

THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
TRAVEL WRITING

EDITED BY
PETER HULME
University of Essex

AND

TIM YOUNGS
The Nottingham Trent University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 2002

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Sabon 10/13 pt System L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

The Cambridge companion to travel writing / edited by
Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs.

p. cm. – (Cambridge companions to literature)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 78140 x – ISBN 0 521 78652 5 (pb.)

1. Travelers' writings, English – History and criticism. 2. Travelers' writings,
American – History and criticism. 3. English prose literature – History and criticism.
4. British – Foreign countries – Historiography. 5. Voyages and travels – Historiography.
6. Travel in literature. 7. Travelers – History. I. Title: Companion to travel writing.

II. Hulme, Peter. III. Youngs, Tim.

PR756.T72 C36 2002

820.9'491 – dc21 2002023425

ISBN 0 521 78140 x hardback

ISBN 0 521 78652 5 paperback

CONTENTS

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	viii
Introduction	I
PETER HULME AND TIM YOUNGS	
PART I: SURVEYS	
1 Stirrings and searchings (1500–1720)	17
WILLIAM H. SHERMAN	
2 The Grand Tour and after (1660–1840)	37
JAMES BUZARD	
3 Exploration and travel outside Europe (1720–1914)	53
ROY BRIDGES	
4 Modernism and travel (1880–1940)	70
HELEN CARR	
5 Travelling to write (1940–2000)	87
PETER HULME	
PART II: SITES	
6 The Middle East / Arabia: ‘the cradle of Islam’	105
BILLIE MELMAN	
7 South America / Amazonia: the forest of marvels	122
NEIL L. WHITEHEAD	

Contents

8	The Pacific / Tahiti: queen of the South Sea isles ROD EDMOND	139
9	Africa / The Congo: the politics of darkness TIM YOUNGS	156
10	The Isles / Ireland: the wilder shore GLENN HOOPER	174
11	India / Calcutta: city of palaces and dreadful night KATE TELTSCHER	191
12	The West / California: site of the future BRUCE GREENFIELD	207
PART III: TOPICS		
13	Travel writing and gender SUSAN BASSNETT	225
14	Travel writing and ethnography JOAN PAU RUBIÉS	242
15	Travel writing and its theory MARY BAINE CAMPBELL	261
	<i>Chronology</i>	279
	<i>Further reading</i>	306
	<i>Index</i>	319

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Title page from Samuel Purchas, <i>Purchas His Pilgrimes</i> (1625)	<i>page</i> 23
2. Satirical map of the world from Joseph Hall, <i>Mundus Alter et Idem</i> (1605)	32
3. Musicians in Buganda in 1862: J. A. Grant's original and the version in the <i>Illustrated London News</i>	64
4. Tenniel's irrepressible tourist	72
5. Quindiu Pass in the Andes	132
6. Humboldt in his study in Berlin	133
7. Paul Gauguin, 'Le sorcier d'Hiva Oa'	149
8. Irma Stern, 'Seated Congolese Woman'	165
9. Derrynane Abbey, County Kerry	182
10. Engraving of Government House in Calcutta by James Baillie Fraser	198
11. Thomas Moran, 'Cliffs of the Upper Colorado River, Wyoming Territory'	214
12. Algonquian Indian chief, engraving by Theodor de Bry after John White	246
13. Ancient Pict, engraving by Theodor de Bry after John White	247

I

WILLIAM H. SHERMAN

Stirrings and searchings (1500–1720)

A good book is at once the best companion,
and guide, and way, and end of our journey.
(Bishop Joseph Hall, *Quo Vadis?* [1617])

Putting the world on paper

Among the many texts produced before, during, and after Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition to Newfoundland in 1583 – from patents and provision lists to narrative accounts and celebratory poems – was a detailed set of instructions for a surveyor named Thomas Bavin. Bavin was charged with compiling a cartographic, pictorial, and textual record of the east coast of America, and with acquiring the books, instruments, and drawing materials he would need for the task. His employers suggested that he pack an almanac, a pair of notebooks, several large sheets of paper, various inks and leads, and 'all sorts of colours to draw all things to life'.¹

Documentation had always played an important rôle in travel, particularly in overseas ventures. English merchants and mariners had long been instructed to keep careful records of their movements, to direct the travellers who would follow in their footsteps and fill in the gaps of geographical knowledge. But Bavin's instructions – and the texts they were designed to generate – outline a more ambitious project. Bavin and his men were to move along the coast, mapping each successive region and writing accounts of any features that might be 'strange to us in England'. The maps were to use a key of symbols for rocks, rivers, hills, and trees (which were to be copied onto a parchment card and kept handy at all times), and the notes were to pay special attention to any commodities the country had to offer. Finally, Bavin was instructed to 'draw the figures and shapes of men and women in their apparel as also their manner . . . in every place as you shall find them differing [from us]'. This would require him to get close enough to the natives to study their social structure, religious customs, and relations with friends

and enemies, and to record their language in an English dictionary brought along for the purpose.

Bavin's party and any notes they may have produced were lost at sea on the return voyage. It may seem perverse to begin a survey of early modern travel writing with a work that does not survive – and may never have been written – but the figure of Thomas Bavin provides two useful reminders. First, that the written record of travel is haunted by missing texts and persons. And second, that English participation in the Age of Discovery got off to a late and rocky start: Bavin's instructions for the first English survey of America were issued exactly ninety years after Columbus's landfall in the New World.

Indeed, the English did not have a figure to set alongside Columbus in the national imagination until 1580, when Francis Drake returned from his three-year voyage around the world. As the first English circumnavigation of the globe, Drake's venture provided a significant boost to the Elizabethans' confidence in opening new markets in remote locations, and to their demand for accounts of global travel. In the wake of Drake's voyage a wide range of texts and images were produced to celebrate his achievements: they display a new sense that the English could play a rôle in the apprehension of the wider world – and of the globe itself. Perhaps the simplest and most potent image of Drake's global mastery was published by Geoffrey Whitney in 1586. Whitney's emblem illustrating 'divine assistance' shows Drake's ship sitting, literally, on top of the world: a bridle attached at one end to the bow of the ship and held at the other by the hand of God completely circles the globe. The accompanying text asks 'you that live at home' to 'give praise to them that pass the waves' – above all to Drake who, like Jason, had braved the stormy seas to bring back the Golden Fleece.² What Whitney does not acknowledge is the fact that it had been well over fifty years since Magellan's discovery of the strait that made Drake's passage possible, and that the gold Drake brought back came almost entirely from fleecing Spanish ships of their American treasure.

English travellers had made sporadic voyages to Brazil, the Caribbean, Newfoundland, and Northern Russia from the 1480s to the 1550s, but few of their forays had any lasting impact and as late as the 1550s they had not yet made a concerted effort to travel to, write about, or take possession of other parts of the globe. This belatedness accounts for several features in the pattern of early English expansionism. The fact that Spain and Portugal had already secured the safest and most profitable trade routes meant, first, that English accounts would be marked by a patriotic rhetoric fired by political and commercial competition. In more practical terms, it accounts for the

tendency of English explorers to search for a northern rather than southern passage to the East, and it goes some way toward explaining why piracy occupied such a prominent position (alongside plantation and trade) in English overseas enterprise.

Not surprisingly, the first English travel publications were translations of foreign works, and in more than half of the regions covered by the period's travellers translations preceded works by English writers (see Table 1). The earliest collection of voyages in English was Richard Eden's *The Decades of the New World* (1555), which was based on the history of Columbus and his successors by Pietro Martire d'Anghiera (or Peter Martyr). Eden's collection was reprinted by Richard Willes in 1577, featuring new translations of travels to India, China, and Japan, along with preliminary accounts of English exploration in Persia and the Arctic. In the coming decades, as English travellers came into their own, English accounts would be translated into Latin, French, German, and Dutch. But in the 1580s English bookshops were still dominated by foreign accounts.³

Richard Hakluyt would soon usher in the first great age of English travel writing, but he too began his project by translating foreign texts. The first book Hakluyt had a hand in was John Florio's translation of Jacques Cartier's *Short and Brief Narration of... New France* (1580), and his first collection of travel accounts, *Divers Voyages Concerning the Discovery of America* (1582), consisted mostly of non-English sources. By 1609, he would play a rôle in eighteen other translations of travel books.⁴

Hakluyt intended his collection *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589) to challenge European perceptions of English inaction and to promote new initiatives by showing that the English had been 'men full of activity, stirrers abroad, and searchers of the remote parts of the world'.⁵ As evidence of this stirring and searching, Hakluyt was able to gather from his countrymen accounts of ninety-three voyages spanning 1,500 years – enough material to fill 834 folio pages. In his second edition, published in three volumes between 1598 and 1600, he more than doubled the number of voyages and pages.

As travellers made contact with new regions and peoples, authors and editors put the world on paper for the new print marketplace at home: the number of new titles published (and old titles reprinted) during the early modern period suggests that there was a significant audience for travel writing, eager to hear news of the wider world and to reflect on England's place in it.⁶ Literacy rates were still relatively low, and many of the texts spoke to very limited audiences with very specific purposes. Nonetheless, travel books became a reliable commodity for a growing number of printers, and they

came to occupy a central place on the period's bookshelves.⁷ Travel writing emerged as one of the early modern period's most popular and flexible genres, and in a wide range of forms it educated and entertained readers, inspired national pride and commercial investment, and contributed to a public record of the world's 'markets, trade routes, personalities, and cultures'.⁸ While the genre never settled into a single paradigm, most of the geographical locations, rhetorical forms, and political issues that we now associate with travel writing had appeared at least once by the end of the seventeenth century. As English travel hit its stride, authors and their audiences learned to write and read the world in books – with surprising speed and sophistication.

Early trajectories

When the Swiss physician Thomas Platter visited London in 1599, he observed in his journal that 'the English for the most part do not travel much, but prefer to learn foreign matters and take their pleasures at home'.⁹ To the extent that this was true, it was not entirely a matter of choice: throughout the early modern period travel was limited by both physical constraints and governmental regulations. Long-distance journeys within England were slow and dangerous (as well as subject to statutes against vagrancy), and a trip to any country except Scotland or Wales required a voyage by ship (and the patronage of powerful institutions or individuals). Nonetheless, at the precise moment of Platter's visit, Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* testified to the dramatic expansion of England's geographical horizons. Table 1 suggests that by 1600 the only major regions for which readers could not yet turn to English accounts were Australia and Antarctica.

Table 1 also provides a clear measure of the impact of the nascent colonies in the Americas on the focus and pace of English travel writing: from 1580 to 1650 a staggering number of new texts were published about Virginia alone. While scholars have tended to trace English expansionism along a westward trajectory, however, the earliest English travellers looked eastward to the Holy Land – and beyond, to the marvels of John Mandeville and the legendary riches of Marco Polo. The first Englishman who travelled for the sake of travel writing was Thomas Coryate, the 'Topographical Typographical Thomas'¹⁰ who walked through western Europe and later travelled to India. The most important of Coryate's peers included William Lithgow (whose *Most Delectable and True Discourse* [1614] described his travels from Scotland 'to the most famous kingdoms in Europe, Asia, and Africa'), George Sandys (whose *Relation* [1615] of his journey to the Holy Land formed an encyclopaedic guide to the East, past and present), and Fynes Moryson (whose massive *An Itinerary* [1617] through Europe and the British Isles

Table 1: *English travel books by region 1500–1700 (with date of earliest publication)*

Primary region of travel	Written in English	Translated into English
Collections	9 (1582)	4 (1553)
Circumnavigations	5 (1598)	2 (1555)
Western Europe	59 (1522)	19 (1549)
Northern Europe	1 (1694)	8 (1561)
Eastern Europe	9 (1591)	4 (1672)
East Indies	25 (1603)	19 (1576)
West Indies	24 (1569)	7 (1577)
Central Asia	4 (1601)	5 (1590)
Far East	2 (c.1500)	23 (1503)
Near East	33 (1511)	20 (1529)
Africa	30 (1538)	15 (1554)
Northwest Passage/Greenland	13 (1576)	1 (1694)
North America	139 (1581)	7 (1563)
South America	18 (1596)	15 (1568)
South Seas/Australia	0	1 (1617)
Fictitious Travels	12 (1516)	10 (1581)
Directions for Travellers	27 (c.1500)	4 (1575)

Note: Cox's listing is neither comprehensive nor entirely accurate: his coverage of "Fictitious Travels" (particularly in plays and poems) is especially incomplete, and some of the authors, titles, and dates of publication have been corrected by more recent reference materials. Furthermore, Cox's numbers are lower than other lists because he does not include reprints and only rarely lists individual works within larger collections.

Source: Edward Godfrey Cox, *A Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel*

has never been published in full).¹¹ Moreover, the first major trading companies chartered to open new markets for English goods were the Muscovy Company (1555, for Russia and Persia), the Cathay Company (1576, for Asia via Canada), and the Levant Company (1592, for Turkey and Italy); and the Virginia Company and East India Company were created within a few months of each other in 1599–1600.¹² An oriental frame remained in place throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The last decade has seen a renewed appreciation of early modern interest in the East – and of the differences between cultural encounters in the Orient, in sub-Saharan Africa, and in the Americas.¹³

A typology of travel writers

The two centuries of travel writing covered in this chapter have sometimes been characterised as a period in which the pilgrim gave way to the merchant, the explorer, and the philosopher. The story is not quite so neat, and to do justice to the full range of travel writing produced in early modern England

we need a larger cast of characters (as well as a less linear narrative): when Sir Thomas Palmer published his chart of the various kinds of traveller in 1606 he included preachers, postmen, soldiers, and spies.¹⁴ This section will attempt to identify the most important figures involved in travel writing, and to describe some of the changing rôles played by each between 1500 and 1720.¹⁵

Editors

Some of the greatest names in early modern travel writing are neither travellers nor writers but editors. During the nineteenth century, Richard Hakluyt would be credited with compiling the ‘great prose epic’ of England’s maritime expansion.¹⁶ Hakluyt owed his inspiration to travel in libraries and archives rather than on the high seas, and his epiphany came during a visit (while still a schoolboy) to his cousin’s chambers in the Middle Temple. When he showed an interest in some books and maps lying open on a table, his cousin gave him a geography lesson before moving on to the Bible:

Turning to the 107 Psalm, [he] directed me to the 23 & 24 verse, where I read, that they which go down to the sea in ships, and occupy by the great waters, they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, &c... I constantly resolved... I would by God’s assistance prosecute that knowledge and kind of literature, the doors whereof (after a sort) were so happily opened before me. (sig. *2r)

When he came to assemble his massive anthologies, Hakluyt could draw not only on the earlier English collections of Eden and Willes but also on that of the Venetian civil servant Giovanni Battista Ramusio. Ramusio’s *Navigazioni et viaggi* was published between 1550 and 1559, and offered readers of Italian a compendium of new European discoveries in the light of classical geography.¹⁷ Three features distinguish Hakluyt’s collections from those of his predecessors. As we have already seen, he was the first to bring English achievements to the fore: in the 1589 *Principal Navigations* he set out to ‘meddle... with the Navigations only of our own nation’ – though he would introduce some foreign sources in the later and larger edition. Second, he insisted on the value of raw documents like itineraries and logs and included them alongside more polished narratives – keeping his editorial intervention, in both cases, to a minimum. And third, he tackled the challenge of organising a wide-ranging body of material by breaking it down into three sections according to what he called ‘the double order of time and place’ – which involved a general movement from the regions first explored to those

Stirrings and searchings (1500–1720)



1. Title page from Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625). By permission of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Library.

discovered more recently and, within each section, a chronological order from earliest to latest.

Many of Hakluyt's working papers passed to Samuel Purchas, a fact reflected in the very title of the four-volume collection he published in 1625 (more than doubling the length of Hakluyt's final collection): *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes*.¹⁸ While Purchas has often been taken to

task for exercising a heavier editorial hand than Hakluyt, his reputation has recently been reassessed.¹⁹ When *Purchas his Pilgrimes* is set alongside his other, more explicitly religious writings, he looks less like a pompous and careless Hakluyt and more like a learned preacher eager to accommodate human and religious diversity within a Christian framework.

Later collections would not match the scope and length of Hakluyt and Purchas, but editorial ambitions picked up again at the end of the seventeenth century: between 1694 and 1732 at least seven major new anthologies of travel writing appeared. Awnsham and John Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1704) included a preface (often attributed to John Locke) entitled 'The Whole History of Navigation from its Original to This Time' as well as a bibliographical survey 'of most books of voyages and travels': travel writing had reached the point where it could not only be collected but catalogued.²⁰

Pilgrims

The pilgrimage was the dominant medieval framework for long-distance, non-utilitarian travel. In England, Sir Richard Torkyngton's expedition to Jerusalem in 1517 is traditionally identified as the last of the proper pilgrimages; but Henry Timberlake's *True and Strange Discourse of the Travels of Two English Pilgrims* was first printed in 1603 and went through nine more editions before 1700. Furthermore, as the title of Purchas's work suggests, the language of the pilgrimage persisted long after the practice began to wane: in the early modern period it not only provided a model for religious travellers but helped to accommodate the worldly goals of secular travellers. Even when their travels did not involve a spiritual journey to Jerusalem (or, as in the case of the Puritans at Plymouth, to New Jerusalem), seventeenth-century travellers often drew on the pilgrimage to describe their wanderings and sufferings. When William Lithgow published the account of his *Admired and Painful Peregrination* (through Italy and Greece to the Holy Land), prefatory poems celebrated the 'adventured Pilgrimage' of 'William of the Wilderness,' and Lithgow's own text opened with a poem entitled 'The Pilgrim's Mourning Ditty'.

Errant knights

The chivalric quest was the other major paradigm inherited from medieval travel writers, and it sometimes overlapped with the spiritual quest of the pilgrims. Chivalric literature would prove more influential in the Spanish colonial imagination than in the English, and remains more visible in

accounts of imaginative than of actual travels – providing important models for epic poetry such as Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, plays like Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, and picaresque novels from Cervantes to Defoe. But Elizabethan travel writing – like court culture more generally – was permeated by chivalric language and ideals. William Goodyear’s translation of Jean de Cartigny’s allegorical *Voyage of the Wandering Knight* (1581) was turned into a tribute to Sir Francis Drake, and Sir Walter Raleigh’s travels in Virginia and Guiana cast him as a secular knight on a golden quest for the sake of his Queen – and if these transformations seem fanciful, it is worth remembering that both men earned their knighthoods with their voyages.²¹

Merchants

Most early English travel was carried out (explicitly or implicitly) in the name of trade, and the profit motive marks most of the period’s published accounts – whether in the author’s and printer’s desire to make money or in the sponsorship of specific ventures. The earliest travel publications on the Continent had been collections of letters and relations written by merchants, and in the *Principal Navigations* Hakluyt placed a heavy emphasis on mercantile travel. His foregrounding of accounts from Muscovy Company merchants reflects what Michael Nerlich has described as a shift in the early modern period from chivalric adventure to venture capitalism. In classical travel writing, adventures were fates to be passively endured, and in the Middle Ages they began to be sought out through quests. During the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and particularly in England (where the name ‘adventurer’ was first applied to merchants), they became risks to be undertaken in the name of business.²²

Explorers

The great explorers were not always interested in writing, and alongside the famous names we associate with early travels are the often obscure names of those who described them. Humphrey Gilbert initiated several decades of exploration by arguing for the existence of a Northwest Passage in his *Discourse of a Discoverie . . . to Cataia* (1576), but his own expedition to Newfoundland was written up by Edward Hayes, George Peckham, Thomas Churchyard, and Stephen Parmenius. Likewise, Martin Frobisher’s three voyages to the Canadian Arctic (the first to act on Gilbert’s argument) were described by Dionyse Settle, George Best, and Michael Lok. England’s two earliest circumnavigators also relied on others to publicise their work: by contrast, Coryate was praised at the beginning of his *Crudities* by Hugo

Holland for having seen ‘manners and . . . men outlandish;/ And writ the same: so did not Drake nor Ca[ve]ndish’ (sig. d8v).

Walter Raleigh was perhaps the first great explorer to play a significant rôle in creating his own persona in print. What distinguishes his *Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana* (1595) is both its unprecedented attention to geographic and ethnographic detail and its autobiographical strategies (which projected a sense of heroism onto an otherwise unsuccessful venture).²³ Travel narratives like Raleigh’s allowed early modern writers and readers to explore not only exotic others but the English selves that came into contact with them.

Colonisers

When the scientist Thomas Harriot and the artist John White went to America in 1585, as part of Raleigh’s attempted settlement of Virginia, they were issued with instructions that must have been virtually identical to Thomas Bavin’s. The result was what would become (along with Raleigh’s own *Discovery*) Elizabethan England’s most sophisticated and influential travel book, *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. In 1588 Harriot published his account in a modest pamphlet, dividing the text into three sections. The first was a list of the ‘merchantable commodities’; the second a summary of the commodities that could be planted, harvested, or hunted for food; and the final section described the commodities available for building materials before moving on to ‘the nature and manners’ of the natives. Harriot is often praised – in spite of the colonial project he served – for his attempt to understand and describe the Virginian natives in their own terms. He not only expressed admiration for some of their characteristics but was also able to provide (with surprising accuracy) Algonkian names for many commodities – thanks largely to the two Roanoke Indians who had visited England after an earlier voyage in 1584 and who served as interpreters during Harriot’s visit.²⁴ When Harriot’s account was printed again by Theodor de Bry in 1590, as a grand folio with a monumental title-page, it was supplemented with two maps of the region and more than twenty vivid engravings – based on White’s watercolours – of native costumes, settlements, and customs.²⁵

Most of the texts that described and debated England’s colonial ambitions in the early modern period would remain focused on Virginia. As hopes of a golden windfall faded (after the failures of Gilbert in Newfoundland, Frobisher in Canada, and Raleigh in Roanoke and Guiana), English colonisers had to concentrate on the laborious cultivation of the land and the fraught relationship with the natives they would displace. No figure better captures these concerns than Captain John Smith, who followed his

two-and-a-half years in Jamestown (1607–9) and subsequent voyage to New England (1614) with a string of original and editorial publications – several of which offer versions of what has become the archetypal colonial scene, his capture by Powhatan’s brother and putative rescue by Powhatan’s daughter Pocahontas.²⁶

Captives and castaways

Thomas Palmer began his chart of travellers by distinguishing between ‘voluntary’ and ‘involuntary’ travellers and, while he was thinking primarily of exiles, the history of travel writing is full of people who were forced to travel to places – and in circumstances – that were not of their choosing.²⁷ Captives and castaways produced some of the period’s most popular, and harrowing, narratives. These could be vehicles for the crudest of patriotic diatribes. *Strange and Wonderful Things Happened to Richard Hasleton* (1595) is a typical celebration of English endurance in the face of foreign cruelty: Hasleton is tortured by the Spanish Inquisition and forced to fight in Turkish galleys, but proudly resists conversion to both Catholicism and Islam. While the extremity of their experiences often led to charges of fabrication, it was also their primary appeal to contemporary readers and to later writers looking for material to imitate or parody. Edward Webbe’s perpetuation of the Prester John myth would lead Samuel Purchas to dismiss him as ‘a mere fabler’ (despite Webbe’s claim that he included only ‘that which is of truth, and what mine own eyes have perfectly seen’); nonetheless, at least three publishers issued editions of his vivid and patriotic narrative in 1590 alone.²⁸ Job Hortop, too, would pepper his *The Travails of an English Man* (1591) with wondrous monsters; but there are naturalistic observations along the way, and his twenty-three years of captivity are recounted in remarkably matter-of-fact terms.

Ambassadors

Toward the end of the early modern period, Paul Rycaut would claim that no community was in a better position to report on foreign lands than ambassadors: their longer residence and closer contact meant they were able ‘to penetrate farther into the Mysteries . . . than hasty Travellers could do, who are forced to content themselves with a superficial knowledge’.²⁹ Some eighty years earlier, Giles Fletcher’s account of his embassy to Moscow in 1588–9 had set the standard for what a summary of a foreign country should include: there are chapters on Russia’s topography, climate, commodities, government, religion, social classes, and local customs.³⁰

Many of these accounts circulated as manuscript letters or journals. Sir Thomas Roe wrote enough during his residence in India (between 1615 and 1619) to fill a two-volume modern edition, but did not publish anything during his lifetime.³¹ And Dr John Covel – who served as chaplain to the embassy in Constantinople during the 1670s – produced a learned private diary of his travels through Europe, Greece, and Asia Minor, complete with sketches of harbours, towns, and monuments, and notes on foreign languages and customs.³² But Rycaut’s account of the Ottoman Empire would become one of Restoration England’s bestsellers, and in Rycaut’s dedication to Lord Darlington we can see something of the Enlightenment’s new approach to comparative ethnography:

[The Ottomans] may be termed barbarous, as all things are, which are differenced from us by diversity of Manners and Custom, and are not dressed in the mode and fashion of our times and Countries. . . . But your Lordship . . . will conclude, that a People, as the Turks are, men of the same composition with us, cannot be so savage and rude as they are generally described. (sig. A3r)

Pirates

The two circumnavigators who frame this survey, Drake and Dampier, spent much of their maritime life in piratical pursuits, and Captain John Smith began his associations with Virginia only after a stint as a pirate in the Mediterranean. Demonised as ‘renegadoes’, euphemised as ‘privateers’, and glorified as ‘buccaneers’, pirates had a significant presence in the early literature of travel and played a central – and ambiguous – rôle in the creation of the British Empire.³³ While their expeditions could increase both personal and national wealth, they also posed a challenge to the government and trading companies.

The seventeenth century saw an ever more successful attempt to bring the pirate into the fold of England’s imperial aspirations – and the textual strategies that supported them. As in other spheres of activity, English faults could be mitigated by invoking the alleged excesses of the Spanish: the preface to Esquemeling’s *The History of the Bucaniers* suggests that ‘how . . . real soever may be the Accusations of our Bucaniers’ Inhumanity and Barbarism . . . they are but meer Infants, meer Novices in Cruelty, in comparison of the Spaniards’.³⁴ This text, which would be continued by Basil Ringrose the following year and become better known as *The Buccaneers of America*, did more than any other to recuperate the English pirate – and particularly the reputation of its dedicatee, Sir Henry Morgan (the West Indian buccaneer who would become Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica).

Scientists

R. W. Frantz argued that English travellers owed their new mission (and status) to the New Science more than to any other factor. Instead of presenting readers with a hodgepodge of marvels, travel accounts sponsored by and presented to the Royal Society began the systematic collection of natural knowledge in the name of reason and public utility.³⁵ The same motivations and methods can be found (albeit more explicitly in the service of financial gain) in the generation of Thomas Harriot. After all, the first English laboratories in the New World were created for Frobisher's installation off Baffin Island, and Raleigh's at Roanoke. But a wider range of travellers played a more influential rôle in Restoration science following the Royal Society's public calls for contributions to a comprehensive natural history.³⁶ Samuel Smith and Benjamin Walford's publications in the 1690s regularly advertised their position as printers to the Royal Society, and its influence is felt not only in the quality of their illustrations but in their decision to supplement an anthology of travels into the Near East with 'three catalogues of such trees, shrubs, and herbs as grow in the Levant', compiled by 'John Ray, Fellow of the Royal Society'.³⁷

These two final categories fused, in the closing decade of the seventeenth century, in the figure of the buccaneer-scientist William Dampier. The most celebrated seaman between Drake and Cook, Dampier eventually circumnavigated the world three times. Born into a farming family, he made trips to Newfoundland and Java while still in his teens, served in the Dutch War, managed a plantation in Jamaica, worked with log-cutters in Mexico, and travelled with pirates through the Caribbean and East Indies. He returned to England in 1691 and six years later published *A New Voyage Round the World*. Despite Dampier's swashbuckling past and lack of formal education, the text combined a lively narrative with careful descriptions of people, plants, and animals, and in subsequent editions he would add groundbreaking accounts of hydrography and meteorology. Dampier's clear prose and keen ethnographic eye placed him squarely among those Restoration scientists who valued direct experience over book-learning, and his dedication to the Royal Society's president revealed a thorough command of its rhetoric:

I avow . . . a hearty Zeal for the promoting of useful knowledge . . . And I must own an Ambition to transmitting to the Public through your hands, these Essays I have made toward those great ends . . . being desirous to bring in my Gleanings here and there in Remote Regions, to that general Magazine, of the knowledge of Foreign Parts.³⁸

The Royal Society rewarded Dampier with the command of an ambitious expedition to the South Seas: the voyage was a failure by every measure except one – it produced his final (and equally esteemed) travel account, *A Voyage to New Holland* (1703–9).

The genre takes shape

It should be clear by now that early modern travel writing was so varied that it may not even be appropriate to describe it as a single genre. The style and tone of texts could vary widely and their organisation always seemed prone to reproduce the haphazard nature of the travels they described: when Thomas Herbert asked his readers for their help ‘to call home my Itinerant Notions’, he pointed out that ‘If my thoughts have wandered, I must intreat the well-bred Reader to remember, I have wandered through many deserts’.³⁹ But Herbert and his contemporaries did start to channel their accounts into some recognisable patterns.

Most texts began – after the requisite tribute to a patron and address to the reader – with some sort of justification for both travel and travel writing, in which lists of classical precedents were commonly invoked and biblical passages commonly cited. The travellers’ experiences could then be described in letters, essays, sketches, plays, and poems. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the most characteristic form was the ‘report’ or ‘relation’, which combined a chronological narrative of movements and events with geographic and ethnographic observations. The narrative voice in these texts could be either strongly first-person (as with Coryate) or strongly third-person (as with Harriot), depending on whether the author wanted to emphasise the travellers or what they encountered. The pattern of analysis represented by the instructions for Bavin and the ‘report’ of Harriot and White was determined by the colonial project they served, but other models for the observation and assessment of foreign countries emerged in the work of political envoys and in the directions produced for educational tourists: Palmer’s text was part of a burgeoning genre teaching noble travellers what to look for in foreign countries, how to record their observations in writing, and how to communicate their knowledge upon their return.⁴⁰

Maps were an obvious adjunct to travel narratives, but they are less common than we might expect. This is partly because they were expensive to produce and partly because (in an age of intense national and commercial rivalry) they would be handled as state or trade secrets. By the end of the period, however, readers would have expected to see illustrations

(of increasingly high quality), not just of harbours and important cities but of native costumes and exotic flora and fauna.

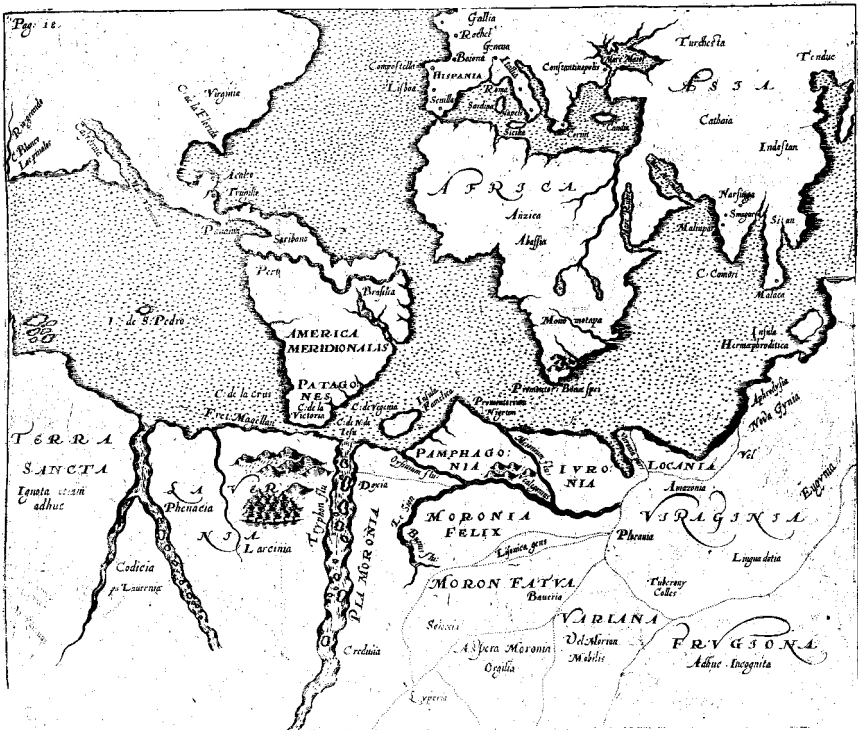
Even the earliest English travel writing was marked by complex rhetorical strategies. Its authors had to balance the known and the unknown, the traditional imperatives of persuasion and entertainment, and their individual interests with those of their patrons, employers, and monarchs. Given such diverse purposes, early modern travel writers were often torn between giving pleasure and providing practical guidance, between logging and narrating, between describing what happened and suggesting what could have happened. These rhetorical challenges, along with the novelty of their experiences, left travel writers with acute problems of authenticity and credibility. The myths and stereotypes which could be reproduced in otherwise sober and scholarly accounts led to associations between travel and lying, which accounts for the assurances of writers like John Cartwright (whose title page advertised a ‘true journal . . . of the East Indies’) that they would only report ‘what mine eyes have seen in more remote parts of the world . . . contenting myself with the conscience of truth’⁴¹ – claims that would, in turn, be mimicked in the fantastic voyages and faked travelogues that began to proliferate in the eighteenth century.⁴² Baptist Goodall accordingly urged travel writers to reject ‘the least of lying wonders told/. . . of foothigh pygmies, dog-eared men/ Blue black and yellow’: there was no need for such ‘fables’, he suggested, when the world offered natural wonders like cloves, elephants, and armadillos and architectural marvels like the Great Wall of China and the Egyptian pyramids.⁴³

Modern attempts to define travel writing have often sought to limit the genre to true accounts of actual travels. As Philip Edwards has suggested, our purchase on the rhetorical work done by these texts depends, in part, on our ability to gauge the difference between their accounts of what happened and what actually happened.⁴⁴ But if travel books gave travellers licence to write they also gave writers licence to travel: authors played with the boundaries between eyewitness testimony, second-hand information, and outright invention, and readers were often unsure whether they were reading truth or fiction. Indeed, for the expectations and desires of many readers, it may not have mattered much. Authors and readers were both aware of the fact that travels were transmitted, and shaped, by textual accounts – the reading and writing of which required (in effect) a secondary journey, with its own rules and realities. Lithgow asked his readers to accompany him in ‘my . . . two-fold Pilgrimage; first, in my personal progress, to these famous places, and next a second peregrination of mind, in renewing the same in the Map of my own Memory’ (*Most Delectable*, sig. A3v). And Herbert expressed what

many travel writers must have felt, that the second journey could be every bit as perilous as the first: ‘And though I am on shore, yet I fear, the Sea is not yet calm; for each Book, sent into the World, is like a Bark put to Sea, and as liable to censures as the Bark is to foul weather’ (*Some Years’ Travel*, sig. B1r).

Science and satire

The fact that there were features that instantly identified a text as ‘travel writing’ made it available not only as a form for new knowledge but as a vehicle for satire, and from a surprisingly early date, actual and imaginative voyages were used to criticise foreign habits, domestic conditions, and even travel itself. The pattern was set by Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516), which (to those not in the know) looked exactly like the period’s genuine travel books – complete with a map and an alphabet of the Utopian tongue. More uses the fiction of a perfect culture, newly discovered in the New World, to critique the economic and political conditions of Renaissance Europe.



2. Satirical map of the world from Joseph Hall, *Mundus Alter et Idem* (1605). Reproduced by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

More's text would inspire both sincere and satirical utopias from the sixteenth century onward. The exploits of explorers like Raleigh and the fortunes of captives like Webbe would be lampooned in texts like David Lloyd's mock-epic poem *The Legend of Captain Jones* (1631). John Taylor ('The Water Poet') was one of several seventeenth-century poets to borrow the conventions of travel writing in exercising his wit and venting his spleen. The period's most inventive mocker of travel, however, was Joseph Hall, whose *Mundus Alter et Idem [Another World and Yet the Same]* (1605) was the period's most elaborate parody. It mimics the entire apparatus of the travel book – including maps, pictures of foreign inscriptions and coins, and lists of foreign words.⁴⁵ Hall himself saw travel as both dangerous (since the only things travellers picked up abroad were foreign fashions and vices) and unnecessary (since everything essential could be learned from books and maps); and his intrepid explorer travels all the way to 'Terra Australis Incognita' to discover countries with national traits that were all too familiar – Gluttonia, Letcheritania, Fooliana, and Hungerland.

The legacy of early modern travel writing is to be found in both the scientific Harriot and the satirical Hall. The transition to the new age of travel writing in the eighteenth century was heralded not just by the appearance of Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World* but by John Dunton's *A Voyage Round the World*, published six years earlier: both books helped to create the conventions that Defoe would draw on in his own *New Voyage Round the World* of 1725. Before Dunton began his more famous career as a bookseller and newspaper publisher, he travelled to America as part of a projected 'Ramble through Ten Kingdoms'. The letters that described his travels around Massachusetts in 1685–6 would not be published until 1867, and the *Ramble through Six Kingdoms* that he advertised in 1705 never made it through the press.⁴⁶ But he drew extensively upon his actual journeys in *A Voyage Round the World*, a satirical novel that would later inspire Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.⁴⁷ The text begins with poems in praise of the author (probably written by the author himself), and no section of Dunton's text better captures the spirit of English travel, looking back to the commercial outreach of the sixteenth century and ahead to imperial rambles of the eighteenth:

Terra Incognita shall fly before us,
 And all the Savages behind adore us.
 On Hills of Ice, as high as Tenariff,
 Wintering, we'll moor our Weather-beaten Skiff . . .
 There find the Passages, and through 'em trade . . .
 And Ramble round, and round, and round, & then,
 Ramble like Drake, 'till we come home again. (sig. B4r)

NOTES

- 1 British Library, MS Additional 38823, item 1: cf. D. B. Quinn, *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1955), vol. 1, pp. 51-4.
- 2 Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (Leiden: Christopher Plantin, 1586), p. 203.
- 3 G. B. Parks, 'Tudor Travel Literature: A Brief History', in *The Hakluyt Handbook*, ed. D. B. Quinn (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 97-132.
- 4 F. M. Rogers, 'Hakluyt as Translator', in *Hakluyt Handbook*, ed. Quinn, vol. 1, pp. 37-47.
- 5 Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (London: George Bishop and Ralph Newbery, 1589), ff. *21-v.
- 6 The most detailed bibliographies are Edward Godfrey Cox, *A Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1935-49); John Parker, *Books to Build an Empire: A Bibliographical History of English Overseas Interests to 1620* (Amsterdam: Israel, 1965); and *European Americana: A Chronological Guide to Works Printed in Europe Relating to the Americas, 1493-1776* (New York: Readex Books, 1980-8).
- 7 Robin Myers and Michael Harris, eds., *Journeys Through the Market: Travel, Travellers, and the Book Trade* (Folkestone: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1999).
- 8 Mary C. Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576-1624* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 7.
- 9 Quoted in Anthony Parr, ed., *Three Renaissance Travel Plays* (Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 1.
- 10 Thomas Coryate, *Crudities* (London: William Stansby, 1611), sig. d7r.
- 11 William Lithgow, *A Most Delectable and True Discourse of His Admired and Painful Peregrination* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1614); Jonathan Haynes, *The Humanist as Traveler: George Sandys's Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610* (London: Associated University Presses, 1986). Sandys went on to serve as Treasurer to the Virginia Colony, where he finished his famous translation of Ovid. *An Itinerary written by Fynes Moryson, Gent. First in the Latine Tongue, and then translated by him into English*, 3 pt. (London: J. Beale, 1617); and see also *Shakespeare's Europe. Unpublished chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary. Being a Survey of the condition of Europe at the end of the 16th century* (London: Sherratt & Hughes, 1903).
- 12 Sir Percival Griffiths, *A License to Trade: The History of English Chartered Companies* (London: Ernest Benn, 1974).
- 13 William Sherman, 'Travel and Trade', in *A Companion to Renaissance Drama* ed. Arthur Kinney (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming 2002).
- 14 Sir Thomas Palmer, *An Essay of the Means how to Make Our Travels into Foreign Countries the More Profitable and Honourable* (London: Humphrey Lownes, 1606), sig. IA.
- 15 As with all taxonomies, the categories are ideal types and individual travellers will often fulfil more than one rôle. For other typologies of early modern travel writers see Robert Munter and Clyde L. Grose, eds., *Englishmen Abroad* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1986); Jean Ceard and Jean-Claude Margolin, eds., *Voyager à la*

- Renaissance* (Paris: Éditions Maisonneuve et Larose, 1987); and Loukia Droulia, ed., *On Travel Literature and Related Subjects* (Athens: Institute of Neohellenic Research, 1993), pp. 451–503.
- 16 This phrase was James A. Froude's: it is cited and discussed in Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, p. 158.
- 17 George Bruner Parks, 'The Contents and Sources of Ramusio's *Navigazioni*', in G. B. Ramusio, *Navigazioni et viaggi* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970); D. B. Quinn, 'Richard Hakluyt, Editor', in Richard Hakluyt, *Divers Voyages* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1967).
- 18 Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (London: Henry Fetherstone, 1625).
- 19 L. E. Pennington, ed., *The Purchas Handbook* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1997).
- 20 Munter and Grose, *Englishmen Abroad*, p. 30.
- 21 See Jennifer R. Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration, 1298–1630* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), ch. 7; Gesa Mackenthun, *Metaphors of Dispossession: American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire, 1492–1637* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), pp. 162–85.
- 22 Michael Nerlich, *The Ideology of Adventure: Studies in Modern Consciousness, 1100–1750* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 3–5, 58.
- 23 See Neil L. Whitehead's edition of the text (Manchester University Press, 1997) and Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, ch. 2.
- 24 Alden T. Vaughan, 'Trinculo's Indian: American Natives in Shakespeare's England', in *'The Tempest' and its Travels*, ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), pp. 51–2.
- 25 Thomas Harriot, *A Brief and True Report* (London: Robert Robinson, 1588; rpt. Frankfurt: Theodor de Bry, 1590).
- 26 Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).
- 27 Palmer only includes travellers from England, but the period's largest group of involuntary travellers were the slaves traded from the 1560s onwards.
- 28 Edward Webbe, *The Rare and Most Wonderful Things* (London: William Wright, 1590), sig. A3r; Robert Silverberg, *The Realm of Prester John* (Athens, Ga.: Ohio University Press, 1996), p. 316.
- 29 Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London: for John Starkey and Henry Brome, 1668), sig. A4r.
- 30 Giles Fletcher, *Of the Rus Commonwealth*, ed. Albert J. Schmidt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966).
- 31 William Foster, ed., *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899).
- 32 British Library MS Additional 22914; partly published in *Early Voyages and Travels to the Levant*, ed. J. Theodore Bent (London: Hakluyt Society, 1893).
- 33 Barbara Fuchs, 'Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renegadoes, and the English Nation', *ELH*, 67 (2000): 45–69.
- 34 John Esquemeling, *The History of the Bucaniers* (London: for Thomas Malthus, 1684), sig. A5.

- 35 R. W. Frantz, *The English Traveller and the Movement of Ideas, 1660–1732* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1934).
- 36 Daniel Carey, ‘Compiling Nature’s History: Travellers and Travel Narratives in the Early Royal Society’, *Annals of Science*, 54 (1997): 269–92.
- 37 Sir John Narborough *et. al.*, *A Collection of Curious Travels & Voyages* (London: Samuel Smith and Benjamin Walford, 1693).
- 38 William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (London: James Knapton, 1697), A2v.
- 39 Thomas Herbert, *A Relation of Some Years’ Travel... Into Afrique and the Greater Asia* (London: William Stansby and Jacob Bloome, 1634), sig. B1v.
- 40 Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel, 1550–1800* (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995), ch. 1.
- 41 John Cartwright, *The Preacher’s Travels* (London: Thomas Thorpe, 1611), sig. B2r.
- 42 Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel-Liars, 1660–1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962).
- 43 Baptist Goodall, *The Trial of Travel* (London: John Norton, 1630), sig. C1v–C2v.
- 44 Philip Edwards, *Last Voyages: Cavendish, Hudson, Raleigh* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 8–11, and *The Story of the Voyage: Sea-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 10.
- 45 John Millar Wands, ed. and trans., *Another World and Yet the Same: Bishop Joseph Hall’s ‘Mundus Alter et Idem’* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).
- 46 John Dunton, *Letters Written from New-England, A. D. 1686*, ed. W. H. Whitmore (Boston: The Prince Society, 1867); *The Life and Errors of John Dunton* (London: for John Dunton, 1705).
- 47 John Dunton, *A Voyage Round the World: Or, a Pocket-Library Divided into Several Volumes* (London: for Richard Newcome, 1691).