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Introduction: Understanding the Early Modern Journeying Play

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Our aims as editors of *Travel and Drama in Early Modern England: The Journeying Play* have been notably simple: to produce a collection of new and original essays by world-leading scholars at all stages of their careers, exploring the relationships between travel and drama in a period of English history (roughly late Elizabethan to early Restoration, *c.*1580–1670) when both activities were rapidly evolving; for the essays, taken together, to pose research questions that shape and stimulate future debates for new generations of researchers; and for the collection to redefine the limits of and, perhaps, expand the canon of recognised plays concerned with travel. Of course, however straightforward our aims, they are inevitably underpinned by a series of more complex research questions concerning the parameters and significance of the genre; in this Introduction, we outline the approaches we have taken to fulfil our ambitions for the collection. The Introduction also provides a concise survey of the critical terrain that constitutes our point of departure and a brief summation of how we think each essay takes forward the collection's research agenda, including, we hope, the areas of future scholarship it might serve to stimulate.

To facilitate intellectual coherence in an essay collection with these aims, it is important to define terms. Though critics often use the terms 'travel drama' and 'voyage drama' interchangeably, and in previous work we have each used both terms, we want to signal from the outset the collection's awareness of the ethical issues that have become associated with the term 'travel'. Although it was only in the mid-eighteenth century that the generic division between fiction and non-fiction became less permeable, once the boundary between fiction and non-fiction firmed up, each form of writing developed a different relationship with its readers through explicit or implicit reading contracts. As Tim Youngs summarises, 'travel writing consists of predominantly factual, first-person prose accounts of travels that have been undertaken by the author-narrator.'[1] Of course, since ancient times, books have always contained literary journeys (indeed Casey Blanton suggests 'the journey pattern is one of the most persistent forms of all narratives'),[2] leading Peter Hulme to argue, correctly in our view, for the need for exclusive definitions of literature and travel writing. For texts to count as travel writing, Hulme believes that their authors must have travelled to the places they describe, as there is an ethical dimension to their claims to have made the journeys they recount and, if an author's claim is later found to be false, the work is 'discredited' (says Hulme) and the text moves out of the category of travel writing into another (such as the imaginary voyage).[3] However, ethical concerns about the 'truth', or eye-witness authority, of travel accounts are visibly evident among early moderns: for instance, in Richard Hakluyt's decision to drop versions of *Mandeville's Travels* and David Ingrams's account of a 2,000-mile walk he claimed to have been forced to undertake for survival after shipwreck in the Gulf of Mexico in 1568, from the second, much expanded edition of *The Principal Navigations* (1598/99–1600), because he doubted their authenticity.[4] More generally, the proverb 'travellers lie by authority' sums up the issue; those sceptical of travellers' narratives argued that without witnesses to challenge their stories, travellers' authority was unassailable.[5] Indeed this proverb was evidently something of a recruiting sergeant for both those supportive of *or* hostile to travel writing well before the eighteenth century: dozens of writers weighed in on the argument, sometimes shedding more heat than light, with, for instance, William Wood in *New England's Prospect* (1634) exasperatedly railing against 'thick-witted readers' who quoted the 'unjust aspersion' of the proverb: '[t]here is many a tub-brained cynic [like Diogenes], who because anything stranger than ordinary is too large for the strait-hoops of his apprehension, he peremptorily concludes that it is a lie.'[6]

For clarity and coherence, and to make a defining intervention in the debate, this collection has adopted what might be described as a flexed version of Hulme's distinction. For us, if a play is based on a particular documented voyage or focuses on the exploits of a historical traveller, even though it is not necessarily the playwright's own experience being dramatised, then it is described as travel drama. The plays about the 'rogue cosmopolitans' John Ward, Thomas Stukeley, and the Sherley brothers, discussed by Daniel Vitkus in this volume (Chapter 7), are

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examples of travel drama, for instance.[7] By contrast, Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (discussed by David McInnis in Chapter 10) is better thought of as a voyage drama.[8] Dekker did not travel in the way that Fortunatus and his sons do, and even though he did apparently use Gerardus Mercator and Petrus Plancius's maps as partial inspirations, the main source of his characters' prolific journeying is German folklore. *Old Fortunatus* therefore accords with the status of later texts that Hulme might call 'literary' rather than 'travel writing'. For these reasons, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (*c.*1611), discussed by Emily C. Bartels in Chapter 9,[9] is also a voyage drama, plotted around a series of imaginary voyages and shipwrecks, notwithstanding its well-known engagement with William Strachey's account of a New World shipwreck on the *Sea-Venture*. It is perfectly possible for a play to be simultaneously both a travel and a voyage drama – Sir William Davenant's *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658), for instance, incorporates 'Black Legend' accounts of Spanish conquistadors,[10] but ends with English forces liberating the Peruvians from Spanish oppression, despite the English being absent from Peru in the historical period depicted.[11]

As our title indicates, this collection has adopted a new umbrella term: the early modern 'journeying play', to cover both terms, 'voyage drama' and 'travel drama', because the relationship between travel and drama at this point is best understood by appealing to both. 'Voyage drama' is a more capacious term and arguably a more innovative category generically than 'travel drama'; conceptually, in that it referred to a range of enterprises and was not confined to sea journeys; and theatrically, since by the late sixteenth century the word 'voyage' was starting to be used to refer to a literary category.[12] Put another way, voyage drama is the more obviously inventive category since, as Mary Campbell puts it, fictional writing, including drama, 'provides the shoes of flight' where 'contemplation matters more than the acquisition of knowledge'.[13] However, even plays derived in some way from an authentic account or experience are *plays* – that is, fictionalisations, dramatisations. In other words they too are inventive, and are not travel narratives or diaries, though it should be recognised that some early modern journeying plays are, in Campbell's terms, more contemplative than others. The use of the new term 'the journeying play' enables this collection to open up more precise and nuanced understandings of the relationship between travel and processes of dramatic fictionalisation.

The flexibility of the term 'journeying play' also allows our collection to embrace stimulating ideas that superficially might seem to challenge its coherence – specifically that travel is not actually a requirement of the genre. For instance, the returned sea captain Young Franklin's failure to find maritime re-employment in Thomas Middleton and John Webster's *Anything for a Quiet Life* (*c.*1621), described by Marianne Montgomery (Chapter 6), results in him traversing the city of London instead – akin, in some ways, to the passage of imported luxury goods to the mercer's and barber's shops that provide the locations for much of the action. Foreign travel is never shown, yet the play restages it as domestic activity as well as repeatedly exhibiting the material products provided, and linguistic diversity enabled, by it.[14] Despite its apparent lack of travel, *Anything for a Quiet Life* is a voyage drama.

We have also used 'the journeying play' in the title of our collection to reference the origins of travel and voyage drama in the 'old' medieval journeying plays, such as the late fifteenth-century *Somonyng of Everyman*, where physical movement, such as Everyman's pilgrimage, mirrors both character development and the journey through life. But, even more importantly, and the reason why we chose it for the title in preference to either voyage or travel drama, is its self-reflexivity as both category and term. The journeying play usefully signals both the distance the genre has travelled over time and the collection's aim to steer its continued progression and future development, including our aim of redefining the canons of what constitutes both travel and voyage drama to show how productively the categories promiscuously mingle and overlap.

An appreciation of the true extent of the early modern journeying play, and of the intersection between voyage and travel drama (including an assessment of whether one category was more dominant than the other), is only possible if we consider both surviving plays *and* what we know about lost plays. In relation to travel drama, for instance, one way to approach the issue is by addressing what seem to be gaps in material, either about prominent historical events or figures that might reasonably be expected to be covered by the drama of the period. As Anthony Parr puts it, 'Where, it might be asked, are the plays about Drake and Hawkins and other heroes of maritime derring-do?',[15] referring to the way that no surviving plays focus on England's most famous 'sea dogs' or, indeed, explorers as their central protagonists.

Sir Francis Drake is an interesting and complex case. Drake, in fact, does appear on stage, just not always in ways we might expect. In the second part of *If You Know Not Me, You Know No Bodie* (probably written by Thomas Heywood, for the Queen Anne's Men, in 1604), a play that blends the genres of city comedy and history, the fact that Drake brings

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Queen Elizabeth news of the Spanish Armada's defeat (in the B-Text, the news is borne jointly by Drake and Martin Frobisher) suggests that, generically, the play might also be categorised as travel drama.[16] Drake also features in mayoral pageants including John Webster's *Monuments of Honor* (1624),[17] and as the eponymous protagonist of an Interregnum entertainment by Davenant in 1659.[18] More intriguingly, a Sotheby's auction catalogue from 13 July 1887 listed a dramatic manuscript (now lost) in the hand of Mildmay Fane, Earl of Westmorland (1602–66), entitled 'Ladrones or the Robbers' Iland, an Opera in a Romansike Way'; the catalogue stipulates that 'amongst the Dramatis Personæ are Drake, Candish, Magellan, Lemaire, Vandernort, &c.', even though it was impossible for these five men to have been there at the same time, raising difficult-to-answer questions of whether this should be seen as voyage or travel drama, or both. Although Ferdinand Magellan's association with the islands was well established (he was said to have discovered and named them in 1521–22), Thomas Cavendish's and Drake's connections are less obvious, and the Dutch mariner Jacob Le Maire circumnavigated the world in 1615–16, approximately one hundred years after Magellan's voyage.[19] Tentatively dated to 1658 (and thus around the time of Davenant's piece about Drake), this operatic entertainment thus appears to recount a purely imaginary voyage, making the generic classification weighted towards voyage drama, with elements of travel drama also evident in the entertainment's use of historical explorers. Drake may also have appeared in his capacity as a 'leading figure in Plymouth politics' in a lost Admiral's Men play: the domestic tragedy 'Page of Plymouth' (1599) by Ben Jonson and Dekker, in which Ulalia Glandfield is forcibly married to Page of Plymouth but continues her romance with George Strangwidge after the wedding; she and George hire two men to kill Page, and when their crime is discovered, all four are tried by Drake, and executed.[20] Given that Drake executed his sometime friend and second-in-command Thomas Doughty for mutiny and treason on his circumnavigation, and the justice of the execution was widely debated and cast a shadow over Drake's subsequent career, it is possible that the execution in 'Page of Plymouth' revives the controversy, and thus might perhaps be seen as containing features of travel drama.[21] Famous travellers who saw the world imported their experience and judgement, for good or ill, back to domestic soils. Taken together, then, these examples of extant and lost plays show that Drake was not completely neglected by theatrical entertainments but none provide him with a centre stage part in a late Elizabethan or early Jacobean journeying play, when the genre was at its

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height. In other words, the small size of the role (in Heywood's play, the lost 'Page of Plymouth', and *Monuments of Honor*), the genre (of pageant and Interregnum entertainments), and the late date (Interregnum entertainments) work together to marginalise Drake in the early modern journeying play.

Captain John Smith, one-time governor of Virginia, is another famed English traveller whose presence on stage has also apparently disappeared from the record. In the dedicatory material prefacing his memoirs of 1630, Smith justified compiling 'this true discourse' on the grounds that 'they have acted my fatall Tragedies upon the Stage, and racked my Relations at their pleasure'.[22] Philip L. Barbour noticed a further allusion to a dramatisation of Smith's exploits in the commendation that Richard James wrote for Smith's *True Travels*:

> Can it be,
> That Men alone in Gonnels fortune see
> Thy worth advanc'd? no wonder since our age,
> Is now at large a Bedlam or a Stage.

One possible candidate for a travel drama featuring Smith would be 'The Hungarian Lion', written by Richard Gunnell and licensed for performance at his Fortune playhouse ('Gonnels fortune') in 1623.[23] Smith's epitaph in St Sepulchre's Church, London, notes that for 'great Service in that Climate done, / Brave Sigismundus, King of Hungarion, / Did give him as a Coat of Armes to wear', which lends credence to a play called 'The Hungarian Lion' featuring him.[24]

Detailed records exist for a handful of explicitly New World plays from the 1590s and early 1600s, including 'The New World's Tragedy' (Admiral's, 1595), 'The Conquest of the West Indies' (Admiral's, 1601), 'A Tragedy of the Plantation of Virginia' (unknown, 1623), and a play about the Amboyna massacre of 1623 (unknown, 1625).[25] The titles of these plays, which locate the action within specific geographies, indicate that each should probably be thought of as a travel drama, or perhaps as combining elements from travel and voyage drama, depending on the extent to which the location was a backdrop for imaginary characters and situations. Others may have disappeared altogether, for the theatrical subject (or subjects) of a vitriolic sermon preached by William Crashaw in 1609 remains untraced.[26] Crashaw criticised players for trifling 'with *Princes* and *Potentates*, *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, nay with *God* and *Religion*, and all *holy things*', claiming 'nothing that is good, excellent or holy can escape them' and specifically noting that 'they abuse *Virginea*'.[27]

He attempts to dismiss their abuses of the New World in what are most likely travel dramas by deridingly noting that 'they are but *Players*: they disgrace it: true, but they are but *Players*, and they have *played* with better things, and such as for which, if they speedily repent not, I dare say, vengeance waites for them.'[28] Crashaw proceeds to conjecture as to the players' motives:

> But why are the *Players* enemies to this Plantation and doe abuse it? I will tell you the causes: First, for that they are so multiplied here, that one cannot live by another, and they see that wee send of all trades to *Virginea*, but will send no *Players*, which if wee would doe, they that remaine would gaine the more at home. Secondly, as the *divell* hates us, because wee purpose not to suffer *Heathens*, and the *Pope* because we have vowed to tolerate no *Papists*: so doe the *Players*, because wee resolve to suffer no *Idle persons in Virginea*, which course if it were taken in *England*, they know they might turne to new occupations.[29]

Crashaw *may* have had the lost 'Conquest of the West Indies' in mind (as Wilhelm Creizenach implied),[30] but it is also possible he could have been recalling a satirical play such as George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston's voyage drama *Eastward Ho* (Children of the Queen's Revels, 1605).[31] But it sounds as though he may have had multiple journeying plays in mind: players seem to be repeat offenders who 'abuse' and 'disgrace' Virginia, and will continue to do so ('let them *play* on').

Travel, whether to the New World or closer to home, evidently loomed large in a number of lost plays from the London commercial playing companies' repertories. A couple of years before Shakespeare turned his attention to Elsinore, the Admiral's Men had a two-part play by Henry Chettle, Dekker, Michael Drayton, and Robert Wilson, 'Earl Godwin and His Three Sons' (1598).[32] The setting is eleventh-century England under, in turn, Canute, Harold, and Hardicanute (the last Danish king of England), and culminating in the accession of Edward the Confessor, despite Earl Godwin's best attempts to claim the crown for his offspring. The plays would have most likely included details of the earl's exile to Denmark and, after briefly returning to England, his exile to Flanders (and if so, should be seen as containing at least some element of travel drama). Exile (for protection rather than punishment) is also the premise of the surviving fragment of what appears to be a pseudo-historical voyage drama set in pre-Norman England, referred to as the 'Play of Oswald' after a prominent character.[33] Ethelbert's son Oswald is smuggled out of Mercia to Northumbria and, in a trope common in folklore, raised in ignorance of his true nobility, but he is reunited with

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and identified by his parents in the fragment of the play that survives. Some of these plays appear to incorporate scenarios related to documented travels of historical characters, but we can also see the influence of the 'old' journeying plays; the role of 'travail' is notable (meaning variously in the late sixteenth century hard work in general, the work required to travel from one place to another in particular, and the labour of childbirth),[34] as is the link between movement and identity (primarily political identity), and material from folklore. Put another way, these plays most likely combined elements of travel and voyage drama, in varying proportions.

Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London* (1602) is one of the more famous early modern journeying plays concerned with pilgrimage and the Holy Land (another prominent theme in the medieval journeying play tradition), but it was preceded by a play called 'Jerusalem' (Strange's, 1591) and the possibly related 'Godfrey of Bouillon, Part 2' (Admiral's, 1594)[35], as well as the crusading plays 'The Funeral of Richard Coeur de Lion' (Admiral's, 1598) and 'William Longsword' (Admiral's, 1599) (also related to the tradition in the additional sense that 'journeying' could mean engagement in battle).[36] The pilgrimage-related metaphor of travel as life's journey – a recurrent motif of medieval and early modern writing – must have had a place in the lost two-part 'Fair Constance of Rome' plays by Dekker, Drayton, Richard Hathaway, Anthony Munday, and Wilson (1600). As Parr has noted elsewhere, 'the idea of the unpredictable journey that tests constancy and reveals God's purpose remained a potent one, as Chaucer's retelling of the tale of Constance shows, and it was a prime means of giving a Christian shape to the peripatetic motif in classical epic.'[37] The plays presumably followed Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*, in which the beautiful Constance narrowly escapes a massacre orchestrated by her future mother-in-law, and is set adrift on a rudderless boat off the coast of Syria (just as Prospero and the infant Miranda were cast adrift from Milan in an ungovernable vessel in *The Tempest*), ultimately landing in Northumberland where her rescue is followed by further trials and tribulations. After marrying the king of Northumberland, Constance is again the victim of an evil mother-in-law, this time being banished to sea through the device of a counterfeit letter. Constance is eventually reunited with her husband and her father in Rome.[38] These are only some of the more obviously journeying plays, as evidenced by their titles; the Levantine setting of 'Frederick and Basilea' (Admiral's, 1597) is suggested by the names of characters present in the surviving backstage plot,[39] while Stephen Gosson's account of 'the trechery of Turkes' in 'The

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Blacksmith's Daughter' (Leicester's?, 1578) casts a rather different light on what might otherwise have been thought a crafts play of some kind.[40]

Despite the intuitive assumption that the early modern journeying play is one of the trickiest forms of drama to pull off, amateur playwrights also seem drawn to plays about travel. One of the most famous amateur dramatists of this period is Sir Edward Dering (1598–1644), whose conflation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays for a 1623 performance at his residence in Surrenden, Kent, is discussed in this volume (Chapter 4) by Julie Sanders.[41] At a slightly later date (*c.*1627 or thereafter), Dering attempted to write a voyage drama about Philander, King of Thrace, set in Thrace (the first act) and Macedon (the remainder of the play).[42] A manuscript fragment at the Folger Shakespeare Library preserves Dering's 'plot' or outline of the projected drama; it provides detailed scene-by-scene summaries up to the end of the third act, then ceases abruptly (despite numerous subsequent blank leaves of paper). Tiffany Stern suggests that 'it may be that this is the plot for a collaborative play in which only Acts 1–3 were of interest to this particular author', or that Dering 'may have given up before completing the document'.[43] Though the outline may not be complete, the playwright, who amassed a great collection of books and manuscripts, undertook significant research from the most up-to-date cartographic and geographical sources available: folios 1^{v}–2^{r} of the draft provide extensive notes on the 'Mountaynes', 'Rivers', 'Cittyes and Townes and places' of Thrace and Macedon, as well as names of the 'provinces' and even '[t]he old names of Thrace'.[44] A marginal note on folio 1^{v} even reveals a source text: 'Speede in Greece', referring to the map included in the first world atlas to be compiled by an Englishman, John Speed's *A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World*, published in 1627. This amateur dramatist, at least, seems to have thought that to write about particular regions he had not himself visited, it was necessary to research the imagined destinations, even if only in his own library.

A comparable example is the case of the philosopher John Locke, who at some point between late 1661 and late 1663 decided to try his hand at writing a voyage drama about 'Orozes, King of Albania', set in an unidentified Eastern country, in part at the court of a Mughal emperor, as Orozes battles the Persians.[45] Like Dering, Locke got as far as sketching a plot-scenario of the play, rotating one of his notebooks and using the blank portions of what can be described as folios 68^{v}rev.–64^{v}rev. Although Locke seems to have conceived the narrative himself, the names he gives his characters reveal indebtedness not just to classical sources such as Cassius Dio or Plutarch (though more likely at second-hand, via James Ussher's *The Annals of the World*, 1658), but also to contemporary travellers' accounts – most notably Edward Terry's *A Voyage to East-India* (1655), from which he drew the names for the Mughal and his two sons, Khusrau and Khurram (the latter famous for commissioning the Taj Mahal). Locke also relied on inspiration from prose romance and, akin to the political allegory apparent in many other contemporary voyage dramas,[46] his story about a disguised king who is saved from imminent execution and restored to power may only have been set in the East to distance it from historical events in England.

Curiously, the few cases of actual travellers who tried their hands at writing plays do not appear to have been tempted to dramatise their first-hand experiences of foreign lands.[47] Benjamin Greene, a factor with the East India Company, travelled with Sir Henry Middleton on the 1610–13 voyage to Surat, and kept a journal from 15 November 1610 to 22 December 1612. The diary, preserved in the India Office Marine Department Records, has been disbound and the individual leaves remounted; the final leaf (which may be in a different hand) contains a dramatic fragment consisting of dramatis personae, a stage direction, and two lines of dialogue. As with Locke's plot, the character names are drawn from prose romances including Marcos Martínez's *Espejo de príncipes y caballeros* (1587; English translations of which appeared in *The Mirror of Knighthood* between 1598 and 1601), *Parismus, the Renoumed Prince of Bohemia* (1598), and *Parismenos* (1599).[48] Richard Norwood, a seasick sailor-turned-navigation-tutor, returned to London from the Mediterranean in 1612 and found himself frequenting playhouses (the Fortune, specifically).[49] Being 'bewitched in affection and never satiated' by the 'frivolous, false, and feigned things' depicted on stage, he 'began to make a play and had written a good part of it' but, following a dispute with the players, abandoned it.[50] For Norwood, playgoing was explicitly a matter of turning away from 'anything that was serious, true, or good', making it unlikely that the 'vanities' he subsequently regretted had anything to do with his real-life travelling.[51]

We can glimpse, then, in the fragmentary accounts of lost plays that remain to us the same issues and concerns that shape the extant plays discussed in *Travel and Drama in Early Modern England*. Of course, it should not be forgotten that the practice of travel for early moderns (to far-flung locations and domestic ones – the latter journeys just as important since most people only travelled short distances)[52] was undertaken by only a small percentage of the population, because of both its expense