CONNECTED HISTORIES IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

Edited by Nandini Das

Lives in Transit in Early Modern England

Identity and Belonging

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Connected Histories in the Early Modern World

Connected Histories in the Early Modern World contributes to our growing understanding of the connectedness of the world during a period in history when an unprecedented number of people—Africans, Asians, Americans, and Europeans—made transoceanic or other long distance journeys. Inspired by Sanjay Subrahmanyam's innovative approach to early modern historical scholarship, it explores topics that highlight the cultural impact of the movement of people, animals, and objects at a global scale. The series editors welcome proposals for monographs and collections of essays in English from literary critics, art historians, and cultural historians that address the changes and cross-fertilizations of cultural practices of specific societies. General topics may concern, among other possibilities: cultural confluences, objects in motion, appropriations of material cultures, cross-cultural exoticization, transcultural identities, religious practices, translations and mistranslations, cultural impacts of trade, discourses of dislocation, globalism in literary/visual arts, and cultural histories of lesser studied regions (such as the Philippines, Macau, African societies).

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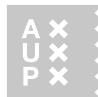

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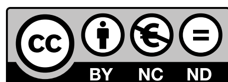

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Introduction

At the end of a long, bone-jarring taxi-ride from Panaji, the modern capital of the state of Goa in western India, there is a small, secluded, white building. During the monsoon rains it is surrounded by exuberant greenery, lush and overwhelming, and the salute of a hundred croaking frogs greets visitors as they dash from the road to shelter under the building's covered portico. This is the site of the seminary at Rachol, one of the earliest training colleges for Jesuit missionaries in Asia, established in the late sixteenth century to aid their efforts to convert the inhabitants of Portuguese-held Goa and the larger Portuguese empire in the Indies. It is still an active seminary, though no longer run by the Jesuits. In the late sixteenth century, Tomás Estevão or Padre Estevam was a familiar presence among its corridors and courtyards, first as its rector, and then as the principal Jesuit priest in charge of the local province of Salsette. Much of his proficiency in the local languages was likely to have been cultivated here, from the fluid, poetic verses of classical Marathi, to the salty, fishy, musical rhythms of Konkani, the colloquial language of Goa's markets and ports, teeming with locals and travellers, the fishermen on their boats, and the women at home.

It is safe to assume that his *Kristapurana*, or 'Life of Christ' – a huge 11,000 verse epic, published in 1616 after years of importuning the Jesuit Superior General, Claudio Acquaviva – would have found its way here, printed in Roman rather than Devanagari characters since movable type for the latter was yet to be developed. Padre Estevam's involvement makes this book the first Christian epic to be written and printed by an English poet, fifty years before John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, because behind his Portuguese sounding name was a very English identity. The man whom the seminary knew as Padre Estevam was the first documented English traveller to arrive in India, otherwise known as Thomas Stephens, of Wiltshire. A Catholic religious exile from England, he had reached Goa by way of Rome and Lisbon in 1579. His arrival had coincided with a time when the more tolerant policies of cultural intermingling that had been practised by the Portuguese in India for the best part of a century were changing under new governance. The establishment of the Goan Inquisition in 1567 and associated edicts took a firm stance against local religions and cultures, proscribing the use of traditional sites of worship, and banning the use of indigenous languages and customs, from the singing of folk songs, to the cooking of rice. Stephens's *Kristapurana* opens with a plea. 'You have removed the previous religious books', a local Brahmin importunes the narrator, the 'Patri-guru' (padre-guru), 'so why

do you not prepare other such books for us?' He will do it, he promises, but it will take some time: 'mnhanati eke divasi romanagri / ubhavali nahim' (Rome was not built in a day). A Wiltshire voice with a very English turn of phrase glimmers across two continents and three languages.[1]

The *Kristapurana* is therefore that curious thing, a transcultural epic, with its Konkani syllables precariously fixed in Roman characters at a Portuguese Jesuit press, and the life of Christ captured in the form of a Hindu *purana*. An English Catholic, on enforced exile from the land and language of his birth, becomes its speaking voice. He is accosted by the new Christians of a foreign land whose language, religion, and culture he himself was helping to erase. The roles played by Stephens and his epic in the history of early modern Goa align them clearly with the exercise of European colonial power, although to stop there would be to tell only part of the story. Both are also products of a series of encounters that speak across European cultures, between Asian and European elements, between printed and oral traditions. The *Kristapurana*'s attempt to make the biblical story available in cheap print, undertaken by an English Jesuit priest educated in Rome, would be difficult to imagine without the context both of Protestant printing and secret post-Reformation recusant presses. Its identification as a *purana*, a holy narrative that fits within a rich existing Sanskrit and Marathi culture, is notably different from contemporaneous Jesuit missionary activity elsewhere, such as in Japan. Perhaps most important is the final twist in its history: the *Kristapurana*'s lyrical praise of the Marathi language meant that the poem would be recited for centuries by Catholics of western India as a mark of resistance against European colonial rule.

Thomas Stephens is one of the twenty-four 'lives in transit' examined in this volume. Together, the questions they raise are simple. In a period marked by mobility, both enforced and voluntary, what did it mean to belong, or not to belong? What did it mean to move between cultures, countries, languages, and faiths? How were such figures perceived, and what effect did movement across borders and between spaces have on notions of identity and belonging? *Lives in Transit in Early Modern England* emerges from the collaborative work of 'Travel, Transculturality, and Identity in England, c.1550–1700' (TIDE), an interdisciplinary project funded by the

1 Thomas Stephens, *Kristapurana. Part I*. trans. Nelson Falcao (Mauritius: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2017), p. 21. For a modern edition of the Marathi original, see *The Christian Puránna of Father Thomas Stephens of the Society of Jesus: A Work of the 17th Century: Reproduced from Manuscript Copies and Edited with a Biographical Note, an Introduction, an English Synopsis of Contents and Vocabulary*, ed. Joseph L. Saldanha (Bolar, Mangalore: Simon Alvares, 1907).

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European Research Council between 2016–2022. Although a standalone volume, it compliments TIDE's previous publication, *Keywords of Identity, Race, and Human Mobility in Early Modern England* (2021).[2] That volume, as its title acknowledges, was modelled on Raymond Williams's *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). Taking a syncretic and diachronic lens to the language and terminology around identity, race, and belonging in the period, it uncovered complex histories of usage that still resonate today. *Lives in Transit* offers examples of this complexity in action. In a period of travel, expansion, imperial ambition, and emergent colonial violence, its essays draw our attention to border-crossers and cultural go-betweens whose lives and interventions challenged and stretched the ways in which the early modern English made sense of difference, belonging, and their place in the world.

The argument for delving into such microhistories of individual lives has been made before. Natalie Zemon Davis's *Trickster Travels: The Search for Leo Africanus* and Sanjay Subrahmanyam's *Three Ways to be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World* are perhaps the most representative exemplars of an approach that has increasingly demanded our attention over the last two decades, interrogating early modern negotiations with belonging and identity on the one hand, and our own methods of knowledge production and navigating the limitations of archival presence on the other.[3] Zemon Davis describes her eponymous 'trickster' – al-Hasan al-Wazzan or John Leo Africanus, the North African diplomat and traveller captured by Spanish pirates in 1518 and presented to the Pope – as an 'extreme case'. Most sixteenth-century North Africans, after all, managed to live their lives unimpeded by extended capture and exile, and few of those captured went on to produce such a defining text as al-Wazzan's *Description of Africa* would be for European encounters with that continent. Yet extreme cases, she argues, 'can often reveal patterns available for more everyday experience and writing', and al-Wazzan allows us an opportunity to 'explore how a man moved between different polities, made use of different cultural and social resources, and entangled or separated them so as to survive, discover, write, make relationships, and think about society and himself'.[4] For Leo Africanus, as for many scholars of the early modern world to follow, the

2 Nandini Das, João Vicente Melo, Haig Smith, and Lauren Working, *Keywords of Identity, Race, and Human Mobility in Early Modern England* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021).
3 Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels*: *The Search for Leo Africanus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006; London: Faber and Faber, 2007). Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to be an Alien* (Chicago: Brandeis University Press, 2011).
4 Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels*, p.11.

kind of flexibility that survival in such a world demanded is exemplified by Amphibia, the 'wily bird' of the animal fable that Africanus shares with his readers. Amphibia lived as well with the fish in the sea, as with the birds in the sky, and Africanus's account wryly admits to his own attempts to emulate her slippery example: 'all men doe most affect that place, where they finde least damage and inconvenience. For mine owne part, when I heare the Africans evill spoken of, I wil affirme my selfe to be one of Granada: and when I perceive the nation of Granada to be discommended, then will I professe my selfe to be an African'.[5] Africanus's Amphibia is the motif of the TIDE logo, which has inspired the cover images of both *Keywords of Identity* and the present volume.

Subrahmanyam would argue that there is more to microhistory than illustrative exemplarity. His volume opens with the testimony of an obscure sixteenth-century Berber adventurer, Sidi Yahya-u-Ta'fuft, allowing us to approach the implications of Amphibia's slipperiness from another perspective, one that illuminates her perpetual difference: 'The Moors say I am a Christian, and the Christians say I am a Moor, and so I hang in balance without knowing what I should do with myself'.[6] As Subrahmayam notes, a historian could ask a number of pertinent questions about such a figure and his lament, in order to justify affording him a place within a macroscopic understanding of the period in which he lived.

> How typical or unusual are he and his situation, and why should this matter to us? What are the larger processes that define the historical matrix within which the trajectory of such an individual can or should be read, and how meaningful is it to insist constantly on the importance of such broad processes?[7]

Yet such macroscopic approaches, Subrahmanyam argues, can afford only 'limited insights into what might have been the lived world of such a man'.[8]

Attending to border-crossers and figures caught in between cultures, languages, and faiths such as al-Wazzan or Yahya (or indeed the figures presented in this volume), demands a conflation of both approaches: a deep attention to the texture of an individual life, and an acknowledgement of the

5 Leo Africanus, *The History and Description of Africa*, ed. Robert Brown, trans. John Pory, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 189–190.

6 Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways*, p. 1.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

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global connections and movements of this period, which in themselves defy neat geographical and national categories. Yet bridging that gap between the microhistories of individual lives and the macrohistory of global movements is not without its own dangers. Miles Ogborn's *Global Lives* acknowledges the challenge of finding a way 'between the opposite perils of tokenism … and exceptionalism', while John Paul Ghobrial has warned of the temptation that lies in 'our rush to populate global history with human faces': 'a risk of producing a set of caricatures, a chain of global lives whose individual contexts and idiosyncrasies dissolve too easily into the ether of connectedness'.[9] Ghobrial's own work on the seventeenth-century figure of Elias of Babylon, whose life took him from his native Iraq to travel widely across Europe and the Spanish colonies in the New world, has illuminated how often Elias's life and actions were haunted, not so much by his wandering, as by the home he had left behind and by the post-Reformation fate of Eastern Christian communities. 'When seen through the eyes of his contemporaries and his descendants', Ghobrial observes, 'the global life of Elias pales in comparison to the local significance he had within his community as an early convert to Catholicism'.[10] Equally significant is Ania Loomba's caveat about another danger that haunts the 'ether of connectedness', namely its tendency to privilege connection over coercion when we emphasise England's relatively insecure place as a global colonial presence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. 'While it is important to eschew anachronistic formulations about early colonialism', she argues, 'to divorce the histories of trade and colonialism is to obfuscate the dynamic of both'.[11] To acknowledge the link between the two

> is not to occlude the sprawling and differentiated global stories that fed into it nor to suggest that such a modernity was always already waiting to be born, but, in fact, to foreground difficult questions about the historical processes and global relations through which this modernity came into being.[12]

Fifteen years since the publication of Zemon-Davis's *Trickster Travels*, Zoltán Biedermann's recent essay on '(Dis)connected History and the Multiple

9 Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 11; John-Paul Ghobrial, 'The Secret Life of *Elias* of Babylon and the Uses of. Global Microhistory', *Past and Present* 222 (2014), pp. 51–93 (59). See also John-Paul Ghobrial, 'Introduction: Seeing the World Like a Microhistorian' and other essays in *Past & Present*, 342 (2019), pp. 1–22.

10 Ghobrial, 'Secret life', p. 89.

11 Ania Loomba, 'Early Modern or Early Colonial?' *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 14:1 (2014), pp. 143–148 (146).

12 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

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Narratives of Global Early Modernity' has returned our attention to this fundamental problem with finding our way through the complicated world that our subjects inhabited, and which we, as early modernists and scholars, attempt to navigate with varying degrees of success. Biedermann's elegant formulation makes a case for attending as carefully to breakdowns of communication, to narratives of disowning and distancing, as much as to narratives of exchange. As he argues, 'Entanglements, entwinements, crossed gazes, and acts of interweaving all have come with remarkably soft associations for a history deeply marked by violence'.[13] Yet at the same time, foregrounding that violence alone would return us to a form of historiography that reads the early modern period as 'one long and sinister buildup to European global hegemony, with all non-European agency reduced to impotency, survivance, or resistance'.[14] How does a scholar of the early modern world proceed in such circumstances? Biedermann argues for an acknowledgement that throughout this period narratives of connection and disconnection, exchange and violence, were less easy to disentangle than we might think. They emerge often as synchronic aspects of the same historical moment. Disconnection, he suggests, 'is not the result of something happening to connections. It is a possibility embedded in connections. It is the result of the fact that a connection establishes a link between two nonidentical entities'.[15] There is a danger in such a formulation, admittedly, of normalising disconnection and the history of violence that it often carries with it. Yet its reminder of the concurrent nature of connection and disconnection is a crucial one, which is borne out repeatedly by the twenty-four men and women who occupy the pages of this volume.

The subjects of the essays in this collection, although far from comprehensive in representing the various types of individuals caught up in both forced and voluntary movement in this period, are drawn from a wide range of professions, nationalities, and preoccupations. Their ways into and out of England were determined by multiple imperatives. The volume divides them into four groups. Some acted either directly or indirectly as agents and representatives of state, such as the notoriously cunning Spanish ambassador to King James's court, Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, count of Gondomar (1567–1626), or James's own wife and consort, Anna of Denmark (1574–1619), who appear in Section I: 'In and out of the state'. Others who

13 Zoltán Biedermann, '(Dis)connected History and the Multiple Narratives of Global Early Modernity', *Modern Philology* (2021) 119:1, pp. 13–32 (24).

14 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

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appear in Sections II and III ('Intellectual Exchange' and 'Conversions and Conversations'), were defined by the networks of information and religious forces that shaped encounters between England and the world throughout this period, and whose presence helped to define those same encounters in their turn. Many of those in focus in Section IV ('Managing Liminality') illuminate both the potential and the problems that haunted such transcultural lives, and that continue to inflect our historiographical approaches today. Such categorisations are neither exclusive not singular. However, across the board, they draw attention respectively to four major domains in which English responses to matters of identity and belonging were debated, negotiated, and modelled: state and court, learning, the Church, and everyday negotiations and popular culture. Those groupings illuminate certain continuities and patterns in the strategies to which individual lives bear witness, but they are also invitations to readers to interrogate such categories and offer their own.

Often juxtapositions across and within the sections prove illuminating. Jane Dormer, the English-born Duchess of Feria (1538–1612) and Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza (1566–1614), the would-be Spanish Catholic martyr who annoyed and bemused her English interlocutors, appear in Sections I and III respectively, but both provide striking examples of the ways in which the social status of aristocratic women facilitated both agency and mobility in ways not available to many of their poorer counterparts. On a different level, a comparison of the abundance of information available on Catherine of Braganza (1638–1705) and the striking lack of records about Esther Gentili (d.1649) reminds us of the fundamental role that was played by class and social status not only in enabling or shaping the limits of mobility, but also in preserving its historical traces. Other pairs, such as the sailor and adventurer, Anthony Knivet (1577–1649), and the Oxford scholar and linguist, Edward Pococke (1604–1691), or alternately, Aletheia Howard, Countess of Arundel (1585–1654), and Virginia Ferrar (1627–1688), appear within the same section as individuals in their own right, but also illuminate the implicit workings of gender and class when read against each other. There is seemingly little in common between the Elizabethan translator and writer of Italian descent, John Florio (c.1552–1625), and the indefatigable Scottish exile, John Durie/Dury (1596–1680), whose attempts to broker a Protestant union in northern Europe brought him into the circuit of some of the principal intellectual and political figures of the times. Yet the lives of both speak to a certain restless fluidity of language and origin, and of intellectual and interpersonal networks that connected post-Reformation England to developments in continental Europe.

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As Florio's complicated and deeply uneasy negotiation of his Italian birth and claims to Englishness illustrates, for many such figures, the in-betweenness that defined them was both an outcome of the porosity of global boundaries in this period, and an identity that served at the same time to strengthen the conceptual and linguistic boundaries that circumscribed their lives and actions. With some, such as Roderigo Lopez (c.1525–1594), the Protestant doctor of Jewish-Portuguese descent who opens the final section (Section IV: 'Managing Liminality'), or Corey the Saldanian (d. c.1627) who closes it, we are reminded of the very real violence through which the exercise of such boundaries could operate. Lopez's alleged treason, which became fodder for Elizabethan gossip and xenophobia and ultimately cost him his life, and Corey's apparent disregard for European civilisation, fuelled by deep homesickness under East India Company captivity, are reminders of the ways in which the fundamental definitions of what constituted a naturalised citizen or a traitor, a savage or a barbarian, were evolving under the pressure of the presence of people like them in early modern England.

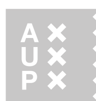
Finding the archival evidence of such lives challenges the narrative impulse of historiography repeatedly. Tracing the footsteps of Elias of Babylon across multiple languages and documentary traditions, Ghobrial strikingly equates his enterprise to glimpses of a man caught 'as if in a hall of mirrors where each new source distorts, skews and stretches certain elements of his person in unforeseen ways'. 'What I present here, therefore', he warns his readers,

> is not a complete, or completed, biography, but rather a series of snapshots of a man taken at different moments of his life. If the picture presented here remains too blurred, I hope that it may be regarded in part as a consequence of the fact that he lived his life in constant motion.[16]

In a more recent essay, Ghobrial has analysed the movements of those he puts 'under the microscope' through the lens of 'identification' – which includes both self-identifications and those imposed onto an individual by others – reminding us that individuals chose to act and were categorised through a series of affiliations that challenged the idea of 'identity' as something fixed and unchanging.[17] His reference to the microscope also highlights the issue of scale. Increasingly at the heart of researching individual lives

16 Ghobrial, 'Secret life', pp. 55–56.

17 Ghobrial, 'Moving Stories and What They Tell Us: Early Modern Mobility Between Microhistory and Global History', *Past & Present*, 242 (2019), pp. 243–280.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is the methodological question not only of how attention to the particular can shed light on broader processes of change, but also, more importantly, how scholars can use this shifting lens to make sense of particular moments, events, and sources. Many of the essays in this volume follow that example. As in the case of the Italian-born musician, Mark Anthony Bassano (c.1546–1599), the Jesuit, Robert Parsons (1546–1610), or the Bengali boy known as Peter Pope (fl.1614–1622), whose conversion was orchestrated by the East India Company as a demonstration of their civilising effect on non-Christian Indigenous peoples, the essays capture one or more moments in a 'life in transit' when multiple imperatives and claims on the figure at the centre were seen to intersect and overlap in surviving documentary evidence, rather than attempting to offer a traditional biography.

However, as the essays on Peter Pope, Corey, and Pocahontas (c.1595–1617) in this volume also acknowledge, that experience of living a life in motion tended to obscure the presence of some individuals more than others. Over the past few decades, a growing body of scholarship has interrogated the complicated nature of early modern constructions of race or 'racecraft', within which questions of lineage and blood, faith and colour, were not only inextricably entangled with each other, but were equally also caught up in the processes through which differential access to power was ensured. Racecraft in its most basic form, after all, as Ayanna Thompson has noted, is 'the underlying imaginative horizon, belief system, or individual and collective mental landscape that seeks to divide humans along unequal lines'.[18] Writing about the representation of black women in European art in 'Object into Object?', Kim F. Hall had remarked in 2000 on the way in which the 'compositional isolation' of those women often reflect that fundamental reality. 'The focus on white male agents in European history', she points out, 'allows us to fill in an imaged life of the original (or even to know details about that life); nonetheless, the same cannot be said for black women'.[19] Imtiaz Habib, whose careful excavation of fragments of

18 Ayanna Thompson, 'Did the Concept of Race Exist for Shakespeare and His Contemporaries? An Introduction' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Race*, ed. Ayanna Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 1–16 (8). While it would be impossible to provide anything but a reductive list here, Thompson's Introduction offers a good point of entry into recent scholarship in the field, as does the Introduction to *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion,* ed. Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton (New York: Palgrave, 2007), pp. 1–30.

19 Kim F. Hall, 'Object Into Object?: Some Thoughts on the Presence of Black Women in Early Modern Culture' in *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, ed. Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 346–379 (374).

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information from English church and court records has fundamentally shaped our understanding of black presence in early modern England, addressed this challenge directly. 'The book's discussions of the records of black people may often appear to be of speculative and symbolic value', his incisive introduction to his 2008 monograph, *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500–1677*, acknowledged.

> But in the project of reconstructing the irrecoverable history of early modern English black people speaking from silence is not a willful disregard of an axiom of scholarly wisdom. It is a sober assertion of the obligation of a necessary risk and one that redeems a difficult task from being one that is not attempted at all.[20]

Walter Benjamin does not appear in Habib's introduction, but it is difficult not to be reminded of Benjamin's argument that 'the history of the oppressed is a discontinuum', in which the marginal and the powerless are regularly denied a voice.[21] As Soshana Felman has suggested in reflecting on Benjamin, history, and silence:

> Because official history is based on the perspective of the victor, the voice with which it speaks authoritatively is *deafening*; it makes us unaware of the fact that there remains in history a claim, a discourse that we *do not hear* … History transmits, ironically enough, a legacy of deafness in which historicists unwittingly share.[22]

Resisting that legacy of deafness has been one of the most exciting developments over the past decades when it comes to recovering marginalised voices, whether it be in terms of race, or gender, or indeed, both. In 'Object into Object?', Hall had asserted that the ability 'to imagine and possibly locate a different trajectory' to recover such voices was not an attempt 'that makes of the past whatever we want', but a 'disruption of the imperialist glance [which] is an important weapon in any arsenal of resistance'.[23]

20 Imtiaz Habib, *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500–1677: Imprints of the Invisible* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 17.

21 Walter Benjamin, 'Paralipomènes et variantes des Thèses "Sur le concept de l'histoire"' in *Écrits français*, ed. Jean-Maurice Monnoyer (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 352, quoted in Shoshana Felman, 'Benjamin's Silence', *Critical Inquiry, Angelus Novus: Perspectives on Walter Benjamin* 25:2 (1999), pp. 201–234 (210).

22 Felman, p. 210.

23 Hall, 'Object into Object?', p. 374.

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For Marisa J. Fuentes, still struggling sixteen years later with 'a historical disciplinary structure that required more sources to make a project "viable"', the problem lay in the very 'ethics of history and the consequences of reproducing indifference to violence against and the silencing of black lives'.[24] Fuentes's response in *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* presents a series of intricate microhistories of a handful of women in eighteenth-century Barbados, foregrounding absence as often as it records presence. The failure of the archive to preserve or present the traces and voices of these 'dispossessed' women becomes an intrinsic part of the story it tells, throwing a raking light on our own historical methodologies and discursive practices. Some of the essays in this volume, such as the ones on Corey and Pocahontas, similarly reflect on the historiography that frames our knowledge about these men and women. Among the various ambassadors, queen consorts, scholars, chaplains, and adventurers in these pages, their presence stands as a stark reminder of the radical difference, both in historical and critical attention, that marks our understanding of the forces that shaped the early modern world, and of the people caught up in their unfolding. A close attention to power relations, an acknowledgement of local knowledge-holders and agents, and an understanding of individuals' complicity in the colonial project has been important to the essays in this volume as a whole. Where possible, essays have used the records that exist for white European or elite individuals to shed a critical light on imperial self-fashioning, and to try to reconstruct those other lives that intersected with them: the hundreds of Indigenous peoples whom Knivet encountered in Brazil, for example.

From the varying forms that displacement took in this period, to the variety of relationships that it engendered, the collective story that these lives tell cannot be reduced to a single grand narrative. What it does offer, however, are three reminders. First, that debates in early modern England about identity, belonging, and the nation can rarely, if ever, be disentangled from the English involvement in global geopolitics and trade, which these 'lives in transit' illuminate. Whether it was closer home, in the country's complicated relationship with continental Europe, or further afield, in the nascent colonies in America or the early trading factories in the Middle East and Asia, England and English thoughts about themselves, from their language, culture, and fashion, to their place in the world, were framed by a constant calibration against others. Second, that such calibration

24 See Marisa J. Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), pp. 146, 12.

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was hardly ever neutral, or stable, or indeed universally accepted by the English themselves. Its sensitivity to multiple forces – political, mercantile, religious, and cultural – defied a single narrative. Questions of who belonged and who did not, or even what belonging meant, went through multiple interpretations in the same period, the same space, and even for the same individual, depending on whether the question was posed in the abstract or the particular. Matters of gender, race, and class added further variables. As a woman and as the daughter of 'the King of Virginia', Pocahontas's place in the English imagination and public discourse, for example, was always to be different from that of Corey the Saldanian or Peter Pope. Third, that while displacement and mobility could open new possibilities and new avenues of exchange for some, that instability of definition also rendered the lives of many deeply vulnerable. As the chaplain, Roger Williams (c.1606–1683), and Teresia Sampsonia Shirley (c.1589–1668), the Circassian wife of an English diplomat and adventurer, would realise in very different circumstances, finding one's place as someone between languages, faiths, cultures, and nations, was to be doubly exposed, subject to the suspicion and questioning of both the English and the non-English. Roderigo Lopez's end painfully illustrates the dangerously provisional nature of belonging in such circumstances, as a negotiated position whose terms were always subject to revision and revocation.

In addressing this varied and complicated terrain, this collection of essays, along with its companion volume, *Keywords of Identity*, is a work in progress. To assert that may seem strange in a published book, but as volumes born out of interdisciplinary discussions, ranging across multiple traditional and non-traditional archives and resources, at a time when our understanding of the history of identity, race, imperialism, and early English colonialism are all under radical re-evaluation and questioning, it is necessary to acknowledge this inevitably tentative nature of the enterprise. In the evolving collective conversations about global connections and disconnections, about stories of exchange and articulations of difference – of language, faith, and race – what these *Lives in Transit* offer are certain vignettes of complexity. The individual lives covered in its pages, we hope, can act as sites of critical consideration of the multiple imperatives in play in the shaping of the early modern world. Attending to them is to enter, not conclude, a conversation which continues to leave its mark on our own concepts of identity and belonging.

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