not sufficiently delve into the significance of the English queen emerging as an Indian regent before a courtly audience. This chapter then, intends to cast a closer look at the aristocratic role-playing, situating such performances once again within the multiple

strands of circulation of eastern bodies, objects and a dialectical understanding of the strange and the familiar.

IV. Travel and collecting in *The Temple of Love*

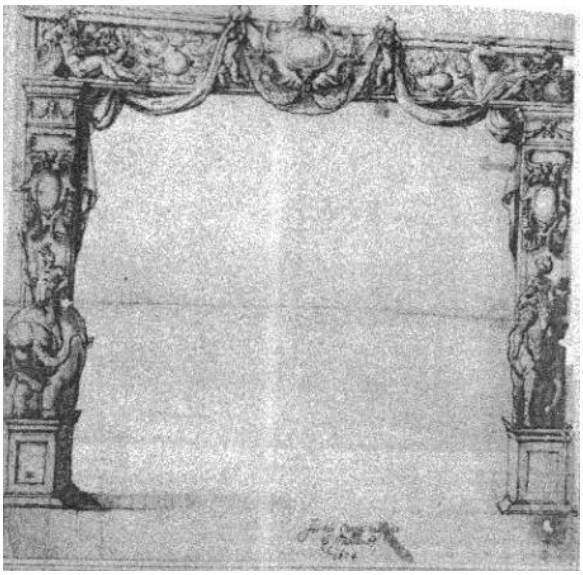

Figure. 2.1. Proscenium of *The Temple of Love*

In the argument to the Shrovetide masque for Henrietta Maria, Davenant presents Divine Poesy, the Secretary of Nature as a messenger to Indamora, Queen of Narsinga. The arrival of Divine Poesy signals the hour for the re-establishment of the Temple of Chaste Love "in this island" under "influence" of the Indian queen's beauty. Davenant's masque locates the English court as the site for the renewal of virtuous love – a trope familiar in the grand transformative claims in other Caroline entertainments (Lewalski 311). By stressing the central role of beauty in the rediscovery and recovery of the Temple, Davenant undoubtedly alludes to Henrietta Maria's previous performance as Divine Beauty in Aurelius Townsend's *Tempe Restored* (1632). Instead

of standing in isolation, then, *The Temple of Love,* needs to be recognized as a continuation and elaboration of the neoplatonic themes that Charles and Henrietta Maria adopted as a metaphor not only for their private wedded lives, but as a public testament of their rule (Lewalski 311).

The plot of the masque builds up this expectation of the queen's redemptive powers. Descending from a rosy cloud, Divine Poesy alerts the Greek poets Demodicus, Homer, Hesiod and Sappho to the imminent arrival of Indamora and admonishes them to abandon their old wanton tunes and compose songs more fit for a virtuous queen. Soon after Divine Poesy and the poets disappear into the mists, the grotto-dwelling evil Magicians of the anti-masque take center stage, threatening to corrupt a group of Persian courtiers who have recently converted to Indamora's "Platonical" ideals. However, ladies in Indamora's train intervene just in time, saving the physical and moral purity of the courtiers. The Queen of Narsinga herself appears at long last, welcomed in by her troop of singing Indian priests – the ancient Brachmani. Order returns to court, the lead masquers dancing with courtiers, rejoicing at Indamora's chaste love for her Royal Hero.

The emergence of the Temple of Chaste Love, long hidden from evil lascivious magicians, in England instead of Asia, has interesting implications for the figures in the masque. Davenant's newest entertainment aligns itself almost entirely with an Oriental plot – noble Persian youths described as "borderers on India," sinister eastern sorcerers, and the queen of Narsinga guide the principal action of the masque. Nonetheless, the location of the Temple in the North Sea island transforms all the eastern figures into travelers. While Englishmen along with their other European counterparts journeyed eastwards, Davenant presents a reverse movement – one undertaken more often by eastern cargo. The journey of the noble Persian youth, or even Indamora herself, mirrors the transport of precious silks, calicoes, spices and indigo. Implicitly,

the arrival of Indamora to the Caroline court suggests not just a return of virtues but also the accumulation of exotic commodities familiar to the aristocratic public.

The Temple of Love seems to repeatedly rely on these images of mercantile or even military appropriation. Davenant's text describing the proscenium which greeted all courtly spectators makes explicit this impetus for claiming and cataloguing eastern objects:

> At the lower end of the Banqueting House, opposite to the State, was a stage of six feet high, and on that was raised on ornament of a new invention agreeable to the subject, consisting of Indian trophies: on the one side, upon a basement, sate a naked Indian on a whitish elephant, his legs shortening towards the neck of the beast, representing the Indian monarchy: On the other side an Asiatique in the habit of an Indian borderer, riding a camel; his turban and coat differing from that of the Turks, figured for the Asian monarchy: over these hung shield-like compartments. (287)

The script, supported by extant sketches by Inigo Jones (Fig 1), suggests a fractured stage – divided between Indian and Persian halves, although later such distinctions prove to be arbitrary – the river Tigris miraculously supplying water to both regions. As *trophies*, these objects, human and animal, suggest military victory, much like the elaborate triumphs in the Lord Mayor's shows. Jones' sketches re-emphasize this undertone of military acquisition – organizing both Indian and Persian figures vertically on two poles reminiscent of the actual trophies erected by the Romans in battlefields and public places to mark successful campaigns (OED). Davenant's description of the proscenium goes on to catalogue other familiar iconographic elements – the rivers Tigris and Meander flanked by a tiger and unicorn respectively. The tiger

apart from being a pun on the river's name,[96] along with the unicorn, already registered as creatures unique to India in books such as Konrad Gesner's *Historia Animalium* (1551-58) and Edward Topsell's *The Historie of Four-Footed Beasts* (1607). This opening scene sets the tone for territorial, ethnic, even religious role playing adopted by the royal performers for the duration of the masque – elaborate fictions which helped perpetuate myths of English access to the east and the Caroline court's growing imperial ambitions.

Stephen Orgel in fact links *The Temple of Love* to the return of the Earl of Denbigh, one of Charles' chief councilors (and brother-in-law to the demised Duke of Buckingham)[97] from his embassy to Persia and India (1998: 663). Davenant, of course, as the court poet, might have been called upon by his royal patrons to allude to these recent travels in the Shrovetide masque. Whether or not Denbigh's embassy instigated the plot for the Queen's masque, the East Indies remained of topical relevance during most of the Caroline years. The 1620's and 30's saw a marked decline in the profits of the East India Company. A famine in Gujarat in 1631 forced the

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[96] Orgel argues that the tiger "doubtless has more to do with its linguistic relation to the name Tigris that with its habitat. […] Again there is nothing Persian about unicorns […]" (1988, 666). Orgel is right – there is nothing 'Persian' about the unicorn. However, Topsell following Gesner identifies unicorns as creatures found in India. While Gesner unequivocally decrees that the unicorn's "locus natalis" is India (1:781), Topsell speculates at length on the fabled creature's land of origin. Topsell records sightings in Ethiopia, and even in unnamed corners of the New World. India, however, eventually registers as the region "stored with unicorns" (714).

[97] The Duke of Buckingham of course was one of King Charles' favorites and a rival to Henrietta Maria's influence on her husband. For more on this rivalry see Veevers 14.

Company to move its base from Surat to Masulipatam in the east coast, seriously affecting returns. In England pamphleteers reeling under a recession targeted the Company, railing against its export of bullion and falling profits.[98] As Lawson, Chaudhuri, and other historians have noted, the prosperity of the East India Company had a direct impact on the Crown, which had grown to rely on customs from the lucrative trade. During the economic downturn, Charles I in an effort to protect the distressed Company offered to become a shareholder.[99] Ironically, in 1637 the king granted William Courteen the license to trade, forming the Assada Company which briefly compounded the East India Company's woes by resorting to piracy (Marshall 276, Lawson 34). If nothing else Charles' actions suggest that he was acutely aware of the revenue possibilities of East Indian trade. The Stuart monarch's interest in the east clearly went beyond his support for any one mercantile company.

However, the proscenium ultimately represented not only England's proto-imperial ambitions, but a liminal space – a threshold between reality and fiction, east and west, or even the strange and familiar. The proscenium architecturally reproduced the limen and its transitory effects, its status as a gateway or bridge (Schechner 58). Jones' sketches and Davenant's description of the proscenium for *The Temple of Love* open up a portal where east and west could co-mingle, a hybrid space that celebrated the increased circulation and consumption of the foreign by the domestic court. This liminality also suggested a confusion and inter-penetration of the strange and familiar.

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[98] Chaudhuri: 1965, 60; Lawson 30-31.

[99] Lawson 33. Chaudhuri notes that as early as 1619 Charles then a Prince had offered to invest £6,000 in the Company, 36.

Not surprisingly, *The Temple of Love* repeatedly invests the East Indies with 'strangeness.' After all, as Patricia Fumerton for instance observes, there *was* something strange with the East Indies trade. More specifically, Fumerton aligns this strangeness to the transport of bullion eastwards, England's excessive consumption of foreign commodities, and the influx of foreign goods and strangers into the domestic economy (174). However, this chapter argues that despite such mercantilist concerns over the impact of East Indian bodies and objects on England's balance of trade, "strangeness" had its own marketplace – one that encompassed multiple publics. It is to this increasingly familiar market of the strange, the foreign or the aberrant, that *The Temple of Love* appealed.

The arrival of the principal masquers, ladies of Indamora's train, "in several strange habits, and their dance as strange," sets the stage for the foreign yet beneficial effects of East India. After all this strange dance restores the Persian youth from the influence of the evil magicians. In fact immediately afterwards a Persian Page announces the redemption of the youth, and their conversion to Platonic ideals. The scenery itself changes to a "new and strange prospect" that signifies India:

> The nearest part was broken grounds and rocks, with a mountainous country, but full of pleasant aspect, in which were trees of strange form and colour, and here and there were placed in the bottom several arbours like cottages, and strange beasts and birds, far unlike the country of these parts, expressing an Indian landscape. (298)

Here Davenant refrains from providing a specific catalogue of beasts or birds. Instead "strange" surfaces as the most important attribute – not just for the flora, but also for the fauna as well. Thereby, India transforms into an extended metaphor for all that is alien and unfamiliar: a land "far unlike the country of these parts." In so doing, Davenant seems on the one hand to follow

the long tradition of classical and medieval writers who recognized "India" only through its opposition to Europe – hot/cold, feminine/masculine, strange/familiar.[100] However, unlike these older texts, strangeness in the masque becomes more than the secondary term within a binary pair. Instead, strange birds and beasts from Indamora's native land become highly desirable objects. The terrain, though strange, has "pleasant aspect," with gentle winds and mountains; looking forward to the eventual Neoplatonic restoration of chaste love "by the influence" of the Indian Queen's beauty (286). In its fascination with the "strange," *The Temple of Love* has much in common with the collecting of curiosities. After all, by the seventeenth century, "strange" beasts and plants had their own marketplace as well as the coveted status of prized possessions in wonder cabinets across Europe. Much like royal entertainments, the wonder cabinet or *Kunstkammer* existed as specular sites of economic clout and global power.

Early modern collecting stood at the cross-roads of old and new ways of associating with strange objects. For instance, Paula Findlen, tracing European appetites for collecting unfamiliar objects back to the Crusades, sees in these an impulse for "a kind of mythologized conquest of nature" (302). On the other hand, as Marjorie Swann alerts us, the current usage of the terms "collection" and "collector" began only in the Elizabethan and Stuart periods (1). Increased explorations and greater access to distant lands during the early modern period helped foster the desire for odd curiosities – dried animal or vegetative parts. Findlen distinguishes between two

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[100] This long tradition of western intimations of "India" stretch from Herodotus, through Hippocrates, Pliny the Elder to Marco Polo and John Mandeville. In the accounts of Mandeville, the fourteenth century traveler India could generate a whole range of strange creatures like cockodrills, and gourds with little lambs growing inside (131, 171). John Mandeville, *Travels*, (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).

modes of circulation, and hence two distinct forms of collection. Travelers and scholars visiting foreign lands often swapped these artifacts as gifts, adding to their own archives. Simultaneously, European princes sought out these items from returning adventurers as tokens of their patronage. By the seventeenth century though, the wonder cabinet had its own marketplace and wealthy collectors could acquire these objects by paying a fee. The marvelous commodities then came to denote one's "ability to afford," emerging thereby as a status symbol (Findlen 300). For the royal collector these constituted not just economic symbols but increasingly came to be recognized as public testimonials of claims to foreign lands, as tokens of global conquest.[101] But the ordinary, more "middling" sort of people also acquired curiosities, often opening up their cabinets for public viewing (Swann 5). In 1634, for instance, Peter Mundy the traveler, having paid the entry fee of sixpence, viewed the extensive collection of John Tradescant the elder in London. He later recorded that he saw amongst other things "divers outlandish herbes and flowers, whereof some that I had not seene elsewhere but in India, being supplyed by Noblemen, Gentlemen, Sea Commanders, etts. with such Toyes as they could bringe or procure from other parts" (Swann 1). The wonder cabinets of Europe, therefore, combined older more aristocratic systems of gift giving with commercial sales (Findlen and. Smith 1). Moreover, these sites suggest a gradual transformation of English domestic space, as a result of which one could stumble upon India in the middle of London. The wonder cabinets of Europe in fact combined older more aristocratic systems of gift giving with commercial sales (Smith and Findlen 1). In many ways these cabinets brought merchants and royalty closer, uniting them in the process of

[101] Findlen 300. It is important to note however, that curiosity cabinets also stocked up on local wonders. See Meadows 194. Smith and Findlen remark that the "decorative scheme in the Prague Kunstkammer … included the seasons, the months, the elements, and the planets" (5).

emergent globalization (Meadow 184). As Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen observe, the collections became for the wealthy merchants a means of "playing the *honnête home*" (6).

This impulse to collect and display did not, however, remain confined to the wonder cabinets. The print market sustained the taste for such curiosities since at least the sixteenth century – broadsheets and pamphlets proliferating images of the foreign as the aberrant. Later seventeenth century books like Niccolo Serpetro's *Marketplace of Natural Marvels* (1653) offered a more consolidated collection of exotic objects, transferring the logic of the wonder cabinet to print culture. That the physical wonder cabinet was in fact readily translatable to print seems evident for instance from the publication of Ole Worm's catalogues (1655), replete with a woodcut of his myriad strange and curious collections on the title page. The courtly audience for Davenant's *Temple of Love*, as well as later consumers of the printed text, would most likely have been familiar with this fascination for "strange objects" either as owners or beholders of the *Kunstkammer* or as readers of illustrated broadsheets. Henrietta Maria's masque seems to replicate this acquisition of the exotic, repeatedly drawing attention to the 'strangeness' of the East Indies.

V. Brahmins and Ethnography

The Temple of Love offers us more than marvelous inanimate objects, bringing in different Indian sects that seem to extend the marketplace of curiosities to old and emergent ethnographies. When the deformed Magicians of the anti-masque threaten to corrupt the moral and physical purity of Indamora's "Platonical" lovers, "three Indians of quality" arrive to save them, in "several strange habits, and their dance as strange" (296). This time strangeness comes to define not Indian plants or animals, but also the natives and their customs. While some late

sixteenth and early seventeenth-century curiosity cabinets contained human body parts (mummies or charms),[102] actual, living, indigenous people were also put on display in pageants or street corners. Seen as proof of new geographical discoveries or conversions to Christianity, these foreigners, a heterogeneous mix of new and old world natives, became collectables. For instance, Sebastian Cabot showed off his captured Native Americans to Henry VII; Martin Frobisher exhibited an Inuit from Baffin Island; and the East India Company organized a public ceremony in Saint Paul's Churchyard for the baptism of the Indian, Peter Pope. (Swann, 23; Habib: 2006, 1-19).

Likewise, Davenant's Shrovetide entertainment displays a similar interest in not only presenting unfamiliar "strange beasts and birds" but also the strange dance of the noble Indian ladies. In fact the description of strange beasts, huts and the strange dance of Indamora's ladies set the tone for yet another unfamiliar exotic spectacle. Immediately after the dance ends, the Indian priests the Brachmani emerge from the "Indian landscape":

> Out of the creek came waving forth a barque of a gracious antique design, adorn'd with sculpture finishing in scrolls, that on the poop had for ornament a great masque head of a sea-god; and all the rest enrich'd with embost work touch'd with silver and gold…the Brachmani joined with the priests of The Temple of Love, in extravagant habits sorting to their titles: (299)

The Brachmani or Brahmins aboard the antique bark combine popular images of eastern riches – the poop embossed with silver and gold, with the strangeness of their "habits" and "titles." The presence of the Brahmins – carefully identified and isolated from all other eastern bodies – raises for us important questions on early ethnographic projects. Why does Davenant's masque single

[102] Swann, 3.

out this specific native group? Moreover, can we speculate as to whether the initial courtly audience or later readers of the masque might have recognized these categorizations?

Whether or not Jones and Davenant blindly adopted the Brachmani from the Florentine entertainment *Guerra d'Amore* (1616), the Indian priests had for long occupied an important place in European imagination. Greek philosophers conflated Brahmins, the Hindu priestly caste with gymnosophists. Diogenes Laertius (310 BC), and Strabo (64 B.C.- A.D.21) among others openly referred to the Indian gymnosophists (Archer 145). After Alexander's foiled expedition to India in 332 BC, tales of the fabled gymnosophists proliferated. The Selucid diplomat Megasthenes wrote of the seven tribes of India, the foremost being the Philosophers. Strabo taking off from Megasthenes attempted to further subdivide the philosophers into "Brachmanes" and "Garmanes" (Archer 145). In Pliny the Elder, the Indian priest-philosophers appear capable of strange feats.

> among the Indians be certaine Philosophers, whom they call Gymnosophists, who from the Sunne rising to the setting thereof are able to endure all the day long, looking full against the Sunne, without winking or once moving their eies. (As quoted in Archer 146)

The gymnosophists combine exceptional physical prowess with discipline and a thirst for knowledge. Later in Arrian and Cicero the gymnosophists stand for the "naked philosophers," drawing on earlier Greek sources. In the fourth century A.D. the Brachmans of India found new favor with the immensely popular *Alexander Romance* (Archer 146).

Later, humanists adopted the tradition, perpetuating myths of the ancient priests. In 1630, five years before Henrietta Maria danced as Indamora with her Brachmanis, the English traveler Henry Lord returning from his travels to the East Indies published *A Discoverie of the Sect of the Banians. Containing their History, Law, Liturgie, Casts, Customes, and Ceremonies. Gathered*

from their Bramanes, Teachers of that Sect. Lord's treatise, an ethnographic study of India's caste system, repeatedly attempted to reconcile his experiential knowledge of the natives with the older classical beliefs. The Brahmins feature prominently in his text, not just as native informants summing up the intricate religious systems of the subcontinent, but also as test cases for Lord's humanist learning. Lord attributes the Brahmins' belief in transmigration of souls to Pythagoras, transforming all Indian practices into aberrations of purer Greek customs. He goes on to meticulously document native customs: ablutions in the river, baptism and naming, marriage, burial and Sati. The Bramhins occupy a vexed intermediary position – strange and foreign, yet reassuring familiar from readings of Strabo, Pliny and Pythagoras. In so doing Lord follows a tradition established by earlier European travelers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries like Niccolo Conti, Ludovico di Varthema, and Duarte Barbosa among many others.[103]

The Brachmanis in *The Temple of Love*, negotiate both these tropes of the familiar and the strange, and seem almost hybrid beings. The priests sing to Orpheus, signaling the imminent arrival of Indamora.

> We priests that burn love's sacrifice,
> Our Orpheus greet with ravish'd eyes;
> For by this calmness we are sure
> His harp doth now prepare the way,
> That Indanora's voyage may
> Be more delightful and secure. (300)

The Brachmani's songs stand in opposition to the grotesque magic of the evil Persian sorcerers. They emerge as benign figures, summoning pleasant winds to secure a safe passage for the

[103] See Archer147-151.

vessel carrying precious cargo from the East Indies. Ironically, Davenant's masque offers no respite from the unfamiliar, swapping dark grottos for the fantastical barque of foreign priests. Instead of erecting a binary between the east and the west *The Temple of Love* contrasts Persian sorcerers with Indian priests, fragmenting the orient. Davenant privileges 'India' not because it did not conjure up the unfamiliar for the courtly audience, but because it signified a brand of strangeness that suited the territorial aggrandizement and political myth making of his royal patrons.

Davenant's Brahmins resurrect the mythical pious gymnosophists of antiquity, steering clear of a strain in early modern travel narratives which saw Indian customs, and its priestly caste, as monstrous and degenerate. In reality European travelers, while aligning the Indian priests with the descriptions in Strabo or Pliny, also openly derided them, holding them responsible for false religious beliefs. Francois Bernier in 1671 would brand the Brahmins as "infamous cheats and Villanies" (Archer 165). For Davenant, however, as for much of the older generation of travelers and merchants, the Brahmins not only testified to India's unchanging history – a narrative captured by the Greeks, but also supplied a religious alterity to Islam. In one of the earliest English accounts, printed in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1598-1600), Ralph Fitch repeatedly references this binary between eastern Moors and Gentiles. Part of the very first expedition to the spice lands funded by London merchants, Fitch managed to enter Mogul India, hoodwinking the Portuguese at Goa. In his reports he elaborates on the strangeness of India, and its "Gentile" population:

> In these countries they have many strange ceremonies. The Bramanes, which are their priests, come to the water and have a string about their necks made with great ceremonies, and lade up water with both their hands within, and then one arme after the

other out. Though it be never so cold, they will wash in cold water or in warme. These Gentiles will eate no flesh nor kill any thing. (Fitch19)

The perceived non-violent nature of the Gentiles or Hindus, and their priestly sect, stand in opposition to the Moor. While Islamic empires, like those of the Ottomans or the Moguls might have seemed formidable to a European imagination, the (supposedly) peace-loving, ritualistic Hindus formed a less threatening third space. The Hindus presented no imminent dangers of forced (even willing) conversions of Christians.[104] And although some English travelers like Fitch regarded Hindu idols as devils, and others like the East India Company Chaplain Edward Terry openly derided the Brahmins as "illiterate priests" (Terry 321), the Indian "Gentiles" remained an alternate religious group that precluded the fears of apostasy which constituted such an important aspect of Anglo-Islamic interactions. In fact Lord and Roe continued to view these Indian philosophers as remnants of a Greek past: as peaceful yet degenerate Pythagoreans (Roe, 113).

If *The Temple of Love* tries repeatedly to distinguish India and the Asian monarchy from the Turks, then the Brahmins add another token to this chain of differentiation. The Hindu priests, though pagan, stand in opposition to the Muslim cultures, abating any fears of apostasy. Moreover, the Hindus as "gentiles" could be assimilated within a Greek religio-philosophical system. After all Megasthenes insisted that Dionysus and Heracles had conquered India, setting the stage for Alexander's arrival (145). These strains of historiography, familiar to a humanist European audience would have permitted Henrietta Maria to adopt the guise of Indamora, regent of the Hindu kingdom of Narsinga. Moreover, the Brahmin priests as well as the Indian queen

[104] There are very few sects of Hinduism that will actually permit outsiders to convert, and most are the fruits of nineteenth-century religious reforms.

would have provided her with benign ways of staging her own religious alterity – Devout Catholicism. The strangeness of the Indian priests, seen as a positive force in the masque transforms into a metaphor for the English queen's perceived religious deviancy.

VI. Visual Culture, crisis in representation and *The Temple of Love*

In keeping with the ethnographic impulse supported by or even predicated on early modern globalization, Davenant from the onset attempts repeatedly to identify multiple ethnic groups – Indians, Persians, Turks. These meticulous attempts at distinguishing and categorizing the other have two notable consequences – one perhaps more obvious than the other. Much like Middleton's *Tryumphs of Honor and Industry*, in the opening section of the masque, Davenant's text as well as Jones' sketches, fixate on the nudity of the male oriental body. But later *The Temple of Love* supplies us with the Brachmani and later with Indamora herself. The East Indies as an empirical category appears fractured. Which one if any represents the "true" East Indies? Is it a land of naked men? Or of the wise gymnosophists? Or neither?

Secondly Davenant's attempts at ethnic classifications (Indians, Persians, Turks) inevitably collapse in Inigo Jones' drawings for the masque. In fact Davenant's text itself mirrors Jones' grossly erroneous directions for costumes, ultimately undermining all geographical or even ethnic specificities. In his description, the proscenium, comprising an agreeable "new invention" of "Indian trophies" – principally a naked native with "several coloured feathers" and a white elephant – appears to conflate the West and the East Indies. Inigo Jones' sketches reaffirm this conflation. Almost all East Indian figures in the masque wear some form of feathered headdress – a visual attribute possibly borrowed from the Florentine *Guerra d'Amore*

(Fig 3).[105] But the feathered headdress might also have evoked European aristocracy, revealing how such sartorial classifications were often far from reliable ethnic markers.

Orgel, trying to explain the wildly inaccurate sketches, argues that "the vagueness of his [Jones's] descriptions reveals a good deal about his sense of the east: the only firm anchor his imagination possesses in conceiving of Asian culture is the style of the Turks" (666). The east, more specifically the East Indies for Jones, stood in opposition to the Ottomans, and perhaps Persia. However, Jones' conflations suggest a deeper confusion in European imagining of its others.

Figure. 2.2. Jones' sketches of the Magi

Figure. 2.3. Indian in *Guerra d'Amore*

Jones' sketches seem to illuminate a visual crisis in representing the East Indies. This handicap affected not just Jones' ability to design eastern attire but extended to his depictions of eastern landscapes. As Orgel notes, for Ben Jonson's masque *Neptune's Triumph*, Jones substituted a banyan tree for a palm grove (668). However, despite Jones' shortcomings he had a

[105] See Stähler (186). The images of the Indian soldier by Giulio Parigi for the carnival resemble native Americans rather than East Indians.

plethora of models to choose from while designing costumes for the Queen's masque. After all, the 1616 Florentine carnival celebrations at the Piazza Santa Croce, the *Guerra d'Amore* surely did not offer the only available code for representing East Indians. While such borrowings suggest that Henrietta Maria's impersonations of an Indian queen entered into dialogue with analogous performances of other continental sovereigns, we must ask ourselves an important question: did Jones have no other, specifically no un-feathered version of East India to resort to while designing for *The Temple of Love*?

The East Indies as a visual category though frequently misrepresented nonetheless would have been familiar to a range of early modern audiences. During the middle ages, travel texts such as those by John Mandeville contained images of "India," woodcuts which marked the Indies as the land of the monstrous, while the Holy Lands remained within the realm of the miraculous. The Catalan Atlas (1375) by Abraham Cresques inserted figures like "the Queen of Sheba" or "Lord of Delli" to mark out specific geographical regions. Later maps such as Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* or Mercator's *Atlas* reduced their reliance on human bodies, banishing them to the title pages or the cartographic margins (Traub 49). Nonetheless, the four continents depicted as four women differentiated on the basis of their skin color and attire functioned as important emblems throughout the period.

Not just maps, but even costume books, as Valerie Traub notes, attempted to capture and catalogue multiple ethnic bodies and attires. Abraham de Bruyn's *Omnium Pene Europe, Asiae, Aphricae atque Americae Gentium Habiyus* (1577) or even Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni di tutto Mondo* (1590) classified bodies according to regions, status and gender (Traub 51). While Traub traces in the frontispieces of seventeenth century maps "an ethnographic idiom […] that accords more fully with the 'scientific' pretensions of the new geography" (57), the

same impetus can be found in the late sixteenth century costume books. In other words noting regional and sartorial differences emerged as a familiar practice – if not a norm. Davenant's attempts at distinguishing Indians, Persians and Turks from one another, fall within this larger ethnographic interest. In fact as Orgel documents Inigo Jones turned to Vecellio while designing costumes from *The Temple of Love* (Orgel 1988: 666).

Figure. 2.4. Jones' sketch of Persian Youth

Figure. 2.5. Vecellio's Persian Captain

Jones' reliance on Vecellio's costume books and his obvious misrepresentations of East Indian figures betray a paradox in early modern visual culture. While mapmakers and publishers attempted to systematically categorize ethnic bodies, they simultaneously blurred and conflated racial groups. Thus even as Vecellio distinguished amongst women from Syria, Moluccas, Tripoli, even Aleppo in the east, his images for East Indian women strangely displayed accessories carried by their West Indian counterparts. Jones' sketches for *The Temple of Love* replicate these visual contradictions. Jones relied on Vecellio for attires for the Persian youth.

Moreover, extant drawings for the Brachmani resemble woodcuts of Vecellio's Chinese nobleman. Ethnographic projects clearly could not be rigidly sustained in the visual rendering of the masque.

The feathered East Indians, then, would have been familiar to audiences across Europe. In many ways the visual conflation retains and perpetuates the etymological confusion, bringing together "both th'Indias of spice and mine."[106] Moreover, feathers especially Mexique feather paintings as luxury commodities, might have wandered into collections or curiosity cabinets of aristocrats and merchants alongside eastern objects.[107] The impulse at collecting then also involved an odd mixture of specificity and blurring. The wonder cabinet as an expression of this craving existed as a physical as well as an imaginative category where ethnic groups, and regions could be easily conflated. Crucially, though, these conflations need to be understood not merely as individual whims, but as part of national or even inter-national imaginings. Davenant's courtly public as well as his later print audience would have been familiar with these ethnic or sartorial mislabelings, allowing the performance to go on uninterrupted. What to us today might seem strange confusions were in fact familiar to early modern publics.

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[106] Donne *The Sun Rising* 17.

[107] Edward M. Test. "Consuming the Americas: Mexican Feather Art in English Literature" (presented at Richard Helgerson and Making Publics, Montréal, QC, August 21, 2009).

Figure. 2.6. Jones' sketch of the Brachmani

Figure. 2.7. Vecellio's Chinese nobleman

VII. Strangely familiar: Domestic disputes, Persian courtiers and Evil Magicians

The Temple of Love presents audiences with two principal versions of strangeness – the antimasque of the evil cave dwelling magicians and the purer priests, the Brachmani who form part of Indamora's entourage. While the Brachmani come to stand for Indamora's benign strangeness for most of the masque, the grotto dwellers on the other hand embody the reverse, threatening the court and the performing Queen herself. Yet, as it later becomes obvious, not only the Brachmani, but the evil magicians themselves also emerge as familiar, although the brand of familiarity derives not from ethnographic mappings, but from factors closer to the domestic court. Any simple opposition between self and the other, Persian and English, benign and monstrous, collapse by the end of the masque.

The antimasque to *The Temple of Love* reveals "three magicians, one more eminent than the rest, their habits of strange fashions, denoting their qualities; and their persons deformed" (291). The costumes of the magicians, predictably defy any easy ethnographic classification (Fig 2), although Davenant explicitly identifies the grotto dwellers as "Asian." Later the second Magician ridiculing the sexual abstinence of Indamora's ladies refers openly to his "Persian quilts, embroidered couches" (293). In fact Inigo Jones' notes describe the first magician dressed in a "Persian mitre," his face old "with great spectacles on his nose, a beard red and white grizzled, long hanging in locks, a wand in his hand of green" (Orgel 1988: 667). However, Stephen Orgel in his study of the extant sketches brands the magician's headdress as "dubiously Persian" while dismissing the attire of the third magi as that of an Italian zany (667). Sartorial distinctions between Europe and Asia collapse, the anti-masque figures emerging as dangerous border crossing hybrids.

In keeping with the symbolic underpinning of the courtly entertainment, the outward deformities of the magicians betray their inner moral corruption. Their physical aberrations

counter Henrietta Maria's earlier and present appearances as Divine Beauty or Indamora. Under the Neo-platonic scheme the queen's external perfections drew her beholders to a transcendental awareness (Dawson, 7). In contrast the sinister looking Asian magicians threaten to seduce the courtly audience back to licentiousness and sinning. The anti-masque figures proceed to act out this precise perverted fantasy. Initially the magicians seem more interested in the usual practices of dark arts:

> Is thy belov'd
> Old witch, dead and entomb'd? Or hast thou heard
> Ill news from hell? Does the grand fiend
> Chain up thy spirits from thy use? Speak, art
> Thou not within thy circle still a Sovereign Prince?
> When thou dost lift with magic power thy white
> Enchanted scepter thus, do not the thin
> Unbodied people bow and obey?

The second magician's concerns revolve around witch-lovers, spirits and animated corpses. Nonetheless, the grotto dwellers played by hired actors and not courtiers, allude to a counter public, a rival community where they remain within their "circle still a Sovereign Prince." As such their contempt for Indamora's Temple transforms into a resistance to Henrietta Maria's Platonic ideals and ultimately a defiance of Charles I himself. As the antimasque progresses the magicians figuratively move closer and closer to the court, threatening to corrupt and undermine Stuart authority. Speculating on the Neoplatonic followers who "practice generation not/Of bodies but of souls," the magicians zone in on the English court.

> (2) But where shall this new sect be planted first?

(3) In a dull northern isle, they call Britaine,

. . . . . .

(3) Certain young Lords at first disliked the philosophy

As most uncomfortable, sad, and new;

But soon inclin'd to a superior vote,

And are grown as good Platonical lovers (293)

The magicians view these recent transformations at court with alarm. However, their attention is soon diverted by the arrival of a new group of 'Platonical Lovers'. Having spotted the group of noble Persian youth on the quest for Indamora's Temple of Chaste Love, the Asian magicians spin webs of deception, conjuring grotesque figures designed to tempt and corrupt. The Persian youth, English courtiers in disguise, bring to the forefront the anxieties of the Caroline court itself succumbing to sexual, even political deviancy. The moral constitution as well as the loyalty of the courtiers appears at stake.

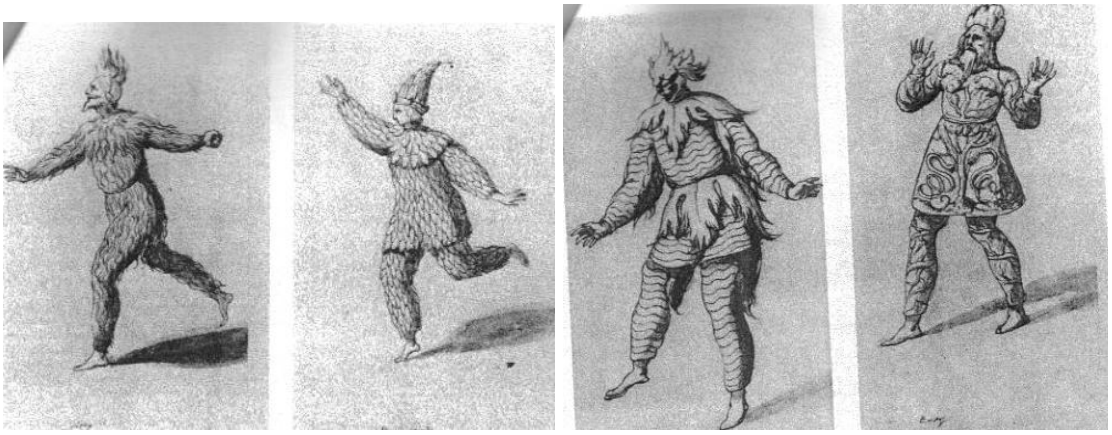

Figure. 2.8. Fiery Spirit Figure. 2.9. Airy Spirit Figure. 2.10. Watery Spirit Figure. 2.11. Earthy Spirit

The evil magicians orchestrate an anti-masque of the four elements – fire, air, water and earth (Figs 8-11). The spirits, as Lessel Dawson notes, exemplify nature in "excessive and corrupted forms" (15). Moreover, the deviant spirits also enact the effects of humoral imbalance

in individual bodies. Each of the spirits drag in figures meant to illustrate a specific humoral disorder. The fiery spirit brings quarrelling men suffering from a "choleric complexion," the airy spirit has alchemists and "amorous men and women in ridiculous habits." Drunken Dutch skippers accompany spirits of water, while the earth brings out "witches, usurers, and fools." The anti-masque presents not only moral perils of licentiousness, but also economic dangers posed by Dutch sailors and usurers. Towards the finale of the anti-masque, yet another insidious figure takes the centre- stage - the Puritan pamphleteer.[108] Davenant isolates from the earlier apparitions this "modern devil, sworn enemy of poesy, music, and all ingenious arts, but a great friend to murmuring, libeling, and all seeds of discord" (296). These allegations no doubt refer to tracts by William Prynne and others who derided plays and the queen's participation in them. The Puritan's challenge to Poesy registers not just as an aesthetic threat, but as a danger to the Caroline system of expressing and maintaining power through "ingenious arts" like the masque, arts which required the energies of poets and their poetry. After all Davenant's entertainment, Divine Poesy starts the entire action: signaling the imminent arrival of Indamora, alerting the Persian youth to the presence of the Temple.

One of the central points of contention between the masquers and the anti-masquers has to do not only with humoral imbalance, but also the roles of the body and the mind. The magicians direct their ire towards the court only after they recognize that Indamora's "Platonical" ideal threatens to completely suppress the body in favor of higher faculties. Mapped onto the body politic, Caroline fantasies, especially those churned out during the Absolute rule,

[108] Veevers sees this as a deliberate attempt on Jones' part to deflect allegations of his Puritan sympathies – sympathies which apparently led him to delay the construction of the Queen's chapel (140-1).

amount to an exclusion of the commons. Privileging the mind, the soul or even the refined senses may well be seen as metaphors for aristocratic and monarchic control. The "strange" deformed magicians in fact demand to be recognized as familiar and important members – as the ordinary citizens that they truly are. The body, the commons and the hired professional actors, though strange and aberrant to rigid aristocratic ideals, nonetheless emerge as disturbingly home-bred, domestic and familiar.

VIII. Henrietta Maria, Indamora and Neoplatonic Love

After the Shrovetide performance Henrietta Maria danced thrice more as Indamora within the same week, making public her approval of Davenant's masque. By the time Jones and Davenant devised *The Temple of Love* for their royal patrons, the East Indies had become a familiar trope in English courtly entertainments. As early as 1585, *The Queenes Maiesties Entertainment at Woodstock* presented Caudina princess of Cambia and her star crossed lover Contarenus. Cambia or Khambat, the western province of Gujarat in the Indian subcontinent, had acquired a reputation as a global mart, bolstered in particular by the port city of Surat. In fact in 1583 when the first group of English merchants led by John Newberry set out to directly access India and its spice lands, Elizabeth I wrote to "Zelabdim Echebar, King of Cambaia" asking for trading privileges.[109] To the sixteenth century Tudor court Cambia signified all of India, including the territories under the control of the Mogul emperor Jalaluddin Akbar.

Despite Elizabeth's interest in staging the East Indies in England, her precise role in the entertainment remains unclear. Most likely she retained her position as chief spectator, declining

[109] See Hakluyt V, 450. For more on the Newberry expedition see Foster 1-8.

to appear as Caudina the Indian princess. In contrast Henrietta Maria adopted the guise of Indamora, a transition possibly facilitated by her predecessor Queen Anne. Anne of Denmark had skillfully used the masque for her own agendas, transforming the genre.[110] The first Stuart queen danced in her own masques, selecting her favorites to accompany her in her performances, thereby erecting a parallel courtly hierarchy. As Leeds Barroll points out, despite James' initial reluctance, his Council stressed the continuance of the Queen's masques overriding all concerns over the expense of such stagings. The masque had become a crucial political phenomenon, and later after the Queen stopped dancing James adopted his wife's ploys in showcasing his own interests through these shows (Barroll 132).

For the Stuart queens, foreign princesses from Denmark or France, masques offered a vital outlet for their political aspirations.[111] If Elizabeth I styled herself as the Virgin queen, then Henrietta Maria turned to Devout Humanism with its union of Neoplatonic ideals and the cult of Mary (Veevers 5). As Dawson notes Neoplatonism inverted gender hierarchies, providing the woman with hitherto unprecedented power over her male lover (7). While neoplatonism itself began as early as the third century with Plotinus,[112] later humanists like Ficino and Pico della Mirandola emphasized Plato's privileging of homosexual love, interpreting it as distinct from

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[110] See Leeds Barroll 121.

[111] Karen Britland argues that despite popular misconceptions of Henrietta Maria as "a frivolous woman whose nationality, religion and love of pleasure contributed to the downfall of the English king" in reality she played a vital role in court (1-2). The daughter of Marie de Medici

[112] Remes 1. Although the term "Neo-Platonism" originates in nineteenth century Gemerman scholarship (2).

carnal desire. Platonic love sought to transcend the physical even while it admired the visible attributes of the lover. Dante, even Petrarch adapted such tropes to heterosexual love. As a result, for the Platonic lover, women transformed into the manifestation of the divine, a gateway to the realm of the ideal. For a queen to insert herself within such a Platonic order amounted to dual adoration. Her subjects transformed into lovers owed her allegiance not just out of political obedience but out of recognition of her moral perfection.

Indamora and the Indian ladies of her train further the English Queen's Neo-Platonic ambitions, creating a royalist fantasy where the loyalty or obedience of courtiers arises not from any political necessity, but love. At the beginning of the masque, Divine Poesy, descending from a "rosy" cloud declares that Indamora will "guide those lovers that want sight, /To see and know what they should love" (289). The lovers in question were in reality English courtiers and the prescribed object of their devotion the queen herself.

Nonetheless, the anti-masque, traditionally voicing anti-royalist, even plebian attitudes, brands Indamora's chaste love as a "new sect." The grotto-dwelling magicians express grave concern at these changes at court:

(1) But who shall bring this mischief to our art?

(3) Indamora, the delight of destiny!

She, and the beauties of her train; who sure

Though they discover summer in their looks,

They raise strange doctrines, and new sects of Love:

Which must not woo or court the person, but

The mind; and practice generation not

Of bodies but of souls. (292-293)

The "new sects of Love" standing in opposition to the Puritans in the anti-masque could well be a reference to Henrietta Maria's Catholicism and her efforts at its 're-establishment' at the Stuart court. The chapel at the Somerset house to which the masque possibly alluded, was in many ways the culmination of the English queen's overt religious practices – her visit to the Tyburn gallows where she knelt and prayed for the souls of executed Catholics, her efforts to intercede on behalf of those imprisoned for their Roman faith (Michelle Anne White 25, 31). Moreover, several of the noblewomen who danced in her masques also converted to Catholicism (Lewalski 297).

Interestingly for us, the term that the magicians select while describing this new sect is "strange." But strange in what way? For as the OED informs us, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "strange" could denote a number of things: foreign people, customs or geography; the unfamiliar; the abnormal; or a harlot.[113] The English queen of course, strictly speaking, was a foreigner – a French princess. And two years prior to *The Temple of Love*, William Prynne in *Histriomastix* had denounced "Women actors, notorious whores" – a label understood to be aimed at the queen herself for her role in *The Shepherd's Paradise*.[114] Moreover, the strangely deformed magicians of the anti-masque suggest that the chaste love culminates in an unfamiliar and possibly abnormal "generation not/ Of bodies but of souls."

In this light, Indamora's pagan Brachmani priests could well stand for idolatry – a familiar Puritan attack against Catholicism. However, as we have seen, the Hindu priests

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[113] http://dictionary.oed.com. Accessed May 25, 2010.

[114] The *The Temple of Love* was also Henrietta Maria's first major court appearance since *The Shepherd's Paradise* (Britland, 131).

belonged to the humanist tradition which regarded them as mythical gymnosophists or inheritors of Pythagoras; and as distinct from Islam and fears of apostasy. Ushering in Indamora, these benign advocates of chaste love make way for the ritualistic restoration of royal authority, extracting courtiers from the clutches of the evil magicians. However, this transformation seems possible not just by evoking the Brachmani, but also the strange appeal of Indian flora and fauna.

Within Neo-Platonism, especially in poetic traditions popularized by Dante, Petrarch, as well as the English sonneteers Wyatt and Surrey (Hutton 72), beauty kindles love: physical and not just moral perfection of the beloved drawing the lover to a higher spiritual plane. Similarly, in the masque, the Temple can flourish only if Indamora and her "noble virgins" succeed in enamoring the young courtiers. The Chorus in fact insists on this need to "kindle in their breasts a fire" (301). But how may we understand Indamora's beauty? Unlike conventional Petrachan love poetry we get no catalogue of physical attributes: no ruby lips, or white breasts, none of the blazon that Shakespeare satirized in sonnet 130. All that Davenant provides are metaphors of light – Indamora is "cheerful as the morning's light," her looks "discover summer" – and strangeness. In the absence of a standard blazon we might well interpret these references to India as extensions of Indamora's attributes. After all, as Queen of Narsinga she can be seen to incorporate the strangeness of Indian plants, animals, attires and habits that the masque repeatedly highlights and celebrates. This fascination with strange Indian objects and peoples, as we have seen, constituted an important part of European wonder cabinets and mercantile collecting.

This association of Indian commodities with Indamora becomes more evident when the queen finally makes an appearance on-stage. She arrives on a "maritime chariot" made from a variety of precious objects and curiosities:

> the Masquers appear in a maritime chariot, made of a spungy rockstuff mixt with shells, sea-weeds, coral, and pearl, borne upon an axletree with golden wheels without a rim, with flat spokes like the blade of an oar coming out of the waves. (300)

The East India Company exported coral as well as gold, the former to feed the demand for beads and for funeral pyres in western India (Lenman, 98-99). Pearls, shells and other precious gems could be found in abundance in the islands dotting the Indian Ocean, especially Ceylon. Not only were these exported to Europe, but they also formed an important part of the Company's gifts to the Mogul emperor (Ibid 103). Indamora's "maritime chariot" operates as an East India Company cargo ship.

The presence of Indamora and her ladies against a purportedly Indian scene, with stage-props like the chariot embossed with coral and pearls, suggests the centrality of such objects in grafting courtly identity. While on one hand the masque seems to stage the transportation of Indian commodities, on the other it reveals the English court as avid consumers. Henrietta Maria, the French princess and Stuart queen, now performing as Indamora regent of Narsinga, registers as a hybrid subject. Indeed, the English ladies or courtiers dancing as Indians or Persians seem similarly "mixed." This hybridity comes not just from the costumes for the masque, but also from the recognition that individual eastern objects were increasingly becoming part of English subjectivity. Spices crept into everyday cooking; imports of calicoes and indigo were on the rise, as were wonder- cabinets, zoos and botanical gardens. The "strangeness" of the India that *The Temple of Love* evokes had become a familiar category in seventeenth-century England, and even an extension of English identity.

IX. Playing an Indian Queen

For early Stuart queens, foreign princesses from Denmark or France, masques offered a vital outlet for political aspirations (Britland, 1-2). We must therefore ask ourselves, how did Henrietta Maria appear as Indamora? Did she dance as a black Indian queen or white? East Indians in travel accounts, and popular adages, frequently appeared as black, often conflated with the Ethiop. On January 6, 1605, Queen Anne had appeared as one of the daughters of Niger in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness*. If Henrietta Maria were to emerge as a swarthy Indamora she would not be breaking Stuart court custom. So, did she like Anne of Denmark emerge in black face or at least a black visor? In other words did Henrietta Maria transform herself into a black queen for *The Temple of Love*?

Figure. 2.12. Jones' sketch for *The Masque of Blackness*

While contemporary accounts of *The Masque of Blackness* openly refer to the Queen Anne's blackface,[115] often criticizing her actions, no such anecdotes exist for Henrietta Maria: no extant records – no shred of court gossip, or outraged Puritan pamphlet suggest that the Catholic queen painted herself black. This silence on Indamora's color provides us with a vital clue. Henrietta Maria as the Indian queen held out for the assembled audience an ideal of chaste love, her physical beauty inspiring her lovers to attain a higher moral, ethical understanding. Under such Neo-platonic symbolism, a direct correlation exists between outer beauty and inner virtue. However, as we have seen in Chapter Two, popular adages linked up blackness with spiritual depravity. While some early modern commentators linked blackness to over-exposure to the sun, or the result of Phaeton's rash incompetence, others like George Best understood it as an infection, transmitted through seminal fluids, tainting subsequent generations (108).

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[115] After Anne of Denmark's masquing, Dudley Carlton in his now famous letter to John Chamberlain complained:

> Their Apparel was rich but too light and Courtesan-like for such great ones. Instead of vizards, their faces and arms up to the elbows were painted black … and you cannot imagine a more ugly sight than a troop of lean-cheeked Moors. (as quoted by Kinney 360)

Clearly, the queen's decision to adopt the guise of a blackmoor – more specifically her willingness to actually paint herself black triggered outrage in some quarters. Carlton combines his disgust for the black face with hints of licentiousness reminiscent of older stereotypes. Anne, painted and attired in "light" clothes resembles a courtesan, rather than a queen, her role playing translating into serious breaches of class and racial decorum.

Given the deep-seated equation of blackness with spiritual depravity it is highly unlikely that Henrietta Maria went for a swarthy Indamora. Blackness with all its popular and theological implications would undoubtedly have jeopardized the prevalent myths of the Caroline court. Instead, in all likelihood she played the role of an Indian queen without any black paint on. Extant sketches of Inigo Jones support this conjecture. Whereas designs for Queen Anne show her in black, her clothes more experimental, Henrietta Maria appears in a more conventional jeweled gown without any hint of a dye (Strong 626). Interestingly, Jones adds for Indamora an elaborate headdress inspired in part by Vecellio's "African girl in the Indies." Ironically then, the Queen's designer continued to conflate East Indies with Africa and blackface even as Henrietta Maria refrained from a dark Indamora for her Neoplatonic scheme (Ibid. 624).

Figure. 2.14. Indamora's headdress

Figure. 2.15. Vecellio's African Indian girl

For all intents and purposes, therefore, it is safe to assume that Indamora, the Indian queen appeared and danced at the Stuart court in a racially neutral form, not in blackface. Nonetheless, Indamora re-inscribes Henrietta Maria's own foreignness. Indamora the racially

ambiguous Indian regent allowed her to present herself as a stranger yet benign and familiar. In ways that a Muslim Turkish queen would never have enabled, the Hindu kingdom of Narsinga and Brachmani priests permitted Henrietta Maria to stage her own alterity.[116]

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[116] Travelers to the Indian subcontinent while documenting spice cultivations, silver mines or indigo plantations also routinely distinguished between 'moores' and 'gentiles' – between the Muslims and Hindus ultimately aligning the latter with Pythagoreans (See for instance Ralph Fitch 11, 17; Edward Terry 324; Sir Thomas Roe 113). Such religious binaries played an important role in the European imagining of Narsinga or Vijayanagara. Accounts of Narsinga trickled in since the middle ages, primarily through anecdotal references in Marco Polo. During the sixteenth century with Portuguese access and control over sections of the Malabar coast, more detailed descriptions of Narsinga emerged. As Joan-Pau Rubiés argues, Southern India, specifically Vijayanagara provided most Europeans, especially the Portuguese and the Jesuits with one of the earliest images of the east. After all, the merchants and priests stopped at India before venturing deeper into Asia to China or Japan (21).

While Portuguese accounts such as Tome Pires' *Summa Oriental* (1512-1515) or *História do descobrimento et conquista da India pelos Portugueses* by Fernão Lopes de Castanheda (1551-1554), or even Giovanni Botero's *Relationi universali* (1591-6) chronicled the kingdom of Narsinga, these texts had more extensive afterlives and publics (Rubiés 21). Translations of these early encounters proliferated, feeding a larger market for tales of exotic lands and discoveries. In 1601 Botero's *The Traveler's Breviat* hit London, followed in 1630 by yet another translation, this time entitled *Relations*, and supposedly derived from "the best Italian impression of Boterus." Similarly, an English translation of Castanheda's treatise became available as early as 1582. In addition, Richard Eden's *Decades of the New World* (translated from Peter Martyr's

As Indamora, her ability to restore order at the Stuart court seems possible only through strange Indian beasts and singing Brachmani priests, which as we have seen by the seventeenth century had their own market place. The strangeness of India therefore needs to be understood as specific – affecting particular birds, beasts, and objects in the wonder cabinet, as well as readily transferable – onto the body of a French princess and English queen. As foreign, yet highly desirable objects, they help forward Henrietta Maria's own alterity. Nonetheless, this willingness

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Latin version), Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* or even Samuel Purchas' *Purchas his Pilgrims*, contained numerous accounts or references to Narsinga gleaned from records of European travelers. Narsinga then, circulated in numerous print-markets – Portuguese, Italian, French or even English, not only as a concrete geographical region, but also as testaments to European access to the spice-lands, as a familiar fantastical space of discovery or appropriation.

Not only printed books, but even maps circulating amongst European courts noted the existence of Narsinga. For instance Dioge Homem's manuscript Atlas presented to Queen Mary of England prominently featured the Spice Islands and the kingdom of 'Narsing'.[116] By the time Davenant and Jones adopted *Guerra d'Amore* for Henrietta Maria's masque, Narsinga had already become a familiar imaginative category, and a metaphor for India, circulating in multiple publics, texts and images. *The Temple of Love*, in other words combined older humanist myths on 'India' with newer more experiential accounts gleaned from mercantilist as well as colonial encounters. Davenant's masque thereby metaphorically appropriates the East Indies, molding it to suit the Stuart queen's political agendas. Indian spices, flora, fauna, even Indian women emerge as categories especially amenable to circulation and display, as strange yet oddly familiar.

"to become" Indian de-stabilizes not just the Stuart queen's ethnic identity but that of the entire English court: we do not simply encounter India in the masque, but must briefly identify all dancers as Indian. While the English traveled to India for both trade and tourism, contact zones were not isolated phenomena in the east. Instead, *The Temple of Love* helps us recognize that early modern London was itself becoming a globalized space, where one could acquire or encounter tangible as well as figurative Indian objects and people in markets, ordinary households or at court.

X. Conclusion:

Staged before a courtly public, William Davenant's *The Temple of Love* presents the Stuart queen as the source of Chaste Love, purging lust and licentiousness from the hearts of the young noblemen. As Britland points out, coming at the heels of a series of sexual scandals at court, especially involving those close to the queen herself, the masque doubles up as a public apology, a housecleaning.[117] Nonetheless, it is important to remember that Henrietta Maria chose to deliver her message of chastity while appearing as an Indian queen. Her decision suggests a continuing interest in the East Indies – an interest that combines older classical knowledge of "India" with more recent accounts of travelers and merchants who brought back

[117] Britland 143. As Britland points out Henry Jermyn, one of the dancers at the maque and the Queen's favorite, got Eleanor Villiers, one of Henrietta Maria's ladies-in-waiting pregnant and refused to marry her even after he was thrown in the Tower. His appearance in the masque was a return to favor. In fact he collected the £50 on behalf of Davenant for writing the masque. Davenant also wrote a satirical play The Platonical Lovers, based on the courtier's indiscretions (141-143).

descriptions of people, customs and habits along with commodities like spices or calicoes. Indamora in Davenant's masque emerges as hybrid, even Europeanized. She comes across as racially indistinct though highly exoticized. As we have seen, in many ways Indamora and her train celebrated the strangeness of "India," a strangeness that had its own marketplace not only amongst the courtiers but beyond. This willingness to mark royal bodies at the English court with attributes of the exotic suggests a move toward cosmopolitanism. As Seyla Benhabib points out, among other things, "cosmopolitanism signifies hybridity, fluidity, and recognizing the fractured and internally riven character of human selves and citizens" (17). Increased English consumption of spices, calicoes, the appearance of "Indian" motifs in paintings, gesture towards not only colonial aspirations, but also a hybridization of the domestic space; an openness to adorn the self with symbols of the other.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the English aristocracy, many of whom might have attended the masque, were in fact, avid consumers of eastern products – perhaps simply because they could afford to buy these luxury commodities – objects which then in return reinforced their socio-economic status. The immediate public of *The Temple of Love*, therefore, might have identified with or even recognized the Indian theme and its celebration of strangeness. Simultaneously, eastern trade could also have appealed to the numerous European ambassadors, references to popular place names like Narsinga or to the Brahmins of classical literature forming an easy bridge that transcended language barriers. *The Temple of Love*, therefore, possibly fed into larger European conversions of the east. It is also interesting to note that John Dryden's Restoration play *Aurangzebe*, had as one of its lead characters, the Indian princess Indamora – clearly the exotic subject and character survived beyond the civil war.

The Temple of Love, then, had an important after life, one outside the walls of Whitehall where it was initially performed in 1635. Soon afterwards, the printed version of the masque appeared opening it up to yet another audience – the seventeenth century print public. Within this sphere it joined other texts like Thomas Middleton's pageants for the Lord Mayor's shows, and also the mercantile pamphlets by Thomas Mun, Edward Misselden and others which interrogated the role of the East India Company and the influx of spices, indigo and East Indian crewmen. Within this larger public the masque circulated not only as an example of royal propaganda, but also as yet another trace of the influence of the East Indies on English domestic identity.

Chapter Four

"'And make them perfect Indies': Alchemy, transmutation and the East India Company"

Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies! You admire now?

- Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist* (II.ii.35-36).

In Ben Jonson's 1610 play *The Alchemist*, Sir Epicure Mammon dreams of transmutation – of base metal to gold, of English counties to the Indies.[118] His fantasy brings out some of the worst fears of more nationalist writers, transforming England's domestic space. His plans include a fully functioning seraglio, and he proposes to castrate virile English servants: "I'll geld you, Lungs" (II.ii. 35). But he is not the only one who turns to the Indies to articulate the transformations made possible by alchemy. Subtle repeatedly evokes the spice islands to trap his gulls, promising a life of untold riches and sensuality. Such temptations seem to work: the Drugger is willing to invest in imports from Ormuz, and Mammon is only too eager to eat out of his Indian shells. Even the surly Puritans are baited with the prospect of luring the Dutch fleet away from the East Indies to fight for their cause in England. In comparison, Chaucer's Canon, also an alchemist, threatening only to pave the streets of Canterbury with gold and silver (625-6), seems to have a rather limited imagination. But of course, none of these grand plans work out in the play, and much like the philosopher's stone, the Indies come to stand for an elaborate hoax.

Under such circumstances, Subtle and Face's deceptions ultimately prevent the transformation of the occident into the orient, inadvertently upholding English domestic bliss by

[118] Devon and Cornwall were mistakenly thought to have silver.

bringing about the marriage of Dame Pliant with Lovewit and his acquisition of their ill gotten profits. Nonetheless, the play leaves us with a series of images that evoke the Indies – both east and west. From grocer's stores filled with tobacco and spices, to imagined seraglios, London seems to be on the verge of transforming into a more hybrid, cosmopolitan space. This chapter will examine the role of the Indies in *The Alchemist*, particularly, but not exclusively the East Indies, as a rhetorical substitute for the philosopher's stone. Much like the alchemist's stone, the East Indies seems to offer vast riches and miraculous medicines. Yet in the play both these goals are exposed as scams. The philosopher's stone and the East Indies double up as metaphors for fraud, with those falling for their lure ending up with serious financial losses.

The Alchemist marks the end of the first decade of the operations of the East India Company. The two principal gulls in the play, the Drugger and Mammon, come from two distinct social groups that were united in their support for the East Indies trade. While druggers or grocers profited from eastern commodities, the English aristocracy had a long history of being avid consumers of these imports. For instance, by the end of the middle ages, pepper had already become a staple at the tables of nobler households (Markley 30). However, the seventeenth century saw the establishment of the long sought after direct trade with the East Indies, and returning ships brought not just spices, but other commodities like indigo and calicoes, as well as promises of great returns on investments. However, trade with the East Indies depended on bullion, not the venting of English cloth, exposing it to great criticism and as we shall see, accusations of fraud. The economic language of the play, its exchanges, and many rackets gesture to an uncertainty regarding the efficacy of the East Indies trade. But the West Indies also creeps in, bringing together, as Donne did "both th'Indias of spice and mine." The ease with which the two Indies seem to cohabit the lover's bed in Donne, and Subtle's trickeries in Jonson,

suggest that these were conflatable geographies in early modern England. Yet there is a subtle but crucial difference, or rather differentiation, that is still being made: there are *two* Indias, with two sets of valued commodities. The sixteenth and seventeenth century perceptions of the Indies, seems to have been based on a co-existence of what might seem to us two mutually contradictory notions: an indeterminate, and easily substitutable Indies; and a geographically specific West and East Indies.

Staged at theaters in Oxford and London, *The Alchemist* had a public quite different from that of royal masques or civic pageantry. Spectators had to pay to see a performance, and playwrights competed to generate commercially successful plays. In a way the commercial stage replicated the dual concerns of Jonson's play: the need to generate money through convincing story telling. In his dedication to the reader, he warns against getting "cozened" by poetry, "especially in plays" (213). In its afterlife as printed text, *The Alchemist*, like other plays, masques and triumphs that this dissertation has been tracking, reaches yet another form of public, joining larger conversations on the growing influence of the Indies.

I. Publics of the public stage:

After having examined the publics of civic pageantry and court masques, we return now to the publics of the public stage. In order to gain access one would have to pay a fee, the amount as we shall see varying considerably. The commercial stage attracted a heterogeneous audience, and it is within this public that Jonson's *The Alchemist* was first staged. Unlike the Lord Mayor's shows or court masques the commercial stage did not set out to celebrate the splendor of any one individual or governing body. And so, the commercial stage (public playhouses and private

theaters) offered a space that was in many ways distinct from the open streets of Cheapside or the Banquet Hall in Whitehall. As Jonson's play suggests, the East Indies trade did in fact enter into these dramatic performances. However, in the case of *The Alchemist* such references were very different from the direct stagings of the Black Queene in *The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* or Indamora in *The Temple of Love*. Instead the play presents us with a more critical view of the East Indies trade, allowing us to read it alongside more contemporary concerns on the economic and social impact of the spice trade. Nonetheless, as with the other texts that I have examined, *The Alchemist* seems to present us with the possibility of "becoming" Indian. Such transformation becomes possible through the magic of commerce, particularly trends in consumption. In an almost alchemical moment in the play Londoners seem to be on the verge of transforming England into the Indies. Moreover, the very language of the play remains steeped in these references to international trade, particularly with the East Indies.

However, the publics of the early modern public stage seem to constantly evade modern commentators. As Robert Shaughnessy, writing on performance studies, wryly notes, "Theater is the place where writing – […] disappear[s]" (19). He gestures to the immense difficulty of capturing the original moment(s) of performance. What we have of the Tudor and Stuart commercial stage are fleeting, mostly written, printed, or illustrated fragments. The publics of the public stage were, by all accounts, heterogeneous and chaotic. The company that played *The Alchemist* also staged *The Tempest*. As scholars of the English stage remind us, public theatres in the form of specially demarcated buildings were principally a late Tudor development.[119] There were, however, innyards and halls that could be rented out for interludes (Chambers 356).

[119] Chambers 355. Although, as Chambers points out Yarmouth had a game-house by 1538 and Exeter had a "theatrum" since the fourteenth century, used to stage farces.

In 1576 the Theatre opened in Shoreditch, outside the Bishopgate's entrance to the city (Chambers 384-85; White 2006: 110). James Burbage, and his brother-in-law John Brayne, a grocer, held the lease to the property. Polygonal in structure the Theatre followed from Burbage and Brayne's previous experience building the Red Lion in 1567 (Gurr 11). Other playhouses soon sprang up: the Curtain (1577) in the parish of Shoreditch and the liberty of Holywell,[120] and Rose (1587) and Swan (1595) in Southwark.[121] Following a dispute over the rental agreement Burbage's sons Richard and Cuthbert with Peter Street and others dismantled the Theatre on December 28, 1598, carrying "all the wood and timber thereof unto the Banckside in the parishe of St. Marye Overyes, and there erected a newer playhowse with the sayd timber and woode" (Chambers 415). This new theater was of course the Globe.

But open air theatres were not the only available entertainment options. Roofed private playhouses offered an alternate venue for the acting companies. It is, however, important to remember that the origins of the hall playhouses lay intertwined with the boys' companies. In 1575 Paul's Choir school started using a small playhouse adjacent to their Chapter House, and the following year the rival Chapel Children opened at Blackfriars (Gurr 26). However, as Andrew Gurr documents playing by boy companies came to an end in 1590, and till 1600 there were no indoor playhouses other than a few rooms in city inns (26). In 1596 Burbage bought the Blackfriars for £600, but owing to objection from the city the playhouse did not open until 1600 (Chambers 503, 367; Gurr 29). Other indoor venues included the Cockpit, Salisbury-court (White: 2006 144; Gurr 33), and Whitefriars (Chambers 515).

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[120] Chambers 400

[121] White: 2006 112

As Martin White documents, the rise of the playhouses coincided with an expansion of London population from 180,000 to 350,000 (112). Johannes De Witt visiting London in 1596, claimed the Swan could hold 3,000 people. Later theatre historians have revised the number to 2,730. Excavations at the Rose suggest a yard capacity of around 533, which when combined with the galleries brings up the total to 2,395. The Fortune possibly held 2,340 and the Globe 3,000 (White: 2006 123). On the other hand the private theaters had much smaller audiences: 100-200 for St. Paul's, 700 for the Cockpit (Phoenix) and 800 for Blackfriars (ibid. 145).

When it comes to the structure of early modern playhouses and playgoing customs, foreign visitors provide valuable information. The itinerary of Prince Otto of Hess-Cassel compiled in 1611 tells us:

> In London there are seven theatres, where daily, except on Sundays, comedies are performed, whereof the most important is the Globe, which lies over the water. The theatre, where the children play, is on the hither side of the water; they play at three o'clock, but only from Michaelmas to Easter. Here it costs half a shilling to enter, but for other places at least half a crown. (As quoted in Chambers 369)

As Gurr explains the public playhouses opened their doors in the afternoon for optimal lighting conditions. This arrangement of course made the playhouses clash with church service. The plays themselves lasted anywhere between two to three hours (38-39). In the public playhouses a penny gained one admission, a second penny a seat in the galleries, a third penny a better seat (Gurr 19). Gallants could also sit on the stage. Statistically, the gallery seats had more capacity than the yards (Gurr 19, White: 2006 123-4). On the other hand, private playhouses cost "sixpence for a seat in the top gallery, one shilling and sixpence for a seat in the pit facing the stage, and two shillings and sixpence for a side-stage box (White: 2006 145).

As for the actual structure of the early modern stage, White contends that each playhouse came up with its own variation. De Witt's sketch of the Swan, extant only in his friend Arend Van Buchell's commonplace book shows a rectangular stage (ibid. 113-114). However, excavations show the stage at the Rose was an "irregular hexagon" and the Globe stage quite possibly tapered toward the front end (ibid. 116-117). Stage practices in the private theaters differed with candle-lights being used for afternoon performance and more extensive use of music (ibid. 148, 152).

Nonetheless, despite differences in structures and audiences the place of both the public and private stage as Steven Mullaney argues was in the margins.[122] Located outside of city prohibition, the playhouses provided a space where "the outlawed practices and agents of Catholic faith could be represented with considerable sympathy, along with Turks, Jews, witches, demons, fairies, wildmen, ghosts" (Greenblatt, 19). In fact we might begin to see it as a cosmopolitan space where foreigners not only routinely appeared on stage, but could also be sighted in the stalls. The records of De Witt or Otto Hess-Cassel prove this enduring lure of the theater that crossed national boundaries.

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[122] Mullaney 1-23. Although his private theatre catered to a wealthier audience Burbage had earned the umbridge of local residents who petitioned to the Privy Council to forbid plays on grounds that it would cause "very great annoyance and trouble, not only to all the noblemen and gentlemen thereabout inhabiting but also a general inconvenience to all the inhabitants of the same precinct, both by resort of the great resort and gathering together of all manner of vagrant and lewde persons that, under color of resorting to players, will come thither and worke all manner of mischeefe." (as quoted by Gurr 29)

Yet the English stage was also deeply invested in exploring domestic issues. Richard Helgerson, Alfred Harbage, and Walter Cohen, amongst others have identified the drama of the period as profoundly nationalistic.[123] While foreigners routinely visited playhouses, the bulk of the audience comprised ordinary English artisans, merchants and noblemen. The plays wrestled with questions of class and gender while staging political controversies. The public of the early modern public stage presented itself as a site of debate and cross-talk. This heterogeneity of subjects, plots, and contemporary references helps us recognize the theater as a public sphere. As Jeffrey S. Dotty argues, the early modern theater provided a space where audiences were encouraged to think and judge for themselves. In fact it often relied on "private people paying attention to matters of state" (183). The volatility of the stage is evident: in 1624 Thomas Middleton's *A Game of Chess*, which alluded to Anglo-Spanish relations, was stopped after just nine performances on charges of portraying living kings on stage. The play had been extremely popular before it was shut down.

Not just Tudor or Stuart foreign policy, but also expanding English trade networks, and fears of apostasy (turning Catholic, turning Turk) came to be enacted on stage. Later as play-texts these entered a larger print public. Of course it is important to remember that playwrights often drew inspiration from previously circulating printed books – Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Hakluyt's *Voyages*, pamphlets on piracy and witchcraft. The public stage formed part of this larger nexus of ideological exchanges. It is within this larger discourse that we need to situate the East Indies.

While East Indian characters did not physically appear on the commercial stage, numerous plays referenced the East Indies – evoking spices and natives. While Shakespeare's *A*

[123] Helgerson 197-8.

Midsummer Night's Dream gives us the Indian Boy, Jonson's *The Alchemist* relies on images of the East Indies to bring out the larger context of roguery. Similarly, in *The Devil's Law Case* by John Webster, wealth generated by the spice trade remains suspect, with Romelio the merchant of Naples turning to the East Indies to cover up his misdeeds. Unlike civic pageants and court masques, plays staged in the commercial playhouses were not directly funded by guilds or the royal coffers. We therefore witness neither conversions of black Indian queens, nor singing Brahmin priests. Instead the plays offer us a glimpse into the ways in which the East Indies trade triggered a range of socio-economic anxieties.

II. Alchemy and the transmutation of metals

In Jonson's play alchemy and "India" appear intertwined, one often complementing the other. The term alchemy derives from Arabic 'al-kimiya' or 'the kimiya' meaning writings from the land of Khem or Egypt.[124] According to Plutarch, 'khem' stood for the black earth of Egypt, as opposed to the desert sand. This blackness was in turn metaphorically associated with the color of the pupil and a sense of mystery (Binswanger 2). Practitioners of alchemy, the alchemists, tried to solve the riddles or mysteries of nature, most specifically transmutation of baser metals to gold. In *The Mirror of Alchimy* (1597), Roger Bacon, describing this fascination with metals and compounds concluded:

[124] Oed. http://www.oed.com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/4691 accessed December 25, 2010; Binswanger 2.

> *Alchimy* therefore is a science teaching how to make and compound a certaine medicine, which is called *Elixir,* the which when it is cast vpon mettals or imperfect bodies, doth fully perfect them in the verie proiection.(Bacon A3r)

The immediate aim of alchemists was to find a medicine that would act not just on human bodies, but also metals, making the imperfect perfect: curing disease and revealing gold. This elixir, or medicine, though sometimes identified with vapors or liquids, most popularly denoted the philosopher's stone.[125] As the Canon's Yeoman in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* clarifies: "the philosophres stoon,/ Elixer clept, we sechen faste echooon" (862-3). The stone acted as a catalyst for the transmutation; it did not itself change to gold (Binswanger 3).

For alchemists transmutation becomes possible because all base materials still retain a core of the purer (Binswanger 8). *The Booke of the Secrets of Alchimie* uses the metaphor of washing clothes with soap, arguing that "the vertue which before lay hid, is nowe made known" (31). Composed of the same elements, air, fire, earth and water, in varying combinations, any substance might be converted into another.[126] The alchemist therefore strives to make that which is imperfect in nature "more then perfect by our artificiall labour" (Bacon 9). While gold

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[125] Oed. http://www.oed.com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/60499 accessed December 25, 2010

[126] Binswanger 7-9. Doctor Faustus had also been hired by Baron Anton von Staufen to produce artificial gold, 2.

is considered perfect, silver comes a close second.[127] All other metals, including steel, lead, copper and iron come across as impure, and unclean (Bacon 2-3). Alchemy, despite being traced back to Hermes Trismegistus, also owed a lot of its central tenets to neoplatonists like Pico della Mirandola, Cornelius Agrippa, and Paracelsus.[128] As Carl Wennerlind points out, alchemists benefited from such neoplatonic notions as that of an imperfect world that was still evolving towards perfection, and the balance of humors (239-239). The philosopher's stone held out the possibility of achieving both these objectives.

Although Bacon lists multiple methods for extracting stone, *The Booke of the Secrets of Alchimie* included in the same binding, suggests India as a possible mine for the stone:

> It is a Stone whose myne is in the top of the mountaines: and here by mountaines, the Philosopher vnderstandeth liuing creatures, wherupon he saide. Sonne, go to the mountaines of *India,* and to his caues, & pull out thence precious stones which will melt in the water when they are putte into it. (45)

Going to India seems to offer a possible means of finding the stone. But *The Mirror of Alchimy* is deliberately allegorical here, regarding mountains as "living creatures." Moreover, the

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[127] Each of the metals also had astrological correspondences: the sun was associated with gold, the moon with silver, Mars with iron, Mercury with quicksilver, Saturn with lead, Jupiter with tin (Chaucer "Canon's Yeoman's Tale" 826-7)

[128] Wennerlind 238. Margaret Healy argues that Ficino links up Herrneticism and Alchemy, 165.

philosopher's ideally combined "the nature of Minerals, Vegetables, and Animals."[129] The stone also contained all four elements, and in its working imitated the creation of the world. [130]

The alchemist's pursuit of gold, though often interpreted in a spiritual light,[131] also intersected with material needs. European courts, especially during the late sixteenth century, and the economic downturn of the seventeenth, turned to alchemy in hopes of bolstering their gold stock (Nummedal 44, Wennerlind 234-236). English support for alchemists had started much earlier in the fifteenth century with Edward IV. And Elizabeth I extended her patronage to John Dee who helped further popularize alchemical studies (Wennerlind 236). Dee in fact worked with Edward Kelley who was reputed to have successfully transformed gold.[132] James I and Charles I continued with this tradition, supporting Kenelm Digby (Wennerlind 236). Incidentally both Dee and Digby had interest in English investments in the New World and Guinea. Their alchemical pursuits were meant to revive commerce by increasing gold availability, as well as improving agriculture (Wennerlind 235-236). And princes across Europe

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[129] A briefe Commentarie of Hortulanus the Philosopher, vpon the Smaragdine Table of *Hermes* of *Alchimy*, 27.

[130] A briefe Commentarie of Hortulanus 20, 25.

[131] Alchemy was ultimately supposed to lead to spiritual upliftment, the gold becoming a metaphor for an advanced spiritual state.

[132] Yates 23. Dee was also a Cabalist. "Practical Cabala and practical alchemy thus seem to go together in the Dee-Kelley partnership." Yates suggests a possible crossover of Cabalist and alchemical interests at least in this instance, and suggests Cornelius Agrippa, another Cabalist was possibly also interested in alchemy.

set up laboratories, and entered into contracts with alchemists (Nummedal 44). Simultaneously the possibility that private citizens could produce artificial gold spurred fears of false coinage, undermining economic and national foundations.[133]

Nonetheless, there was a long tradition of dismissing alchemy as a scam (Bevington 81). In *The Canterbury Tales*, for instance, the Canon's yeoman describes his master as having great "subtilitee" (620), only to later expose him as a fraud. He goes on elaborate on his own ordeal of blowing fire, burning bones, iron, salt and pepper in earthen pots and glass lamps, all to no avail (755-65). But the Canon's treatment of a London priest is most outrageous. Promising to produce silver, he throws coal into the fire. Of course, he had already fixed it with the metal:

> This false chanoun – the foule feend hym fecche! –
> Out of his bosom he took a beechen cole,
> In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,
> And therinne put was of silver lemaille
> An ounce, and stopped was, withouten faille,
> This hole with wex, to kepe lemaille in. (1159-64)

Far from generating silver from baser metals, the Canon resorts to an old trick. The guileless London priest of course falls for it and loses his money. The alchemist in Chaucer is a ruthless trickster who is shamed and runs away when his yeoman starts spilling his secrets.

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[133] "There was one *Salcedo* a Spanyard, which before had escaped the gibbet of *Roan,* for coyning false coyne, with his false gold and siluer wrought by Alchimie, fled into *Spayne,* and from thence into *Lorrayne,* where the *Guizes* hiered him for sixe thousand Crownes (which they payed him at *Nancie* in *Lorrayne)* to murther *Monsieur.*" Colynet 16.

But were all alchemists seen as frauds? Tara Nummedal juxtaposes rising court patronage of alchemists at the end of the sixteenth century with a proportionate increase in fears of frauds and charlatans (Nunmedal 37-51). Significantly, when alchemists failed to deliver on promises they were prosecuted not under charges of witchcraft, but fraud, underlining the commercial basis of such transactions (Nunmedal 45). Nunmedal warns against modern assumptions that all alchemists were dismissed as charlatans in early modern Europe. Instead, well educated princes actually believed in the possibility of transmutation. The difficulty lay in detecting genuine alchemists from their fraudulent counterparts (ibid. 42). Part of the problem in regulating alchemists, and distinguishing among them, arose from the absence of a guild (ibid. 46). In this light princes and ordinary consumers were forced to judge for themselves the legitimacy of an alchemist. When caught, the tricksters were severely punished and often summarily hanged by irate princes.[134]

III. Indies trade as alchemical stone

Much like the alchemist's stone, "India" seemed a way to gain untold riches. When Christopher Columbus set out to find India, he was driven by popular tales of a land overflowing with gold and spices (Cohen 13). I argue that both these objects, most commonly associated with India or the Indies, have much in common with the principal aims of alchemy: its discovery of a stone that might transmute base metals to gold, and cure diseases. Prior to Columbus' journey

[134] Although not all who were convicted of fraud were sent to the gallows, a disproportionate number of alchemists were because they had cheated not private citizens, but a prince. Nunmedal 50.

westwards, Marco Polo had returned from China with tales of fabulous riches, and pseudo-travelogues like that of John Mandeville promised entire hills made of gold in the east:

> Beside that isle [Taprobane], toward the east, be other two isles. And men clepe that one Orille, and that other Argyte, of the which all the land is mine of gold and silver. […] In the isle also of this Taprobane be great hills of gold, that pisimires keep full diligently. And they fine the pured gold, and cast away the un-pured. And these pisimires be great as hounds, so that no man dare come to those hills, for the pisimires would assail them and devour them anon. so that no man may get of that gold, but by great sleight. (198-199)

Taprobane (modern day Sri Lanka), conveniently adjacent to the lands of the legendary Christian ruler of Ind, Prester John, holds out the possibility of any daring and skillful man acquiring vast quantities of gold. The quest for such treasure (gold *and* silver), much like the alchemist's trials in his laboratory, requires both cunning and hard work. Mythical beasts stand guard over the stock of gold, making its acquisition all the more difficult. Nonetheless, these fantastic tales helped make India synonymous with gold and silver – the two most pure of alchemical metals.

When Columbus stumbled upon the New World, he tried to find gold in each new island that he beheld. Soon after arriving at Cabo del Isleo, he delayed further travels "until I have speech with this king and see whether I can get gold that I hear he wears." (71). His failure to locate the fabled mines notwithstanding, the New World did ultimately yield silver mines, and gold. Despite its predominance in the Americas, stories of old world gold refused to die out. In 1584, Ralph Fitch following Cesar Federici's account, described Pagodas in Pegu "with tiles of silver, and all the walls are guilded with golde" (31). He even claims that there were gold mines nearby.

Likewise in "The Voyages and Peregrinations made by Antient Kings, Patriarckes, Apostles, Philosophers, and others," published by Samuel Purchas, Ophir, the fabled source of King Salomon's mines seems to be located in the old world. He refuses to identify "Ophir in Peru and the West Indies" (66). He argues instead: "I answer that Peru was not inhabited, nor yet New Spaine, one thousand yeares after Salomans time" (68), expounding the popular belief that West Indies was populated much later than the rest of the world. For Purchas, Ophir, and the Ophirian Voyage, lies in the East Indies:

> The Ophirian Voyage (it is probable) comprehended all the gulfe of Bengala from Zeilan to Sumatra, on both sides: but the Region of Ophir we make to be all from Ganges to Menan, and most properly the large kingdome of Pegu, from whence it is likely in processe of time, the Southerly parts, even to Sumatra inclusively was peopled before Salomans time. (87)

As one of the most commercially viable stretches of the east, the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean double up as Ophir. But whether situated in the west or east 'Indies,' these accounts inevitably conjured fabulous wealth for the taking.

However, the alchemist's stone did not just open up the possibility of acquiring gold and silver; it was also sought after for its medicinal virtues. Likewise, India yielded not only riches, but also spices – noted for their medicinal benefits. According to *A rich store-house or treasury for the diseased*, pepper, for instance, was used to cure several types of ague,[135] cloves and mace drunk with wine alleviated colic,[136] and nutmegs mixed with cinnamon helped with "the

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[135] A. T. E1v, E4v

[136] A. T. R1v

running of the raynes."[137] What made spices especially handy, was that they were also used for cooking, and were often readily available in the house. The anonymous *The good hous-wiues treasurie* (1588), after providing elaborate recipes for making broth for mutton, chicken, veale, capon, rabbit and birds, as well as baking instructions for pippin, quince and eel pies, also supplies a handy list of household remedies for common ailments. The same spices used for sprucing up one's cooking, aids with problems of indigestion: powder of cloves cure nausea, cinnamon sticks seem to stop vomiting altogether, as did pepper.[138]

But spices supposedly cured more serious ailments too. *A rich store-house or treasury for the diseased* offers a concoction of common and rare spices to alleviate the plague:

> A maruellous good drinke for them that are infected with the Plague.
>
> TAke leafe-gold, and mingle it with the iuice of Lemons, and a litle Suger-candie, Cloues, Mace, and a litle Cinamon, and a like quantity of Licquorice finely pared & sliced, and let this be steeped in white Wine, or else in good Claret Wine, and put therein a good quantity of the powder of Angellica, or else of the decoction of the same roote, the same drinke will help the Patient being drunke warme. (A.T. 65 (V1r)

This prescription, meant to counter one of the deadliest diseases in early modern Europe, brings together gold and spices, forming a rich potable concoction that will restore life. Gold, as we have seen, was regarded as the purest of metals. Spices mixed with well known medicinal herbs like Angelica, and steeped in wine, seem to supplement the purifying attributes.

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[137] A.T.G3v

[138] *The good hous-wiues treasurie* n.p. [34?-36?]

Moreover, if one of the purposes of alchemy was to make an imperfect world perfect, then as we have seen in Chapter One, India held out a glimpse of a world that once was paradise. Medieval cartographies and travelogues of Mandeville, for instance, believed that the terrestrial paradise was in the east, accounting for the astounding fecundity of the east. Rivers of Eden in fact still washed through parts of Ind (178). The riches of Ind as well as her fertility ultimately figure as the vestigial effects of a lost Paradise.

However, by the seventeenth century, a new relationship with India was being forged, one that involved fiscal alchemy. With the establishment of the East India Company on December 31, 1600, direct trading with the spice producing regions became an increasingly lucrative reality. In the first decade of its operation the Company raked in a profit of 155% on capital that amounted to £517,784 (Chaudhuri 22). The unprecedented profits made possible through the spice trade seemed no less than a feat of transmutation. However, as with the confusion over identifying a true alchemist, the East Indies trade ran into several problems quite early on: all that glittered was not gold.

In the case of the East India Company troubles began not so much with gold, but silver. Bullion proved to be the mainstay of the spice trade as England failed to vent its cloth manufactures. To several critics and mercantilist pamphleteers, instead of bringing treasure in, the East Indies trade was actually hemorrhaging bullion. Could it be that like fraudsters and charlatans, the Indies was pulling a quick one on unsuspecting England? In *Free Trade or The Meanes to Make Trade Flourish* (1622) Edward Misselden has no doubt about an Indian conspiracy:

> the subtilty of the *Indians* is great, in talking advantage of this unhappy *Faction*, or rather *Fraction*, that is fallen betwixt us. For those that have traveled the *Indies*, and observed

> those people can tell, that the *Indians* do ascribe so much to the light of their understanding that they doe account the rest of the world blinde in Comparison. […] and yet can finde the *Meanes*, to pry into the *Mines* and *Treasure* of the Christian world. (112-13)

Here Misselden reverts to popular stereotypes of unreliable, morally despicable Indians. Moreover, as non-believers their schemes double up as an attack against Christianity itself: they pry into "the *Mines* and *Treasure* of the Christian world." Many of the mines in question, of courses, were actually situated in the Americas, and formed part of a trans-global circulation of precious metals.[139] Silver from the West Indies became Spanish pieces of eight – the standard currency for any trade with the east. Gerard Malynes in *A Treatise of the Canker of English Common Wealth* (1601) had earlier evoked this global commerce as an elaborate fraud:

> Who seeth not then, that without any cause of admiration, some men do wonder as it were at the simplicity of the West *Indians*, *Brazilians* and other nations, in giving the good commodities of their countries, yea, gold, silver, and precious things, for beads, bels, knives, looking-glasses, and such toyes and triffles? Nay, that we our selves are guilty of the like simplicity, if herein (the premises considered) yet an error were committed? For giving our good commodities, or treasure which chiefly from the West *Indies* is received for our sayd commodities, unto them of the East *Indies*. (68)

West Indians and Brazilians foolishly running after trifles – beads, knives, and looking glasses – squander away their treasure. Their "simplicity" or gullibility makes it more difficult for them to identify the truly important objects. It also makes it easier for European merchants to swindle them. What is troubling for Malynes is not that Europeans are cheating the West Indians, but that

[139] There were of course mines in Europe as well especially in Germany

the tricksters are being gulled in turn. Instead of an equitable exchange, global commerce becomes a series of con-jobs, with the East Indians emerging as the arch-fraudsters and ultimate beneficiaries. Later in *The Centre of the Circle of Commerce* (1623) Malynes again describes East Indians as cheats: "The King of Bantam and other Princes of the East doe the like, selling their corruptible Wares for silver to hoard up the same" (133). As with alchemists, these allegations of deliberate deception become more damnable than mere clumsiness or oversight. Seemingly, East Indians were not inadvertently draining bullion, but doing so deliberately, and with false promises.

Such fraud affected not just England's balance of trade, but the circulation of bullion in all of Christendom. As we have seen in Chapter One Misselden understood intra-European commerce as life affirming, whereas external trade was seen as enervating, draining silver from a unified Christian body (Misselden 19-20). Supporters of the East India Company, of course, attempting to make a case for the necessity of spices and Indian dyes, raised the bogey-man of the Turk to counteract criticisms of bullion export. As Thomas Mun argued, direct access to the East Indies, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, dealt a financial blow to "the common enemie of Christendome (the Turke)," the erstwhile "Maister of the Trade" (9). But for detractors, the East Indies trade, like false alchemy, seemed increasingly like a cleverly devised hoax.

IV. Frauds, Gulls, and *The Alchemist*

The plague forms the context of the plot Jonson's *The Alchemist* and its performance. Initial plans to open at the Blackfriars had to be altered because of an outbreak of the epidemic that closed all theaters in London (Campbell xvii). Instead the first performance was at Oxford,

which had laxer restrictions, in September 1610. Within the play, the pestilence prompts the departure of Lovewit, leaving his servant Face in charge of his house. A run-in with Subtle, the self-proclaimed alchemist and Doll Common sets the stage for fraud:

> A cheater and his punk, who now brought low,
> L eaving their narrow practice, were become
> C ozeners at large; and only wanting some
> H ouse to set up, with him they here contract,
> E ach for a share, and all begin to act.
> M uch company they draw, and much abuse,
> I n casting figures, telling fortunes, news,
> S elling of flies, flat bawdry, with stone:
> T ill it, and they, and all in fume are gone. (Argument 4-12)

The argument identifies subtle as "A cheater," while the acrostic spells out "Alchemist." But what sort of an alchemist is he? We are given the precise nature of the pact that the three of them enter into: all profits will be split three ways. Like most alchemists of the time, Subtle seems to have entered a financial contract, though not with a prince, but a wily servant. Nonetheless, in the opening act, we find Face and Subtle in a bitter battle armed with a sword and a small glass bottle. Disputes over their gains leads Face to threaten the alchemist with possible legal repercussions:

> I'll bring thee, rogue, within
> The statute of sorcery, tricesimo tertio
> Of Harry the Eight: aye, and perhaps thy neck
> Within a noose, for laundering gold and barbing it. (I.i.111-114)

His angry charges neatly sum up a wide range of criminal activities that someone purporting to be an alchemist might commit: altering gold coins and necromancy. As we have seen, fraudulent alchemists meddling with coinage had become a common concern. Face's accusations of bathing or laundering coins in acid to dissolve gold, and clipping their edges, resurrects these old fears. Royal statutes throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries forbade anyone from "clipping, washing or filing" any domestic or foreign coin.[140] The result was a debased coin, and if found, the culprit could be tried for treason (Caffentzis 22; Gaskill 126).

Face's other allegation, that of sorcery had equally severe consequences. Not just witches, but diabolical sorcerers as well, had long been persecuted (Kors and Peters 16-17). Charges ranged from heresy to 'Maleficia.'[141] Henry VIII's 1541 statute invoked here, "An Act against Conjurations, Witchcrafts, Sorcery and Enchantments" decreed: "It shall be a felony to practice or cause to be practiced Conjuration Witchcraft Entertainment, to get Money."[142] By

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[140] Edward VI 1547 statute, Raithby 495. As Janelle Day Jenstad argues, goldsmiths were amongst the group of people frequently charged with altering coins (199). We can see how alchemists similarly skilled with handling metals (hypothetically gold) might we viewed with similar suspicion.

[141] 'Maleficia' was generally associated with female witches. As for charges of heresy, in 1258 Pope Alexander IV authorized the association of heresy and witchcraft (Kors and Peters 13-15). A difference was still made between magic and witchcraft, between "magie" and "sorcellerie" (in French). Nonetheless, a diabolical sorcerer or witch, either male or female, was believed to have entered into a pact with the devil (10, 12).

[142] As quoted in Raithby 347

branding witchcraft as felony, the statute brought witches directly under the jurisdiction of common law instead of the ecclesiastical courts (Rosen 86). Henry VIII's law, however, was repealed by Edward VI a few years later, only to be reintroduced during the reign of Elizabeth I. Her successor, James I, of course, wrote *Daemonologie* (1597) which dealt extensively with witches, and perceived them as a personal threat.[143]

But why should Face brand Subtle a sorcerer? Why might an alchemist be perceived of as a necromancer? Shouldn't alchemy properly fall within the domain of natural magic, and thus be considered benign? Face's detailed description of Subtle's activities provides us with a few possible clues:

> When all your alchemy and your algebra,
> Your minerals, vegetals, and animals,
> Your conjuring, cozening, and your dozens of trades,
> Could not relieve your corpse with so much linen
> Would make you tinder, but to see a fire,
> I ga' you coun'nance, credit for your coals,

[143] In 1589, his bride Princess Anne of Denmark had to turn back on her voyage to Scotland because of freak storms. Danish admiral Peter Munk blamed the storm on witches in Copenhagen. King James hurried off to meet his bride in Denmark only to confront storms on his return journey. This time the Scottish witches took the blame. An elaborate conspiracy was unearthed, and James himself oversaw some of the interrogations. James I believed in the divine right of kings to rule. As god's deputy on earth, he became the obvious target of the subversive actions of the witches. The Tudor anxieties surrounding the impact of witchcraft on the political realm, therefore reached a crescendo during the Jacobean era.

Your stills, your glasses, your materials,

Advanced all your black arts; lent you, beside,

A house to practise – (I.i.38-47)

Although the list starts off with minerals, vegetables, glass bottles, and mathematical formulas, suggesting a scientific discipline, Face ends by grouping these under "black arts." Strictly speaking, the term "alchemy" literally translated as "the black" art, "khem" being the word Egyptian for "black"(OED; Binswanger 2). And the association of alchemists with black art has a long history. As Binswanger argues, the historical Doctor Faustus had been hired by Baron Anton von Staufen, who was short of funds, to produce artificial gold (2). The Doctor, in fact, had acquired great fame as an alchemist, contemporary sources describing him as one the most accomplished that ever lived.[144]

If Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* was inspired by a historical Faust, then might not Jonson's *The Alchemist* have a similar historical source? As Frances A. Yates contends, the latter consistently alludes to and parodies Dee's *Monas hieroglyphica* and his mathematical preface to Euclid (161). Dee was a known conjurer.[145] In fact Elizabeth's alchemist also seems to have been the proto-type for William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Both plays of course were performed by the King's Company (ibid.). If we agree with Yates' pairing, then we must notice other parallels between the two plays: both seem to evoke a global, if not colonial imagination. *The Tempest* with its allusions to the Bermuda pamphlets, and

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[144] Abbot Trithemius said Faust was "the most accomplished alchemist that ever lived" (Binswanger 2).

[145] With his associate Kelley, Dee was said to have conjured angels (Yates 82-3).

enslaved Caliban, seems to enact the fantasy of colonial possession through magic;[146] while Jonson's play presents us with a series of references to both West and East Indies. Dee of course, was known for advocating a British-imperial destiny for Queen Elizabeth I (Yates 85).

However, the two plays, performed by the same company within a few years of each other,[147] differed vastly in their treatment of the conjurer (ibid. 161). Prospero can actually perform magic while Subtle is a charlatan. According to Yates, Jonson's play seems to have been an attempt on the playwright's part to ingratiate himself with James I who was known to dislike Dee and feared all things magical (ibid. 161). While the conjurer gets reduced to a cheat and quack, a common prostitute takes on the role of the Fairy Queen. Both these gestures in the play prompt Yates to align *The Alchemist* with James' skepticism of Elizabethan nostalgia (161). By extending this analogy, any attempt at an Elizabethan revival becomes a cheap trick, the play revealing central tenets of Tudor mysticism and iconography as nothing more than an elaborate hoax.[148]

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[146] Prospero's magic, strictly speaking, cannot be described a 'natural magic' which has been described as "concerned only with elemental substances in their relations to stars and avoiding the 'star demons', the spirits connected with the stars" (Yates 45). Prospero of course famously uses spirits.

[147] *The Tempest* was performed around 1611

[148] As Yates points out, ironically Jonson had used the Arthurian fairy legend with all its associations to Elizabeth for Prince Henry's masque. His repudiation of Elizabethan ideals in *The Alchemist* therefore seems paradoxical. But it might have been his way of publicly undercutting Prince Henry's active Protestantism (161).

The Fairy Queen is part of the first con-job that we get to see in the play. But Dapper, a lawyer's clerk, hoping to change his luck at gambling by winning the favor of fairies, is not the last of the gulls. The very next person to fall into the alchemist's trap is the Drugger. Looking to set up a new shop, he openly turns to necromancy in order to ascertain the best possible locations for his door, shelves, and pots (I.iii.11-13). We are told that he is "A seller of tobacco" (I.iii.3) and refrains from adulterating his stock with "sack-lees or oil/ Nor washes it in muscadel and grains" (I.iii.24-25). Presumably, his honesty makes him more vulnerable to the tricksters. Instead of giving him a direct answer, Subtle prophesies that he will become a sheriff of London. But according to the alchemist, even greater fortune awaits the Drugger:

> There is a ship now, coming from Ormus
>
> That shall yield him such a commodity
>
> Of drugs – This is the west, and this the south? (I.iii.59-61)

The island of Ormuz or Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, under Portuguese control since the sixteenth century was a major trans-shipping port for eastern spices.[149] The drugs in question, that would make Abel Drugger rich beyond his wildest imagination, could therefore, be nothing other than the produce of the East Indies. In many ways it is telling that Jonson's Drugger is "Free of the Grocers" (I.iii.4) or a member of the Grocers' Guild. The Grocers, as we have seen in Chapter 2, had exclusive rights in dealing with foreign commodities like tobacco and spices. Moreover, as Gil Harris notes, in late medieval England the term "spicer" covered the trades of grocer and

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[149] Campbell 487; Farrington 13. The East India Company helped Persians capture Ormuz from the Portuguese in 1622, getting in exchange a share of the customs revenue of Bandar Abbas (Farrington 64, Chaudhuri 29).

apothecary (121). Tobacco, of course, was also used as a drug, mainly for treating syphilis.[150] But, by pointing to Ormuz, Subtle seems to suggest that trading in eastern spices might make the Drugger richer much faster.[151] The West Indies is not forgotten; it just needs to be supplemented with its eastern counterpart. The Drugger's store conveniently combines both the *Indies*.

Nonetheless, this pharmacy, filled with herbs and spices from the Indies, is part of Subtle's trick. The Drugger falling for this fantasy of gaining wealth through the imports from Ormuz, squanders not only his gold, but also his chances at wedding a rich widow. Foreign drugs, while praised for their benefits, were also often viewed with skepticism. Tobacco for instance was seen as poison (Pollard 6); and as Gil Harris observes, pepper and mummia, the most well known Oriental drugs, were used by the English customs official Thomas Milles to conflate "mountebank physicians with the East India Company, both of whom he imagines hawking questionably healthful effects – whether corporeal or financial" (128). Such condemnations sprang not just from hostilities toward drugs as foreign commodities, but also from the recognition that they were mostly exported in exchange for bullion.[152]

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[150] George Abbot says tobacco was used in Peru to treat "lues venereal" (149); Pollard 4.

[151] Pepper had once been known as "black gold" (Jardine 53), and even after prices fell with an increase in imports, it still remained profitable.

[152] About the East India Company Milles writes: "And finding our Traffick, nigh Pulselesse, Spritlesse, and almost out of Bloud like confident Empericks that seek but private Profit, at one hand or other six pence in the Pound, to powder her with Pepper and turne her into Mummy" (K1r). Earlier he said "His Own Eternal Glory and Mans Immortal Blisse, is by a like consent of

In *The Alchemist* Subtle's entrapment of the Drugger leads to yet more plots and victims. Kestrel, a customer at the tobacco shop also lands before the alchemist. On the Drugger's recommendation he freely surrenders his widowed sister. Although Dame Pliant fails to recognize this herself, her virtue is under grave threat in the alchemist's lair.[153] During their initial exchange Subtle and Face take turns kissing her while Kestrel simply stands and watches. Later Face confesses "In troth, I needs must have this widow" (Iv.iii.5). At the end of course he offers her to his master as compensation for using Lovewit's house in his absence.

The fabulous wealth promised to the Drugger through spices from Ormuz never materializes in the play. Much like the philosopher's stone, the East Indies trade seems to be the way to get rich fast. However, the alchemists use it to trick the Drugger of his money and bride. His allegiance with the Grocers' guild seems to make him especially susceptible to falling for Subtle's ploy. He seems in a position to immensely benefit from England's trade with the spice lands and Levant, and his greed increases, only to lead to his downfall.

V. England, Indies, and Transmutation

More than anything else alchemy promises change: transmuting baser metals like lead to gold; changing a diseased body into a disease-free one. *The Alchemist*, then, is filled with

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Nations made fixt and firme in the *Finenesse* and *Purenesse* of Gold and Silver, by the name of *Bullion*" (B2v-C1r).

[153] *The Alchemist* in this respect shares startling similarities with *Bartholomew Fair*. In both plays the economic logic the plot leaves the women on the verge of being raped or prostituted while the male protectors (husbands and brothers) remain oblivious.

transmutations and promises (or threats) of change. In the opening act Subtle draws attention to one of these early transformations. Quarrelling with Face, he cries out:

> Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee out of dung,
> So poor, so wretched, when no living thing
> Would keep thee company but a spider or worse?
> Raised thee from brooms and dust and watering pots?
> Sublimed thee and exalted thee and fixed thee
> I' the third region, called our state of grace?
> Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
> Would twice have won me the philosopher's work?
> Put thee in words and fashion? Made thee fit
> For more than ordinary fellowships? (I.i.64-74)

The alchemist here claims to have transmuted one thing for another – an uncouth servant into a more sophisticated, if dishonest Face. This alteration seems to cross social hierarchies. A lowly servant, occupying the bottom of a domestic space, a "vermin" surrounded by dung, brooms and watering pots, has been "sublimed." Subtle has distilled all impurities out of his apprentice and translated him to the third or the purest and uppermost region of air (Campbell 484). The person before him now is the purest essence, the quintessence of Face. A successful alchemist of course was said to have succeeded in finding the quintessence of things, sublimating impure substances. In that sense Subtle suggests he has transmuted the base lead-like Face into his golden counterpart.

This newly distilled man is, of course, slightly different from traditional alchemical transformations. But he is the means by which Subtle might rake in more gold: Face is his

accomplice in crime. As the alchemist goes on to clarify, Face has turned more fashionable, and learnt not just how to consort with his social betters but also "to cheat at horse-race, cock-pit, cards/Dice, or whatever gallant tincture else" (I.iii.75-6). His ability to move in higher circles results not in elevated spiritual understanding, but in criminal activities. Subtle, the fraudulent alchemist had created a perfect apprentice and trickster.

However, as Face points out, he is not the only social climber. In this warped cycle of transmutations, the apprentice has also created the sorcerer. Before the lonely servant planted Subtle in the house of Lovewit, his true master, the alchemist was languishing "at [a] Pie Corner,/Taking […] meal of steam in from cooks' stalls" (I.i.25-6). Impoverished, and at the brink of starvation, he found relief only with the arrival of Face. Instead of trying to make a living as an alchemist on London's busy streets he now had a whole house to his disposal. His act had similarly translated: Subtle is now a great doctor with an apprentice hooking gulls for him.

These transitions, transgressing class hierarchies, betray the dark underbelly of an alchemical dream. If anyone and anything could truly be transmuted and purified then what would happen to existing social structures? Of course, Jonson's play turns this premise into a well orchestrated scam. Not just Subtle and Face, but Doll too briefly undergoes transmutation. She appears as the Fairy Queen before Dapper, and is passed off as "A Lord's sister" to Mammon (II.iii. 223). Not even Lovewit remains unaffected. At the end he disguises himself as a Spaniard before revealing himself as the true owner of the house and claiming Dame Pliant as his bride. Fraud, disguises, and transmutations leap out from every page.

Nonetheless, it is Sir Epicure Mammon who displays the most prolific imagination when it comes to the philosopher's stone. He hopes to transform English counties into the Indies. His

name itself suggests an onslaught of riches and temptation. The word "Mammon" derived from post-classical Latin "mammona" means wealth. It has its roots in Hebrew and Aramaic, and implies "riches or gain of wickedness." In the New Testament uses, "Mammon" is sometimes personified, but always appears in a pejorative sense. In this religious sense it originally denoted "inordinate desire for wealth or possessions, personified as a devil or demonic agent." However, from the sixteenth century it more frequently implied "wealth, profit, possessions, etc., regarded as a false god or an evil influence."[154] Mammon, therefore, commonly evoked demonic agency, excessive lust for wealth, and a sense of falsehood. The English knight's other name "Epicure" has a similar etymology of hyper-consumption. Derived from the Athenian Philosopher Epicurus (c.300 B.C.), who identified pleasure as virtue, in the sixteenth century the term "Epicure" denoted someone who had given himself up to sensual pleasure, as well as one who cultivated a refined taste.[155] Both these later uses came to be associated with consumption – eating and drinking.

Sir Epicure Mammon seems to embody both these qualities of greed and sensuality, and they combine in his hunt for the philosopher's stone. Upon first arriving on stage he declares:

> Now you set your foot on shore
> *In novo orbe*; here's the rich Peru,
> And there within, sir, are the golden mines,
> Great Solomon's Ophir! He was sailing to't

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[154] OED < http://www.oed.com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/113169> accessed January 2, 2011.

[155] OED < http://www.oed.com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/63280>

Three years, but we have reached it in ten months.

This is the day wherein to all my friends,

I will pronounce the happy word, 'be rich'. (II.i.1-7)

He believes that his stone is almost ready, a discovery that will change the world, literally transforming it into a new one. The only way that Mammon can imagine this transition is by evoking the Indies – not the east, but the west. The New World, or the Americas, with gold and silver mines seem a geographical version of the alchemist's stone. He also brings in Biblical accounts of fabulous riches, but unlike Purchas, he locates Solomon's Ophir in Peru, not Pegu. His quest for the stone takes on the form of the fabled Ophirian voyage: it took three years for Solomon to reach his port of gold (I Kings 9-10. Campbell 488). However, Mammon seems to have condensed it into a mere ten months. His journey for the stone also retraces the route of the Spanish galleons. However, although initially Mammon turns to the New World, he later switches to the East Indies. More than any other character in the play he displays a colonial imagination, hoping to access and possess both Indies.

A little later, while sharing his plans of transmuting things with the philosopher's stone he tells Surly:

Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,

And make them perfect Indies! You admire now? (II.i.35-36)

It is not just that Mammon wants to turn his house into gold, or buy up all the tin and copper from Lothbury (II.i.33-34). He wants to turn England into the Indies. In his ambition, Mammon seems rather cosmopolitan, willing to forgo any stringent idealization of the English domestic space. But which Indies might he be threatening to turn Devonshire and Cornwall into? As Jonson's later play *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) suggests, smoking tobacco, a drug almost

exclusively associated with the West Indies, had become commonplace in London. Adam Overdo declares: "Look into any angle o' the town – the Straits, or the Bermudas – where the quarrelling lesson is read, and how do they entertain the time, but with bottle-axe and tobacco?" (II.vi.72-74). The Straits and Bermudas in question were disreputable alleys near King's Cross (Campbell 509). In the justice's diatribe tobacco seems as ubiquitous as ale, while English drunkards and smokers fight in seedy lanes that sound distinctly foreign.

However, in *The Alchemist*, although Mammon evokes Peru to describe his quest for the philosopher's stone, he increasingly turns to the East Indies while imagining its transformative effects. Making elaborate plans on what he will do once he gets his stone, he informs Face:

> Lungs, I will set a period,
> To all thy labours: thou shalt be the master
> Of my seraglio. (II.ii.31-33)

He goes on to specify Face's role in his harem: "I'll geld you, Lungs" (II.ii. 35). Like an eastern potentate, Mammon longs for a harem, and wishes to castrate Face and install him as the head eunuch. Most famously the ruler of the Ottoman Empire had seraglios. As Nicolas de Nicolay, part of a French embassy to Suleiman the Magnificent reported, Constantinople had:

> the old Sarail, which first was builded and inhabited by Mehmet the second … within which do dwell the wives and concubines of the great Turk, which in number are above 200 being the most part daughters of Christians, some being taken by courses on the seas or by land … some of the other are bought of merchants, and afterwards … presented to the great Turk, who keepeth them within this Sarail, well appareled, nourished and entertained under straight keeping of … an eunuch….(117)

What is sensational in this account in not just the numerous wives and concubines, but also the revelation that many of them were "daughters of Christians" who were transported to Constantinople and then sold. Reports of captured Christians, who later converted or "turned Turk," abounded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, turning the Ottoman Empire into not just economic rivals, but religious enemies.

However, the great Turk was not the only eastern ruler to have a seraglio. As a custom practiced in most Muslim worlds, the Mogul emperor in India also had a harem that travelers frequently commented on. Nicholas Withington, who had managed to get a free passage to Surat as an attendant of Captain Best, spoke with awe on "the greatnesse of this Kinge, the Greate Mogul" and a bell "hanging in his seralia [seraglio]" that any petitioner could ring (226). A marginal note elaborated that the 'seralio' was "A palace in which his women for his pleasure are kept in" (Foster 226n). Ralph Fitch, part of the first English expedition to the East Indies, described in great detail the territories of the Mogul Emperor Akbar. In Agra and Fatehpur, the emperor kept, along with elephants, horses, and tame deer, "800 concubines" (17). The Mogul harem was as cosmopolitan as its Turkish counterpart, and it would not have been unusual to find Christian women in Agra. While there are no accounts of Englishmen converting in India, some did enter into the service of the emperor. Fitch for instance reports that his fellow traveling companion William Leeds, the jeweler, entered the service of Akbar "who did entertaine him very well, and gave him an house and five slaves, an horse, and every day sixe S.S. [shillings] in money" (18). Later William Hawkins while working for the East India Company, and presenting himself as an English ambassador, also accepted a position of "foure hundred horse" offered by Akbar's successor Jahangir. Firmly entrenched as a Mogul officer, Hawkins took the title of

"Chan" or Khan.[156] So while Englishmen in India were not "Turning Turk," they were still going native. Mammon's fantasy suggests that this quality of "turning Indian" was as importable as spices.

His threat of installing a seraglio right at the heart of London, and castrating Face, despite its comic effect has dangerous implications. His actions seem to bring close to home fears of apostasy as well as well known stereotypes of eastern cupidity. Mammon dreams of tempting rich citizens to pimp their wives to fill his harem. He hopes to "Have a sublimed pure wife, unto that fellow/I'll send a thousand pound to be my cuckold" (II.ii.55-56). He longs to "sublimate" or change a pure wife into an adulteress, a devoted husband into a willing cuckold. His gold threatens to corrupt everyone around him, spreading greed like a disease. Much like Subtle and Face, his plans for the alchemist's stone emerge as a grotesque perversion.

Much like Volpone, Mammon's appetite for virtuous women goes hand in hand with his desire for fabulous commodities. He imagines tasting the strangest food, served in priceless plates:

> My meat shall all come in Indian shells,
> Dishes of agate, set in gold, and studded
> With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths and rubies.
> The tongues of carps, dormice and camels' heels,

[156] Hawkins writes "Then, because my name was something hard for his [Jahangir's] pronunciation, hee called me by the name of English Chan, that is to say, the English lord, but in Persia it is the title for a Duke; and this went currant throughout the countrey" (83). Robert Covert who arrived on the Ascension also noted that Hawkins went by the title 'Can' or Khan (Foster *Early Travels* 65).

Boiled i' the spirit of Sol, and dissolved pearl (II.ii.71-76)

Tongues of carps, dormice, and camel's heels – unusual and rather unflattering gastronomical food choices, are to be mixed with gold ("the spirit of Sol") and pearl. He longs not only to possess the philosopher's stone, but actually ingest the fruits of its metallic purification. In his hopes of dissolving and drinking pearl, he comes dangerously close to Pliny's description of Cleopatra. Unlike the Drugger, Mammon's ambitions are not restricted to setting up a store. Instead, as a member of the English aristocracy, he appears interested only in consumption, and not just any form of consumption, but a "conspicuous" one. His desire to consume (literally and metaphorically) more and more objects has much in common with changing trends in the seventeenth-century shopping and sumptuary laws. As Linda Levy Peck observes, an increase in voyages culminated in a corresponding availability and demand for a wide array of commodities (2). In 1608, James I repealed the last of England's sumptuary laws, demonstrating an acceptance of the thriving market for luxuries. As Mammon tells us, his purse of gold will effortlessly turn his cook into a knight (II.ii.86-7). Nonetheless, luxuries classified as "wants" as opposed to needs had elicited a long history of criticism (Berry 9). Roman moralists, equating luxury with Asia, saw it as an exogenous force weakening their citizens and soldiers (Berry 67-69;Levy Peck 6). Christian thinkers, picking up on earlier mistrust of luxury, frequently used it interchangeably with "lechery" and "lewdness" (Berry 87). Moreover, in St. Augustine and Prudentius luxury/lust comes to symbolize man's fallen condition, and joins the list of sins (Berry 88-94). Mammon's list of course similarly crosses from luxuries to lust back to luxury again. Although, as Levy-Peck argues "the demoralization of luxury had already begun in Jacobean England," Mammon with his very name etymologically indicating devilish possessions, and wicked gains, suggests a lingering anxiety about the effects of uncontrolled

conspicuous consumption. And Jonson in *Epicene* had already ridiculed the English aristocracy for squandering their fortunes over "toys" at the Royal Exchange (Levy Peck 65). Mammon's actions similarly open him up to rebuke.

Of course, *The Alchemist* translates consumption to a whole new level, and Mammon's desires know no bounds. He seeks to flaunt his wealth not only before London merchants, but before eastern rulers as well:

My shirts

I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light
As cobwebs; and for all my other raiment
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes' and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of paradise, and eastern air. (II.ii.88-94)

The Persian in question might have been the legendary Assyrian king Sardanapalus, well known "for his voluptuousness and luxury" (Campbell 490n). However, closer to Jonson's time, this might well have been a reference to Persia's status as an important transit point in the east-west trade. In fact Shah Abbas had been actively promoting his country's business ventures, especially the production of silk (Keay 102). By the end of the sixteenth century England's trade with Persia was carried out mainly through the Moscovy and Levant Companies with mixed

success.[157] That the English aristocrat itches to provoke the Persian Sophy over their store of textiles is hardly surprising.

Face quickly picks up on Mammon's need to rival eastern potentates and transmute the occident into the orient, replete with its luxury and lechery. When he appears smitten by Doll, and seeks help in wooing her, Face immediately jumps in:

Mammon: And wilt thou insinuate what I am? And praise me?

And say I am a noble fellow?

Face: O, what else, Sir?

And you'll make her royal with the stone,

An empress; and yourself king of Bantam. (II.ii.323-326)

Bantam, located in the Indian Ocean, south of Sumatra, was initially part of the Sundanese kingdom of Pajajaran. Later Sultan Hasanudin created an independent kingdom of Bantam. Despite religious differences Bantam traded with the Portuguese, revenue from pepper transforming it into one of the largest ports in the East Indies (Farrington 34). The city had other advantages: Chinese traders brought silks in their junks (Keay 20), and a wide array of textiles arrived from the Indian subcontinent, as well as Japanese lacquer, stones, drugs, and gums (Farrington 39). But more importantly the first voyage of the East India Company ships took them to Bantam in 1602. Renting out quarters and warehouses the Company went on to establish its first factory in the East Indies (Farrington 34). Bantam market offered the English great opportunity to trade with a cosmopolitan group of merchants, including Arabs, Bengalis,

[157] Appleby 60; Marshall 267. The problem lay in establishing a direct overland route (Marshall). Such difficulties of course evaporated after 1617 when the East India Company took over Persian interests (Keay 103-106; Farrington 64)

Gujratis, Persians and Ottomans (Farrington 39). The king or rather the Sultan of Bantam had only been ten years old at the time and under a regency (Keay 20).

The Company's early stint at Bantam was not always easy. As John Keay argues, the local Javanese often failed to distinguish between the English and their Dutch rivals, and Chinese arsonists destroyed much of their calicoes and pepper stores (30-31). Face's portrayal of Mammon as the king of Bantam brings together his latent colonial fantasies. Of course, as with the Drugger, Mammon's dreams come to nothing. Far from gaining the philosopher's stone and turning Devonshire and Cornwall into the Indies, he loses his own gold. Rather than pursue the matter in open court and be exposed as a gull, Mammon lets Lovewit take ownership of his stolen goods (V.v.70).

VI. Puritans, Dutch and the East Indies

Mammon was not the only one hoping to turn England into something else. The Puritans in the play were counting on the philosopher's stone to bring out a few changes too. Tribulation Wholesome, representing the interests of expatriate British Puritans in Amsterdam (Campbell 483), needs gold to bribe the magistrate:

> *aurum potabile* being
> The only medicine, for the civil magistrate,
> T'incline him to a feeling of the cause,
> And must be daily used in the disease. (III.i.41-44)

The bribe would encourage the magistrate to reverse the plight of the "silenced saints" – Puritans whose licenses for preaching had been revoked after the Hampton Court Conference (Campbell

467). The alchemist's stone promises to fulfill both its purposes – generating gold, and curing disease. By treating the enforced muteness of the Puritan preachers, the gold offered as bribe would ultimately further the sect's agenda in England. While in *Epicene* Truewit uses garrulous Puritans to torment poor Morose (II.ii.31, 68-73), their presence is far more threatening in *The Alchemist*. Subtle deftly conjures a world where Puritans have the philosopher's stone:

> Have I discoursed so unto you; of our stone?
> And of the good that it shall bring your cause?
> Showed you (beside the main of hiring forces
> Abroad, drawing the Hollanders, your friends,
> From the Indies, to serve you, with all their fleet)
> That even the med'cinal use shall make a faction,
> And party in the realm? (III.ii.19-26)

The Dutch were great rivals to the English in the East Indies trade. Dutch ships successfully penetrating Portuguese defenses at the end of sixteenth century reached the spice islands, making the English Levant Company practically redundant (Lawson 12, Marshall 267). By 1596 they were already in Bantam.[158] In 1599 when the ships returned laden with goods from the East Indies, panic-stricken London merchants petitioned Elizabeth to start their own company (Lawson 16). Thus the English East India Company labored from a sense of belatedness, trying to reach shores before the Dutch, or attempting to wrestle out their rivals if necessary. In reality, the Dutch were a formidable threat. In 1602, six smaller companies that had been operating since 1594, joined forces to form the United East India Company or the *Verenigde Oostindische*

[158] Farrington 48. As early as 1601 the Dutch had defeated the Portuguese in a naval battle near Bantam.

Compagnie (VOC) (Gaastra 50). Having ten times the capital of the English East India Company, and more manpower, the VOC moved from one spice producing island to another, setting up forts, and offering protection to native rulers in return for monopoly over spice crops.[159]

Not surprisingly the VOC fleet was a great concern to English interests in the East Indies. Subtle's assurance that the philosopher's stone will lure the Dutch away from their pursuits is ultimately threatening. Gold from the stone will make it more profitable for the fleet to attack England at the behest of the Puritans rather than defend their stakes in the east. In this instance the alchemist's stone and the East Indies appear as easy substitutes for one another. Subtle's list, of course, goes on. Apart from ushering in a foreign invasion, the stone's medicinal powers, healing gout, dropsy and palsy in eminent men, will similarly win over all domestic opposition to the Puritan brethren (III.ii.27-40). In fact they would become so powerful that they will be able to pay off any army and "buy / The king of France out of his realms, or Spain / Out of his Indies" (III.ii.47-49). All these commercial and medicinal exchanges are ultimately designed to fulfill Puritans ambitions in England, once again transmuting or altering the state of domestic affairs. Once again alchemy promises to bring change, transforming the impure into 'pure.'

But of course this Puritan takeover remains an unrealized fantasy in the play. And Tribulation falls for Subtle's trick. Both he and Ananias seriously consider the alchemist's proposal of forging Dutch dollars – an activity that was illegal in England (III.ii.144-150). They are exposed as harboring criminal intentions, even toward the nation that had given them refuge in times of their hardships. Meddling with coins, as we have seen, was one of the most common

[159] Farrington 48. In 1605 VOC built a fort in Amboyna (clove producer), in 1609 came the fort in Banda Neira, and from 1607, the sultan ofTernate was under their control (48-50).

charges brought against alchemists. Implicitly the Puritan brethren join the ranks of everyday thugs. At the end, Tribulation and Ananias get no gold. In fact when Ananias presses for the return of the materials he had advanced, Lovewit threatens to lock him up in a cellar. The Puritans seething with rage are forced to leave empty-handed.

VII. Lovewit and comic resolution:

All of the alchemist's schemes come to nothing once Lovewit returns. Warned by his neighbors of the strange goings on in his house, he confronts Face:

> You know that I am an indulgent master,
> And therefore conceal nothing. What's your medicine,
> To draw so many several sorts of wildfowl? (V.iii.81-83)

The "medicine" in question, as we have seen, was an alchemical dream served up with a heavy brew of the Indies. Instant riches and wealth understood principally by references to the gold and spices of the Indies, lured the Drugger, Mammon, as well as the Puritan brothers Tribulation and Ananias. Any transmutation that the philosopher's stone promised similarly evoked the Indies, threatening to turn London into a seraglio, or bringing about a full-blown Dutch naval attack. Fortunately, none of these plans come to fruition for there is no philosopher's stone. Nonetheless, all those who were lured by Subtle and Face's rhetoric of the Indies lost their gold. As we have seen, seventeenth-century pamphleteers expressed growing concern at a similar type of exchange – that England was getting duped into surrendering bullion to the East Indians in return for mere toys. What was worse, English consumers like Mammon were in fact slowly but surely changing England. Not just spices, but calicoes crept into English shops, plants from the

East Indies could be seen in the Botanical garden, and actual East Indians returned on ships and went on to work in the dockyards of Deptford. In a sense, there was already an alchemical change well in progress.

Within the play, however, the prospective seller of spices from Ormuz, the hopeful master of a seraglio, and the allies of the Dutch are heartily ridiculed and duped of their money. In a further twist, the man spinning these alchemical dreams is left with nothing to show for his efforts. Face, after taking stock of their net gains, calmly announces that these belong to his master. Subtle and Doll must flee immediately. Face helpfully offers: "All I can do/Is to help you over the wall, o' the backside" (V.iv.134-135). Far from finding gold, Subtle winds up where he started. But just as the sublimation of London into Mammon's seraglios is exposed as an illusion, Subtle's class transgression is punctured. The return of the true master of the house, Lovewit, puts an end to scams, and restores the social order.

Face too returns to his original role as "Jeremy" the honest servant (V.ii1, 37). But he must first earn his master's indulgence, and despite Lovewit's promise of indulgence, there are compensations to be made:

> And only pardon me th' abuse of your house:
> It's all I beg. I'll help you to a widow,
> In recompense, that you shall gi've me thanks for,
> Will make you seven years younger, and a rich one. (V.iii.86-89)

What Face offers here are wealth and health, the two key ingredients of the alchemist's dream. The widow will bring his master more riches, and she will make him younger – a promise that sounds remarkably like a transmutation, or a miraculous cure. Lovewit, therefore is the ultimate benefactor of the schemes. Already a wealthy man, he gets even richer – almost instantaneously.

Not just the widow's wealth, but the goods belonging to the gulls also increase his stores. But Lovewit does not desire to turn the city into the Indies; instead he is willing to marry Dame Pliant and settle into quiet domesticity. However, he reaps the rewards of a con that combines the language of alchemy with the Indies.

Epilogue: Finding Hidden Indians

In James Cameron's 2009 film *Avatar* Jake Sully a paraplegic marine journeys to a far away planet called Pandora where in order to extract the prized mineral resources humans must "become" something else, more specifically, they must develop an "avatar" in order to infiltrate the humanoid natives. The basic premise of Cameron's hugely successful film replicates the tropes of "discovery" familiar in early European colonial encounters. Seen as a technologically primitive, the Na'vi, the original inhabitants of Pandora appear susceptible to the commercial and military incursions of the humans. In fact, blue in color, with long tails, the Na'vi are not human, although they are bestowed with human emotions. However, what is interesting about Cameron's self described "science fantasy" is the way that the Indian permeates the visual and metaphoric representations of Pandora and the Na'vi. But we must perforce ask ourselves, which "Indian"? While the Na'vi themselves seem to have been inspired in part at least by Native Americans, the film insists on the ability of the humans to adopt "avatars" – a term that has its root in Hindu theology. An "avatar" is a reincarnation of god. Interestingly, the Hindu deity most noted for his avatars is Vishnu, whose skin is blue, like that of the Na'vi. Of course, more immediately "avatar" belongs to the language of computer games and online personas (Mukherjee 5). Nonetheless, the visual imagery of Cameron's film seems to evoke a cultural subtext that can be linked to both East and West Indians. This reliance extends beyond the central context of the "avatar," with the "Tree of Souls" in Pandora resembling a drooling Banyan tree. We can find "hidden" Indians, transposed onto an alien world, in the alien terrain of Pandora and blue bodies of the Na'vi. Their presence in a fantasy film seems to suggest the lasting legacy of "Indians" in colonial and post colonial myth making.

In my dissertation I have traced Indians who might often seem to have been "hiding" in plain sight. My purpose has been to underscore the extent to which "real and imagined Indians" informed the language of sixteenth and seventeenth century texts. This is not to suggest that Indians, particularly East Indians appeared in vast numbers either in civic, court, performances or on the commercial stage, however, what I have attempted to show is the need to recognize their significance in social, economic, and political life of England. The dramatic texts, travel narratives, and trade pamphlets help us better understand the extent to which the East Indies permeated the lives of English men and women who might never have left the English soil. What I have shown is a process of domestic transculturation whereby the English domestic space itself needs to be identified as essential "mixed."

While the literary texts help us access imaginative enactments of Indians, the trade pamphlets alert us to more real concerns over this process of domestic transculturation. For instance, Kayll's *Increase of Trade* expresses growing alarm at the rising mortality of English sailors and a corresponding influx of East Indies into England. Later in the seventeenth century there were outcries against importing muslins and calicoes. Similarly, the growing importance of indigo was seen as detrimental to indigenous woad cultivators (Balflour-Paul 56). These debates remind us that our current debates over outsourcing have in fact a much longer history. Importation of foreign goods and the arrival of foreigners, in far greater numbers than ever before, provoked certain responses from seventeenth century writers. On the other hand, as Alison Games has for instance shown, cosmopolitanism also played a vital part in shaping early modern imaginings. Merchants, ambassadors, and ordinary travelers helped forge a new understanding of foreigners, instilling an ethics towards strangers. My chapters have traced these oscillations between fear and acceptance of foreign goods and bodies in multiple publics

revealing the complex, often paradoxical nature of domestic responses to the expanding East Indies trade.

Simultaneously, I have shown a process of "Indianization" whereby London streets, the royal court, even English bodies themselves "become" something else. Thereby, transculturation does not remain a phenomenon of far flung colonies, but a condition of the metropolis itself. This dissertation fills what I perceive as a gap in current literary scholarship, arguing for the need to recognize early modern London as a "contact zone," populated by peoples from various regions of the globe. It also draws attention to the fact that the commercial stage was not the only space where writers and actors could engage with an increasingly globalized world. Instead, there were other performances that we must consider, other ways of "becoming" Indian, evident in Lord Mayor's shows, court masques and other royal entertainments. Together they provide a diversity of settings and modes of performative transculturation that help us better evaluate the material and cultural impact of "Trading India."

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