Forum

Beyond the Atlantic: English Globetrotters and Transoceanic Connections

Alison Games

WHAT makes a geographic region a logical unit of historical analysis? Historians are products of disciplinary conventions that classify jobs and professional organizations first by place (generally a nation, a region as defined by the old model of area studies, or a continental landmass) and then by historical period. These conventions are obviously determined by where scholars work and study: that the United States is one field whereas all of Asia is another reflects peculiarities of our profession in the United States.[1] Historians perpetuate these distinctions that privilege geographic region in departmental field structures, in courses and majors for undergraduates, and in graduate programs for doctoral candidates. The profession replicates itself within this preexisting geographic framework, largely because advisers want to be sure that students can find jobs as most departments continue to define them: by region. For most historians, then, place is often the starting point in historical research. But the geographic space that guides research can impose unnatural constraints. For historians of the early modern period, the modern political boundaries that determine regions of study (as departments define such entities) can be confining because early borders—where they existed or were acknowledged—were porous, contested, and shifting. Moreover, research topics related to the expansion

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[1] On the political, social, and geographic ideas that have shaped the popular continental divisions of the world, see esp. Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, Calif., 1997).

William and Mary Quarterly, 3d Series, Volume LXIII, Number 4, October 2006

of Europe and global interaction in the early modern period, precisely the types of studies likely to engage scholars of colonial societies, do not lend themselves well to single regions. Historians consequently find themselves struggling to write nonnational histories within national paradigms.

One useful solution to these dilemmas can be seen in the growing field of Atlantic history, which takes as its unit of analysis not a single state but rather the four continents surrounding the Atlantic as well as the ocean itself.[2] The turn toward the Atlantic by many early Americanists has been a boon. This broad regional perspective helps historians of colonial societies escape the nationalist teleologies that plague colonial history. It has similarly posed new questions and suggested new methodologies as historians of early America find convergences with other fields and perspectives. In short, the emergence of Atlantic history has played an important role in the invigoration of the field.

But might the Atlantic be too small a unit of analysis? To what extent should historians engage questions about developments within the Atlantic by looking elsewhere around the globe, thereby integrating the Atlantic into a larger global history? Similarly, to what extent are the processes that occurred within the Atlantic global, not regional, in nature, thus requiring a global approach? This Forum investigates, from a range of geographic and methodological perspectives, the constraints of the bounded Atlantic in the context of early modern British and early American history. It suggests that adherence to arbitrary boundaries has the unfortunate consequence of severing regions and historiographies that might be fruitfully drawn into dialogue.

The pieces in this Forum, including this one, engage these issues in four distinct ways, though they share two characteristics: all four focus especially on the spatial constraints of the Atlantic, bringing historical geography to the fore, and all four confront the global dimensions of early modern European empires, of which Atlantic enterprises composed only one aspect. Philip J. Stern approaches the world beyond the Atlantic from the vantage point of the British Empire in the late seventeenth century. He argues that historiographical conventions have bifurcated the British Empire geographically (separating activities in the Atlantic from those in the Indian and Pacific oceans) and chronologically (severing first and second empires). These divisions have obscured the important and varied connections and interactions among these different overseas enterprises, whether in the form of common problems such as piracy or tangible links between overseas ventures. Stern urges

[2] See Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 741–57.

readers to investigate different elements of British imperial activity in tandem but cautions against adhering to any single analytic framework. Using the competition among eighteenth-century European empires in North America as his frame of reference, Paul W. Mapp explores the utility of Atlantic history by testing an Atlantic approach against three other possible perspectives. One lens is topical—imperial history—and two are geographic: continental and Pacific history. In the end Mapp rejects all these models and proposes focusing instead on European expansion, paired with global interaction, to encompass the entirety of the processes under investigation without artificially constraining them.[3] Such an approach, Mapp suggests, reveals commonalities that transcended any single ocean basin. Peter A. Coclanis rejects outright the Atlantic as a discrete unit of analysis. Instead, he urges historians toward a cosmopolitan perspective that encompasses the entire globe. In Coclanis's view the Atlantic is a unit artificially severed from the larger world of which it was a part, and he demonstrates this global integration through the tangible links of people, goods, and experiences that connected the Atlantic to other parts of the world. All four essays share Coclanis's insistence on recovering the early modern world as its inhabitants might have perceived it, not as historians have since dichotomized it.

This piece shares Stern's, Mapp's, and Coclanis's attention to spatial constraints and early modern empires. It emphasizes people and their experiences as a vehicle for reconceptualizing the place of the Atlantic in a period of global expansion. Though the migrations of commodities and pathogens have long supplied two obvious examples of the virtue and necessity of global perspectives, people circulated the globe as extensively as did commodities and, unlike inanimate products, they transported their accumulated knowledge with them.[4] Global processes knit the early modern world together, enabling people to perceive in its entirety a world once experienced only in fragments. Entirely new landmasses and populations were discovered in the wake of maritime exploration and places long familiar were reached more quickly, their goods

[3] Those sharing Mapp's vision should visit www.feegi.org, the Web site of the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction.

[4] This piece comes from a project I am completing on English expansion around the globe from 1560 to 1660. On the global transmission of pathogens, see, for example, William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, N.Y., 1976); Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge, 1986). Studies of commodities are all the rage these days, with salt, kola, peanuts, pepper, coffee, chocolate, rice, and cod finally getting the press they have long deserved. The classic progenitor of this field is Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1985).

more readily and cheaply exchanged, their oddities more rapidly assimilated. People were at the heart of this process of globalization, which was shaped not by inanimate forces but rather by individuals who linked the world through ever-thickening connections.

Such globetrotters and the networks they generated and sustained are mainstays of the historiographies of Dutch and Portuguese overseas activity. Like all European powers in the early modern period, the Dutch and the Portuguese had extensive commercial interests around the globe. Men moved among them from the trade factory in Batavia to plantations in Brazil, from Luanda to Goa to Bahia. Since Dutch interests in the East Indies generated greater profits than did their Atlantic holdings and since high mortality rates and the need for fortifications demanded personnel, the Dutch and their diverse employees migrated to Asia for short-term sojourns in numbers greater than simultaneous migrations west. Englishmen also circled the globe, trying their fortunes in different overseas ventures, yet these globetrotters have had little influence on historical scholarship aside from occasional biographies of exemplary cases. For the most part, the global careers of such men are hidden from view: first, by an imperial historiography characterized by stark divisions between English ventures in the Atlantic Ocean and elsewhere and, second, by multiple national historiographies that have consumed the individual stories of colonies, trade factories, and other probes within the histories of nations as diverse as India, Canada, Indonesia, Barbados, Jamaica, Guiana, and the United States. These separate approaches have generated what H. V. Bowen has called an "atomized inheritance," one that makes it difficult to discern these geographically far-flung activities in their entirety.[5]

[5] H. V. Bowen, *Elites, Enterprise and the Making of the British Overseas Empire, 1688–1775* (New York, 1996), 5. For the Portuguese, see A. J. R. Russell-Wood, *A World on the Move: The Portuguese in Africa, Asia, and America, 1415–1808*, Aspects of Portugal (New York, 1993). Setting the Dutch Atlantic in a global context, Pieter C. Emmer and Willem W. Klooster have argued that in fact there was no Dutch Atlantic (Emmer and Klooster, "The Dutch Atlantic, 1600–1800: Expansion without Empire," *Itinerario* 23, no. 2 [1999]: 48–69). Their argument hinges on personnel and income. For a different approach that argues that the Netherlands was transformed by its engagement with the Atlantic, see Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570–1670* (Cambridge, 2001). Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480–1630* (Cambridge, 1984), is one example of a book that connected different types of enterprises, but the model has not generally been followed, particularly for later periods. Instead, the pattern has been to examine different geographic regions of English activity around the globe discretely, even within a single oceanic basin. Separate essays, for example, explore English activity in the Chesapeake, New England, the Caribbean, western Africa, Asia (primarily south

It is precisely this regional specialization that has obscured even the existence, let alone the centrality, of men who moved from one venture to another. Indeed one expert on the early British Empire has suggested that men with transoceanic visions and experiences were a rarity.[6] Yet in marked contrast to this characterization, evidence from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has revealed these men in a virtually unmanageable abundance. The typical leader of a commercial or colonial venture—in America, the East Indies, Europe, or the Mediterranean—was precisely this kind of cosmopolitan figure, a man who had been elsewhere or who was on his way there. Such global experience permeated colonial societies and trade factories from governors, ministers, factors, ambassadors, consuls, and officers down to colonists, traders, and the tars who manned English ships. No one knew what type of venture would prove viable or profitable, so men who grasped the enthusiasms of the age tried them all.

Once the entirety of an individual's career comes into view, the Atlantic recedes in importance, becoming one chapter in a larger story. Two famous residents of early American societies illustrate the point. Take John Smith, whom early Americanists most readily associate with the colony of Virginia (where he spent only two years of a long career). He first tried his fortunes as a soldier on the European continent and, among his many adventures, was enslaved in the Ottoman Empire. Thomas Dale, the famous draconian governor of Virginia, began his career as a soldier and fought for the Dutch for several years in their protracted war against the Spanish before he went to Virginia. On his return to Europe, he rejoined his Dutch regiment before the East India Company recruited him to assist in their challenges to the Dutch in the East Indies. Dale died in Masulipatum in 1619, having turned his martial energies from tackling Iberian hegemony to thwarting Dutch trading enterprises.

Smith, Dale, and the other men who shared their global travels suggest some new ways to think about the interaction of the Atlantic and other ocean basins and encourage efforts to use the experiences of such individuals to integrate discrete pieces of the globe into a single story. That single story has four distinct elements: geography, trade, accumulated experience, and imperial origins. Each element offers a different context for North American ventures, connecting these experiments to

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Asia), Ireland, the middle colonies, and the lower South in Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century*, Oxford History of the British Empire (Oxford, Eng., 1998).

[6] Nicholas Canny, "The Origins of Empire: An Introduction," in Canny, *Origins of Empire*, 19.

other English probes in different parts of the world. By considering places and people in tandem, historians can understand how settlements developed as they did and the specific ways in which the weight of prior knowledge and expectations helped and hindered new ventures. The British Empire, as it ultimately developed, was the culmination of these accumulated global experiences.

A global geographic perspective on English overseas ventures refocuses attention away from a seemingly inexorable western flow of migrants from Europe or Africa to the Americas. When a man ventured out of England on his first overseas voyage in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries, he typically went east to the European continent as a trader, traveler, or soldier, or, especially by the beginning of the seventeenth century, into the Mediterranean. So common was the pattern of English military service with the Dutch during the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) that John Pory referred to the Low Countries as "that university of warre." Men whom historians associate first with other personal qualities, such as religious piety or familial connections, often secured their initial employment in North American colonies because of their military skills. Like so many of his peers, John Winthrop Jr. (later the governor of Connecticut) had continental adventures before he ventured west across the Atlantic. He was part of the large English campaign under the Duke of Buckingham to relieve the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle in 1627 and participated in the humiliating debacle at the Ile of Rhé. When he was recruited for his father's Massachusetts venture, he was appointed to organize the colony's defenses against Indians and inspect the English fort at Harwich.[7] Leaders of the New England colonies may have valued piety but, sandwiched between French and Dutch territory, they knew the importance of good fortifications and defense and recruited soldiers with experience in Europe with the same vigor as did other business enterprises.

Winthrop took another voyage further east to the Mediterranean. In this trajectory he was joined by thousands of English soldiers, traders, mariners, and travelers. The sea's western kingdoms in France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy were already familiar to English traders, who had opened consulates in Naples and Marseille by 1461 to trade directly with the region, and the English began sporadic trade with the East in the sixteenth century. Western Mediterranean markets contained large and rapidly growing populations of Catholics eager to consume fish on the

[7] Richard S. Dunn, *Puritans and Yankees: The Winthrop Dynasty of New England, 1630–1717* (Princeton, N.J., 1962), 61–62; John Pory to Sir Dudley Carleton, Virginia, Sept. 30, 1619, in William S. Powell, *John Pory, 1572–1636: The Life and Letters of a Man of Many Parts* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1977), 106–9 (quotation, 106).

many fast days their faith required them to observe. English access to cod from the North Atlantic fisheries positioned them to take advantage of this hungry market with the easily dried, preserved, and transported commodity, as portable and high in protein as modern energy bars. But the east remained out of reach during the tumultuous and dangerous decades of Venetian, Habsburg, and Ottoman rivalry in the middle of the sixteenth century, and it was the markets of the east and the relative safety of the years after the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 that enticed the English to return.

If religious obligations created markets of believers keen for fish in the western Mediterranean, religious conflicts offered a powerful impetus for English trade in the east: in 1570 the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth I. This action liberated Protestant English merchants from Catholic prohibitions against trade with Muslims and, when combined with Ottoman demand for armaments in the 1570s for their wars with Persia, led to a propitious mutual interest in trade, culminating in William Harborne's trip to Istanbul in 1578 to initiate formal commercial and diplomatic relations. Among the many valuable commodities the English could offer to the Ottomans was tin, which was a crucial component in casting bronze artillery. With such desirable commodities, the English secured trading privileges from the Turks in 1580. The Levant Company prospered, becoming along with the East India Company one of England's most powerful and profitable overseas trading ventures. Soon the English permeated the Mediterranean region, moving inland from the coastal ports to places such as Aleppo, reached only by caravan.[8] By the middle of the seventeenth century, the English had a number of trading posts abroad. All were served by a steady stream of English ships, numbering in the hundreds in any given year and carrying thousands of merchants, ministers, statesmen, and mariners, all participating in these revitalized trades. They were joined by recreational travelers who were eager to take advantage of the relative safety of the period to visit the region's famous historical and biblical sights.

Though scholarship has turned with new insights to the relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period, largely rejecting the relevance of orientalism for this era, historians have continued to juxtapose Christians and Muslims as if each were a

[8] M. Epstein, *The Early History of the Levant Company* (1908; repr., New York, 1968), 17–19; S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578–1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (Oxford, Eng., 1977), 23; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (Berkeley, Calif., 1995), 1: 612–27.

monolithic category. The experiences of English and Scots traders and travelers, however, point to the complexity and variety of those encounters. Most of these English-speaking travelers were Protestants. They were no safer in the Christian kingdoms of the Mediterranean (which were universally Catholic) than they were in those regions governed by Muslim rulers. Hazards associated with the Muslim east were found in equal measure in the Christian west, and the safest harbor an English traveler could hope for was one where he was able to blend in with the crowd through prevarication and subterfuge. In this period the English reached the region as traders and supplicants for the favors that would permit them access to valued commodities or as travelers whose successful voyages would be secured only by compliance with local norms.[9]

In the Mediterranean thousands of English found their first significant experience with large-scale, long-distance trade in an alien and inhospitable environment, in the Ottoman east and, especially, in the Catholic west. Accommodation, self-abnegation, and deception were crucial survival strategies. The English traveled in local garb. They masked their religion and their nationality, speaking deliberately in languages other than English to avoid drawing attention to themselves. They tried to pass as Catholic. Some even attended Mass, trying to mimic the actions of the worshippers around them and fumbling ineptly with the holy water. Traveling in the western Mediterranean with some Spanish companions, George Sandys openly denied his Protestant faith, declaring to them "that [he] was no *Lutheran*," a strategy that immediately improved the circumstances of his voyage. Henry Blount adopted a similar strategy at one precarious moment in the Mediterranean when he announced that he was a Scot. As Fynes Moryson warned travelers, "He that cannot dissemble, cannot li[v]e."[10]

[9] For an illustration of this trend to emphasize dichotomies in the region, see the first section of Linda Colley's *Captives* (New York, 2002). A significant exception that rejects this world of opposites is Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, New Approaches to European History (Cambridge, 2002). On the importance of rereading early encounters through the prism of assimilation, not conquest, see, for example, Braudel, *Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, 1: 629; Nicholas Canny, "England's New World and the Old, 1480s–1630s," in Canny, *Origins of Empire*, 148–69; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2000). See also Kenneth Parker, *Early Modern Tales of Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London, 1999), 28–29.

[10] [George Sandys], *A Relation of a Iourney begun An: Dom: 1610. Fovre Bookes. Containing a description of the Turkish Empire, of Ægypt, of the Holy Land, of the Remote parts of Italy, and Ilands. Adioyning* (London, 1615), 249; Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Written By Fynes Moryson Gent. First in the Latine Tongue, and Then Translated by him into English* (London, 1617), pt. 3: 29; [Henry Blount], *A Voyage into the Levant. A Breife Relation of a Iourney, lately performed by Master H. B. Gentleman, from* England *by the way of* Venice . . . (London, 1636), 32–33.

This orientation to England's east not only furnishes a different geographic framework for thinking about subsequent English activity in other ocean basins but also, crucially, establishes a different model of interaction with non-English people and points to the varied ways in which the English encountered the world and its inhabitants. If colonial historians often think of Ireland as a formative place in shaping English plantations in America, in the Mediterranean the English learned a very different style of exchange than the bellicose culture of conquest in Ireland.[11]

A focus on people and their travels directs attention to the centrality of trade in prodding English ventures overseas. Early American historians tend to privilege colonization as a dominant style of cultural interaction, but from a global perspective, trade factories and other parasitic forms of settlement (including piracy and plunder) predominated. In this context colonization becomes an outcome requiring explanation, not an ordained certainty, reminding readers that the English envisioned many different possible futures for the western Atlantic. Places that evolved into colonies defined by the transplantation of English settlers and their occupation of land appropriated from indigenous people started off with much more vague goals. Take the example of Virginia. The men who ventured there intended to extract what wealth they could from the region, hoping to install themselves as recipients of tribute from Aztec-styled indigenous tributaries, to find mines to rival Potosí (what proved to be the world's richest silver mine, located in modern Bolivia and discovered by the Spanish in 1544), and to trade. Virginia ultimately developed as a place of English settlement, but in its first few years it adhered more closely to a trade factory model. Such were the hopes of London investors, themselves deeply involved in numerous trading companies. They wanted to establish settlements capable of producing commodities that the English had been required to import from southern Europe, including fruits, dyes, olives, and sugar.[12]

[11] See esp. David Beers Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966); Nicholas P. Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 30, no. 4 (October 1973): 575–98; James Muldoon, "The Indian as Irishman," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 111, no. 4 (October 1975): 267–89. Muldoon approached the connection from the perspective of a medieval historian of Spain and argued that Ireland should play the same explanatory role in studies of English America as the reconquest of the Iberian peninsula has played in studies of the Spanish conquest of America. Muldoon's call for a reconceptualized historiography of English expansion has been enthusiastically answered, as the first volume of Oxford History of the British Empire, with its rich exploration of the internal conquest of the British Isles, makes clear. See Canny, *Origins of Empire*, esp. Canny's introd. and the contribution by Jane H. Ohlmeyer, "'Civilizinge of those rude partes': Colonization within Britain and Ireland, 1580s–1640s," 124–47.

[12] James Horn, "The Conquest of Eden: Possession and Dominion in Early Virginia," in *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World*, ed. Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia, 2005), 31.

Trade was important not only to sustain the enterprise but also to legitimate it. William Strachey justified trade with the Indians in 1612 by comparing such trade with England's "rich and necessary Trades into *Turkey*, and the *East Indies*." Moreover he wanted English rights to this new land to be acquired properly, through purchase. "Every foote of Land which we shall take [u]nto our [u]se, we will bargayne and buy of them for copper, hatchetts, and such like commodityes," which the Indians could sell to their neighbors. Trade justified English presence in the region and legitimated their access to foreign territory—theirs not through theft but through exchange. John Smith's accounts describe his own preoccupation with trade as he traveled the country exchanging commodities. He compared his labors (unfavorably) to those of the Muscovy Company factors in Russia. The Virginia Company echoed the culture of the trade factories in designating an individual its "cape merchant."[13]

To smooth trade relations, the English in Virginia adopted strategies central to trading culture. As they did to facilitate trade in India, Indonesia, Japan, the Ottoman Empire, Portugal, and elsewhere around the globe, the English placed boys in local communities to learn languages. These boys could serve as hostages to good English behavior (if the English cared about the fate of the children), but the policy was also consistent with trade practices. English merchants sent apprentices as young as thirteen to live in foreign countries such as the Low Countries, Portugal, or even India to master trade languages. The purpose was not cultural exchange and assimilation—the English worried that children living in Portuguese households might convert to Catholicism—but rather the acquisition of language skills and cultural knowledge that might further commercial relations. The English also pursued another strategy common in trade factories, that of cultural assimilation and commercial advantage through sexual alliances. The marriage between John Rolfe and Pocahontas illustrates that path. The English had at least two models of sexual alliance available to them in their American adventures. They could adhere to the familiar model of the trade factory, firmly established at entrepôts in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, where men pursued informal or formal, long-term or

[13] William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund (London, 1953), 18, 26. For Smith's early trading enterprises, see "Between 10 September and early December, 1608. Captain John Smith to the Treasurer and Council of Virginia, London," in Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter, 1606–1609* . . . , Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 243. For references to "cape merchant," see "20 November 1606. Instructions for Government," in Barbour, *Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter*, 1: 41; Wesley Frank Craven, *Dissolution of the Virginia Company: The Failure of a Colonial Experiment* (New York, 1932), 51.

short-term sexual alliances for companionship, advantageous family connections, and practical benefits. Or they could emulate the Spanish model of marriage to indigenous women of noble families for diplomatic and strategic purposes. These Spanish marriages were characteristic of the first generation of Spanish invasion. When Spanish women finally started to migrate to the Americas, Spanish men dispensed with their legal marriages to powerful Indian women and married other Spaniards instead. Some of Smith's friends apparently suggested the latter possibility when they proposed an alliance with Pocahontas to "[make] himself a king." Smith, however, understood the Powhatan inheritance system and knew that he would gain no right to territory through such a marriage. Governor Dale apparently entertained this idea as well. Ralph Hamor, a colonist and officeholder, described his own mission to persuade Powhatan to marry another daughter to Dale. The daughter, it turned out, was already married, like Dale himself. Despite Hamor's suggestion that she be reclaimed from her marriage for this envisioned and, to him, superior English match, Powhatan demurred, replying that the English already had one of his children. Had Dale succeeded in his second marriage, he would have resembled the Englishman William Adams in Japan, who married there despite his marriage in England and provided for his two families in his will.[14]

Informal sexual alliances are by nature difficult to trace in Virginia records. East India Company and Levant Company traders may have written frankly about their partners, prostitutes, and children, but the Virginia visitors and residents were not similarly candid, though such unions certainly existed. Strachey's extensive vocabulary lists offer historians a clue: one phrase he included was "to lye with a woman." Another hint comes from a 1612 letter written to Philip III by the Spanish ambassador in London, who heard news from "a friend, who tells me the truth," about affairs in Virginia. Some of the men in Virginia were

[14] The Spanish conquistadors had quickly established this pattern of using indigenous women from noble families to cement their authority at the top of preconquest hierarchies. Cortés arranged five successive marriages for Tecuichpotzin, the daughter of Moctezuma (and renamed Doña Isabel by the Spanish), to bolster Spanish authority over the toppled Aztec empire (Donald E. Chipman, *Moctezuma's Children: Aztec Royalty under Spanish Rule, 1520–1700* [Austin, Tex., 2005], chap. 2). On the possibility of Smith's own marriage to Pocahontas, see John Smith, "A Map of Virginia. With a Description of the Covntrey, the Commodities, People, Government and Religion . . . ," in Barbour, *Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter*, 2: 458–59; Helen C. Rountree, *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown* (Charlottesville, Va., 2005), 142. On Dale's envisioned marriage, see [Ralph] Hamor, *A Trve Discovrse of the Present Estate of Virginia, and the successe of the affaires there till the 18 of* Iune. *1614 . . .* (London, 1615), 40–42.

thinking of marrying Indian women, he reported, and some forty or fifty were already married. He was obviously incorrect about the number of marriages but might well have been accurate about the English pursuit of Indian women. He also reported that the cleric Alexander Whitaker was critical of the promiscuous behavior of the men at Jamestown.[15]

Rolfe's interest in marriage followed a pattern that the English rarely adhered to in Virginia, though English traders elsewhere found numerous advantages to establishing sexual alliances with indigenous women. But Rolfe's conviction that marriage was a desirable and viable arrangement points to the importance of restoring the context of trade factories to the history of Atlantic settlements. It is obviously absurd to argue that sexual alliances necessarily led to harmonious relations between people of different cultures, particularly when these encounters were embedded in asymmetrical power relations, as was the case, for example, for enslaved women and their masters or overseers. Yet in those many instances in the early seventeenth century when the English reached outposts as a weak and dependent population, sexual relations supplied an entrée to unfamiliar societies and a quick way to learn about the languages, cultures, and customs that would expedite trade and diplomacy. In Virginia the English were weak, and there was a real possibility that sexual alliances might further a dynamic more akin to that of the trade factory.

Colonization might ultimately have proved to be a defining trait of English ventures in many parts of the Atlantic, but that outcome should not obscure the importance of trade in the first century of exploration and exploitation from the casual exchanges of mariners along the North American coast in the sixteenth century through the 1620s. Set within a global context, English enterprises around the world were dictated by trading concerns, and North America did not necessarily have to be any different, though it is clear that indigenous economies and disease environments imposed important constraints on English behavior and acquisitiveness, whether in Aleppo, Surat, or Jamestown. Trade failed in Virginia for numerous reasons, including the absence of marketable goods.

[15] Strachey, *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, 192. On English sexual interest in Indian women, see Camilla Townsend, *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma: An American Portrait* (New York, 2004), 112; Flores [Zuñiga] to Philip III, in Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States: A Narrative of the Movement in England, 1605–1616, which Resulted in the Plantation of North America by Englishmen . . .* ([1890]; repr., Bowie, Md., 1994), 2: 572–73 (quotation, 572). Interest in Indian women was hardly unique to Virginia. The planters of Providence Island proposed to their employers in London that they bring Indian women to the island. The company rejected this scheme (Letter to Captain Bell, Apr. 20, 1635, in Public Record Office, Colonial Office 124/1, fol. 77r).

Attention to people reveals the repeated efforts of the English to transport models of cultural interaction devised in one ocean basin to another. By looking at the global visions of participants in different schemes, historians can see the unlimited imagination and ambition with which merchants and others pursued paths to profit. Scholars can also recapture the intertwined relationship between history and geography: the chronological order in which the English encountered different parts of the world mattered, encouraging men to transport models from one place to another and often hindering new settlements as a result. If historians have dichotomized not only the globe but also the style of commercial encounters expected in different places, these seventeenth-century globetrotters had no comparable rigidity in their thinking. They sought, for example, to plant colonies in places historians have come to view as regions dominated by trade factories in the seventeenth century.

In the 1640s the English tried twice to settle colonies on Madagascar, a place they knew as an important supply station for fleets bound for the East Indies. Both ventures were shaped by Atlantic and Caribbean models. Envisioned as a supply colony, the first settlement, at Augustine Bay on Madagascar's southwest coast at the mouth of the Onilahy River between the modern cities of Toliara and Anakao, was populated by men, women, and children; four babies were born on the long voyage out. The second settlement, near the island of Nosy Be off Madagascar's northwest coast, known as Assada in the seventeenth century and now a popular tourist destination, was envisioned as a sugar plantation. The first ship to Assada carried an engine for sugar production and a former Caribbean governor to rule the settlement. Promoters drew deliberately on English activities in the Atlantic to point to the relative advantages of Madagascar and to benefit from prior experience. William Monson, an English admiral, noted the strategic value and convenience of a colony on Madagascar compared with the inconveniences of settlement in America. He praised the people, preferring their "more civiller conversation and humane behaviour" to those of the Indians of America. Monson also identified advantages for trade. He insisted that this settlement plan be compared with American plantations "without partiality" and complained that American settlements were too scattered to be able to assist each other with defense. In his mind Madagascar was a viable, even preferable, option.[16]

[16] William Monson, "Advice how to plant the Island of Madagascar, or St. Lawrence, the greatest Island in the World, and a part of Africa," in M. Oppenheim, ed., *The Naval Tracts of Sir William Monson in Six Books Edited with a Commentary Drawn from the State Papers and Other Original Sources by M. Oppenheim*, *Publications of the Navy Records Society* 45 (1913): 434–39 (quotations, 437–38).

Monson's pamphlet of 1640 supplied a crucial transition for Madagascar's advocates, whose ambitions had been shaped primarily by rivalry with the East India Company. Monson took the idea of plantation, refracted it through American experiences, and used the comparison to illustrate the advantages of Madagascar. Though the English remained aware of the helpful model of Batavia, the large Dutch trading post in Indonesia, the presence of American comparisons circumscribed expectations in important ways that contributed to colonial failures. Actual settlements were ultimately shaped by inappropriately applied Atlantic and Caribbean models. If Monson's tract first suggested a new Atlantic frame of reference, three promotional works made explicit references to American colonies. They recommended, for example, avoiding the adversarial relations with indigenous people that characterized Virginia, particularly in the wake of the 1644 attack along the York and Pamunkey rivers. They prodded colonial investors to entice settlers overseas with promises of headrights, or grants of land to people who funded the transportation of any individual to the colony. Caribbean enterprises also offered models. Trinidad, only recently open to the English for trade, gave its inhabitants "freedome of customes," which the merchant Richard Boothby advocated to encourage plantation on Madagascar. Boothby also invoked Trinidad to inspire timorous readers, who might have been daunted by the power of the Sakalava or by European rivals. As the adventurers of Trinidad overcame their fears of the Spanish presence, so too should the English who journeyed to the Indian Ocean.[17]

[17] Wa[lter] Hamond, *A Paradox. Prooving, That the Inhabitants of the Isle called Madagascar, or St. Lawrence (in Temporall things) are the happiest People in the World . . .* (London, 1640); Walter Hamond, *Madagascar, The Richest and most Frvitfvll Island in the World . . .* (London, 1643); Richard Boothby, *A Breife Discovery or Description of the most Famous Island of Madagascar or St. Lavrence in Asia neare unto East-India . . .* (London, 1646), on headrights, 61, on Virginia attack, 18, on Trinidad, 61–64, quotation, 62. Powle Waldegrave refuted the comparison with the people of Virginia. Even the enemy the English encountered in Madagascar was different from the open enemy of Virginia. The English, Spanish, and Portuguese did well against such a clear enemy, but the people of the bay were crafty: they would trap the English with promises and with "heathenish Rhetorique and circumstances" yet would try to kill or starve their European visitors (Waldegrave, *An answer to Mr Boothbies Book, of the Description of the Island of Madagascar. In Vindication of the Honorable Society of Merchants trading to East-India, from the many Aspersions laid upon them by the said Boothbie* [London, 1649], 24). Waldegrave attacked the use of headrights. He thought men might be deceived; the voyage was so long to Madagascar and the expense of transporting goods so great that men who paid their own way would find promises to be empty. What worked for Virginia would not, he insisted, work for Madagascar (ibid.). On the expansion of the Sakalava in this period, see Raymond K. Kent, *Early Kingdoms in Madagascar, 1500–1700* (New York, 1970).

The English brought with them to the Indian Ocean in the 1640s several decades of experience trading there in addition to their familiarity with trade and settlement in other parts of the world, particularly the Caribbean and Atlantic. The Indian Ocean in the seventeenth century shared important features with the Caribbean, so perhaps it seemed plausible to the English that they might apply the lessons learned from experiences in one basin to another. Both ocean basins were characterized by the presence of several competing European nations, including the Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and English. Yet within each region, European powers conducted themselves differently. Europeans ventured to the Indian Ocean primarily as traders. Successful trade required insinuation into local networks and accommodation to local mores. Though Europeans fought with each other, they had to be careful in dealings with indigenous people, whose alliances and support promised the wealth that had initially attracted European traders to the region. In the Caribbean Europeans jostled for territory, primacy, and goods. They turned the region into their own battleground and by the middle of the seventeenth century these endemic rivalries could be carried out without inconvenient concerns about the political interests of dwindling indigenous populations. But the English, French, and Dutch had also learned to tread carefully as latecomers to a region claimed by Spain. Walter Hamond was surely thinking of this constraint when he remarked that the English who settled on Madagascar would not have to worry about the opposition of the king of Spain, who "hath too many Irons in the fire already" to be bothered with the English there.[18]

When Europeans traveled from one ocean basin to another, they had to adapt to the different cultures within each. Their inability or reluctance to do so could spell disaster for colonial settlements. In the first settlement at Augustine Bay, adversarial styles adapted from Caribbean and Atlantic experiences contributed to colonial failure; in the second colonial effort off Assada, a dream of replicating Barbados off the coast of Madagascar disappeared along with the first group of planters themselves. And when the second venture failed, lost as so many earlier colonial efforts had been, one man who chased after the colonists fumed at the easy abandonment of the venture. "Had those who are to bee honoured for planting, Virginia, & S. Christopher, deserted them upon such slender grounds," Captain Blackman later recalled, "I believe wee had not had at this Day a Plantation in America."[19] For Blackman the links between East and West Indies were obvious and informative.

[18] Hamond, *Paradox*, B4v.

[19] Robert Hunt, *The Island of Assada, Neere Madagascar Impartially defined, being a succint, yet Plenary Discription of the Situation, Fertility and People therein*

Yet for all the difficulties of transporting experiences from one ocean basin to another, new ventures continued to be conceptualized in terms of the anticipated portability of oceanic cultures. English ambitions for Tangier, acquired by Charles II with Catherine of Braganza's dowry, reveal expectations about colonization and trade on a global scale. By the 1660s the English had acquired a range of overseas experiences through colonial and commercial enterprises. If Mediterranean styles of accommodation and dissimulation were once exported with English traders around the globe, patterns of interaction developed elsewhere could similarly be transported back to the Mediterranean. Tangier ultimately became an important naval base and commercial port for the English, its value symbolized by a massive breakwater armed with cannon whose construction and maintenance proved a steady English preoccupation. But before English officials determined the city's strategic and economic role, one enthusiastic supporter of Tangier, an Englishman named James Wilson, had proposed an elaborate colonization scheme for the city and its hinterland. Wilson readily conceded the commercial opportunities that the city afforded, but his plan was broadly strategic and colonial and in that respect consistent with the strategic vision that Charles II brought to his overseas holdings. His scheme responded to the colonial experiences of English competitors in the Americas and the commercial power of rivals to the East. Wilson believed that Tangier offered two benefits: it could thwart Spanish power and it could prevent the Portuguese and the Dutch from defeating the English in trade with Europe or the East Indies. But to secure the status of the town, Wilson not only advocated the construction of fortifications and a mole, a point on which most agreed, but also insisted on the necessity of colonization. This enterprise would entail the aggressive recruitment of men and women to settle there, following a model that by 1661 had become increasingly common in the Atlantic, as the forced relocations of the Western Design and the resettlement of Ireland under Oliver Cromwell revealed.[20]

The scale of Wilson's ambitions was considerable: if one-third of the population of Scotland ventured to Tangier it would be no loss for the king, who derived little benefit from that kingdom, but a great gain for Tangier. The recruitment of Protestants from the continent, facilitated

Inhabiting. Clearely demonstrating to the Adventurer or Planter, the right way for disposing his Adventure . . . (London, [1650]). The search for survivors is detailed in Captain Blackman's relation of his voyage to the East India Company, Jan. 14, 1651/2, from Swally Marina, in British Library, E/3/22, fol. 275v.

[20] See, for example, the journal of John Luke, who reported regularly on viewing the mole and on the status of repairs to the mole during his time in Tangier from 1670 to 1673 (British Library, Add. MSS 36,528).

by royal agents established for that purpose, would further bolster the town's prospects, and Wilson envisioned assimilation of these foreigners into "good english men" in the space of one generation. Wilson was adamant on the necessity of including women, whom he regarded as important for cultural reasons, their presence rendering Englishmen more tractable and preventing their scandalous recourse to "wemen of the country." Proximity and a familiar climate boded well for this venture; they would, Wilson argued, make it more profitable than either the East or West Indies. He even assured the king of a silver mine to rival Potosí. For Wilson Tangier was embedded in a vision of England's relations with a wider world. He imagined the creation of the free port as part of a process of "perfecting the worke of makeing our nation masters when not of all yet of the greates parte of the comerce of the world."[21] Wilson envisioned a line of English settlement that stretched from Tripoli all the way down the west coast of Africa; he pictured a European settlement on the model of the North American coast, mirrored directly across the Atlantic on the African coast and characterized by loosely contiguous pockets of English settlement. Models derived from English activities around the world shaped new ventures, which bore the accumulated burden not only of prior experience but also of geography.

A focus on these globetrotters reaffirms the special importance of such individuals in the organization and conceptualization of English commercial and colonial activity. The English engaged the world in a distinctive way that was a product of royal strategies, fiscal constraints, and political and military weakness. In this respect they were unlike their Spanish and Portuguese rivals and predecessors. Iberian institutions, from municipal councils to legal systems to the Catholic Church, followed Spanish and Portuguese traders, conquerors, and colonists around the globe. In contrast, the English Crown pursued its global enterprises through joint-stock companies funded by private investors with royal monopolies. This strategy of financing expensive and risky overseas ventures from India to America not only had financial implications but also introduced a different method of empire building. Apart from essential royal monopolies, English investment companies were free to create

[21] The quotations are drawn from James Wilson to [?], Oct. 5, 1661, in British Library, Add. MSS 4191, fols. 11–14. Wilson anticipated the recruitment schemes of the Jersey and Pennsylvania plantations in North America, which similarly relied on continental pietists to settle land. E. M. G. Routh cites another version of this proposal in British Library, Harl. MSS 1595, in which the author is anonymous (Routh, *Tangier: England's Lost Atlantic Outpost, 1661–1684* [London, 1912], 21).

their own worlds overseas, and this latitude permitted an astonishing range of colonial and commercial experiments. The Dutch, like the English, pursued their ventures through private enterprise; the similarities between these two nations in their strategies for geopolitical advantage were remarkable, with the Dutch often showing the English how to adapt to new circumstances, whether learning how to cultivate sugar cane or how to dine Japanese style in Hirado. But by the end of the seventeenth century, the English had surpassed even the Dutch in the extent of their global commercial, colonial, and extractive ventures. Their ability to do so depended largely on a much vaster supply of men available for overseas ventures and the state's willingness to harness subjects for imperial ends, a policy that emerged in the 1650s.

At the center of this vigorous global expansion were individuals who took part in commercial and colonial ventures around the globe. The travels and experiences of these people offered a new style of empire building. The English Empire was not constructed and shaped at the imperial center. Rather it was an empire built on the ground, in the peripheries, in colonies and trade factories, on islands and in port towns, aboard ships and within fortifications. It was an empire whose ultimate configuration depended not on the coherent vision imposed by a monarch or the Board of Trade but instead on the experiences of men who lived around the globe in a series of overseas experiments. Models devised in different colonial and commercial settings were subsequently adapted and transported around the globe by men whose travels tangibly linked one enterprise to another. By the time the British Crown (in the form first of Cromwell and later of Charles II) turned in the mid-seventeenth century to administering this patchwork of private enterprises, imposing an umbrella of commercial regulations that aspired to establish uniformity on diverse ventures, such commonality as existed derived from the ways in which experienced personnel had adapted successful models in different and new environments and had accumulated the knowledge and expertise that shaped these endeavors.

If the Atlantic is often a logical unit of analysis, it can also be an artificial one, yoking together some places that might not be happily joined and segregating far-flung places that might shed light on each other. Though historians may limit themselves to a single oceanic basin, inhabitants of the early modern world did not. Looking at these different colonial and commercial ventures as discrete experiments within the context of a single ocean basin erases the connections that contemporaries made and understood and that informed and sometimes doomed successive ventures. When it comes to early modern overseas enterprises, any single ocean basin is too small to explain the complexity of the processes at work, much less the outcomes.