SAA 2017 - ASIA IN THE MAKING OF EUROPE
Organizers: Su Fang Ng, University of Oklahoma & Carmen Nocentelli, University of New Mexico

Abdulhamit Arvas, Vassar College
The Ottomans in and of Europe
Early modern English encounters with the Ottomans—real or imagined—resulted in multifarious representations of the Ottomans in England. While the Ottomans figured prominently in the cultural as well as political, economic, and social life in Europe, western cultural re-formations and social developments in turn travelled into the Ottoman Empire from the mid-fifteenth century onwards. These interactions, not despite the political and religious divide, produced a cross-pollination of cultures in historical interconnections. While English imaginings marked the Turks as the cultural other, stressing their religious difference from Christian Europe, the political, commercial, and social exchanges call for an investigation of such rich and complex cross-pollinations, or in Sanjay Subrahmanyam's term, "connected histories" that emphasize similarities, intricate networks, processes of circulations, and possible connections between the so-called East and West in the early modern world beyond nationalistic boundaries and ethnographic perspectives. Deploying a comparative approach that takes into consideration the Ottoman context—their own voices and perspectives—in exploring cultural discourses in England, and in Europe in general, my paper will specifically examine a collection of letter exchanges between the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II and European rulers, putatively from mid-fifteenth century and written in Latin, and translated and published in London in 1607. The collection shows preexisting conventional tropes about the Ottomans as the barbaric, Islamic other; yet, it seemingly conveys realistic impressions and reliable political content for its reader. Nonetheless, it offers various figurations of the Ottomans by conveying Ottoman discourses to the English audience. When put into a comparative context, such representations thereby uncover connected histories that present striking parallels between the cultural imaginaries of the Ottoman world and Europe, challenging a stable concept of Europe in the early modern period, as well as strictly divided, ostensibly unconnected Eastern and Western literatures, or Oriental and Occidental studies.

Richmond Barbour, Oregon State University
 "Constructing the New Exchange: Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*"
My contribution to the seminar offers a reading of Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse* in view of the local and global energies attending the construction of Robert Cecil's New Exchange on the Strand in April 1609. Lord Treasurer Salisbury was a pivotal advocate and recent member of the East India Company, whose exotic wares his elite shopping mall, built on the rapidly gentrifying boulevard connecting the City and Whitehall, would retail to greater London. As the new emporium threatened to pull commerce westward from the lodestone of the Royal Exchange, its construction excited controversy in London. That hubbub necessarily impacted Jonson's bid to praise the building. Since its rediscovery in the late 1990s, the *Entertainment* has provoked contradictory

readings. Some frame the show as a frank celebration of transnational commerce; others, as a sardonic critique of the global confidence it ostensibly promotes. I suggest that the concentration of diverse social and economic interests in and around the opening helps to explain the enigmas of the text commissioned to finesse the occasion. A man of famously divided sensibilities, Jonson has it both ways: he gratifies his great patron while—and by—allowing room for irony.

Thea Buckley, The Shakespeare Institute

"Where America, the Indies?": the East India Company spice trade and Shakespeare's fluid cartography

This paper examines the interrelationship between the colonial spice trade and the widening of European literary and geographical horizons, with a focus on Shakespearean notions of Asia as 'the Indies'. In particular, the paper problematizes the idea that this creative traffic has been unidirectional rather than mutual; Sukanta Chaudhuri posits that "outside the western world, India has the longest and most intense engagement with Shakespeare of any country anywhere" (3). Paradoxically, this sustained interaction is framed by a shifting cartography. In the playwright's lifetime, fickle monsoon trade winds carried his works to India—as early as 1607, East India Company sailors reportedly performed *Hamlet* aboard, years before the British Empire annexed India. Shakespeare likely read the published adventures of Ralph Fitch, sailor aboard "the Tiger" (*Macbeth* 1.3.6), which set out in 1583 to survey the Indian spice route for English trade purposes. Shortly after Fitch's return from the Malabar Coast, laden with pepper, Shakespeare writes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* of ships sailing on the "spicèd Indian air" (2.1.124) and of girdling the entire globe.

Through examining Shakespearean depictions of 'the Indies', in which East and West often blur, the paper highlights these instances within the wider context of the relationship between Shakespeare's works and peninsular geographies, discoveries, and reimaginings. Later Indian colonial Shakespeares expand upon this cartographical stretching, if subversively—Munshi Ratan Chand's 1882 Hindi translation of *The Comedy of Errors* reorders Dromio's hierarchy of countries in his catalogue of Nell's globular form (3.2.116-144), so that India now stands "in her face" (3.2.140) while England replaces the 'Netherlands' (Gillies et al. 275). Overall, if Shakespeare helped place India on the maps and stages of Europe, India in turn provided a creative impetus for Shakespeare to reshape the boundaries of literary and imaginative possibility.

Jennifer Feather, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
"Now shall his barbarous body be prey": Marlowe's Sigismund and the Making of Europe
Our seminar title, "Asia in the Making of Europe" can be read in at least two ways. First, it suggests considering Asian influence on Europe thought, culture, and history, but it also begs the question: how did the conceptual space of Asia enable the conceptualization of a space called Europe? Of course, much has been said about the centrality of the foreign in forming a coherent sense of communal identity. Moreover, many nuanced accounts, and a great deal of early modern drama, troubles any clear dichotomy between Europe and Asia. This essay focuses on the liminal spaces of Eastern Europe as a way of exploring how the spaces "Europe" and "Asia" are both defined and troubled. In particular, I analyze the figure of Sigismund, King of Hungary, in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* as a way of considering contested spaces, those not fully Europe or fully Asia, in imaging a European identity. A figure like Sigismund – a Christian king from the edges of Europe, an ally with Islamic forces that oppose Tamburlaine, a Christian but also Catholic and an oath-breaker – highlights the fissures in what might otherwise seem fully coherent identities, offering a way of exploring the boundaries of what constitutes "Asia" and "Europe." Moreover, he offers a way of examining Tamburlaine's own equally complicated identity as a Scythian who styles himself after Persian kings. This essay analyzes the liminal spaces between Europe and Asia as a way of interrogating how these two spaces organize cultural differences in the early modern period.

Marion Hollings, Middle Tennessee State University
The Countess of Auvergne, Herodotus, and the Scythian
In Act I, scene iii of *Henry VI, Part I*, the Countess of Auvergne, a character that appears incidentally only once in the play, in these few lines (I.ii.38-60 to I.iii.1-82), makes, in a small act of mythologizing Asia, an allusion to an event recorded in Herodotus's *Histories*. As she plots to entrap the military hero Talbot, she exclaims, "I shall as famous be by this exploit/As Scythian Tomyris by Cyrus death" (I.iii.5-6). Why is this scene that is relatively insignificant making use of a story told in Herodotus about a Scythian? What would a learned woman of the Renaissance (for the character of the countess more represents a woman of Shakespeare's own context than the fourteenth century his history play dramatizes) have known of Herodotus? And how would she have known it?

The countess's comment in the play suggests a larger cultural familiarity with an incident from Persian history as told by Herodotus and transmitted by, and circulating in, the Italian humanist tradition that translated him. Her allusion represents an early modern process of encountering and mythologizing Asia through the transmission of Herodotus's *Histories*. To get at the complexities of this encounter and to offer answers to questions such as those posed above my paper examines the reception and transmission histories of Herodotus in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and considers how Herodotus is read, studied, by whom, and why.

Early modern conceptions of Scythia draw on classical sources, and in particular on Herodotus, to participate in a mythopoesis whose processes are more broadly representative of the ways in which Asia is encountered in an early modern English and European imaginary.

Representations of Scythia and Scythians form a subset of Persian historiography as practiced in the humanist tradition and also appear in early modern European accounts of travel to Russia. My paper considers to what purposes the different signifying practices concerning the Scythian are put and what different kinds of cultural work the Scythian performs in these sorts of European encounters with Asia.

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Daeyeong (Dan) Kim, Stanford University
Specters of Cultural Hybridity in *The Island Princess* and *The Renegado*
This paper examines the nature and limits of cultural transformation in the early modern period through the trio of the European explorer, the renegade-immigrant, and the native princess in *The Island Princess* and *The Renegado.* Both plays stage a familiar tale of love as conquest, and tragicomedy provides the structure that facilitates this European fantasy. In the case of *The Island Princess,* Armusia, the European explorer, must undergo the potential tragedy of apostasy and sexual degeneracy before the play contains these threats formally through a comedic resolution—a wedding that unites Armusia with Quisara, the native princess, and, more importantly, transforms her into an obedient Christian wife. *The Renegado* operates with a similar narrative logic: Vitelli, the European merchant, is tempted by Donusa, the play's equivalent to Quisara, but ultimately triumphs by converting and marrying her. It goes without saying that the plays' tragicomic resolutions hinge on a successful conversion—yet, it is this very transformation that is cast with doubt in *The Island Princess* and *The Renegade.* The plays, in fact, are filled with instances of failed or reverted conversions/transformations that ask: Is cultural or religious conversion physical or metaphorical, temporary or permanent? Further, what is the "ocular proof," if any, that would authenticate one? This paper argues that the plays meditate on the cultural politics of transformation through their minor, culturally hybrid characters: Ruy Dias in *The Island Princess,* and Grimaldi and Gazet in *The Renegado.* These characters function as litmus tests, of sorts, for the questions above, and collectively color our reading of the plays' broader colonialist impulses inscribed in their interracial marriage tropes.

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John Kunat, Sonoma State University
***Titus Andronicus* and the Geographies of Race**
In *The View of the Present State of Ireland*, Edmund Spenser argues that the Irish are descended from the Scythians, having migrated to the island from the region north of the Black Sea. Since the Scythians are the prototypical barbarians in Roman and Greek ethnography, Spenser's linking them with the Irish is an attempt to portray Gaelic peoples as constitutively savage and uncivilized. However, in the classical tradition upon which Spenser draws for his knowledge of the Scythians, this ancient people is also represented as European. In fact, Herodotus positions the Scythians as parallel to the Greeks. Under the leadership of their queen Tomyris, they prevent the Persians from

establishing themselves in Europe by defeating Cyrus, just as the Greeks were to do with Darius at Marathon and his son Xerxes at Salamis. The Scythians are thus the signifiers of a barbarous Europeanism, which manifests itself by repelling the more sophisticated and civilized forces of Asia. The defeat of the Persians is itself a reenactment of the earlier defeat of the Trojans, the most famous and admired kingdom of ancient Asia. Since the Romans traced their descent from the Trojans, many of the Romanizing countries of Europe also wished to claim a Trojan origin, including the English, who famously viewed themselves as descendants of Brutus. The Irish Scythians therefore not only embody ancient barbarism but are the natural enemies of the British, who ultimately derive from the most refined and noble people of Asia. In *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare invokes the same historiographical tradition as Spenser by reincarnating the Scythian queen Tomyris in the person of Tamora, who threatens the Asian-derived peoples of Rome with the ancient barbarism of the European North. This thread encodes a form of ur-whiteness that stands in opposition to both the whiteness of the Romans and the blackness of Aaron, the enslaved African.

Mingjun Lu, University of Toronto
Innate Ideas and Conscience: The Joining of Morals and Metaphysics In Leibniz and Wang Yangming
Following Donald Lach (1945), most studies on Gottfried Leibniz's (1646-1716) engagement with China focus on his exposure to Zhu Xi's (1130-1200) *lixue* 理学 "metaphysics of Li or natural principle." But few have noticed the parallels between Leibniz's philosophy of the mind and Wang Yangming's (1472-1529) *xinxue* 心学 "metaphysics of the mind," which was proposed to refute Zhu Xi's *lixue*. Leibniz's earlier writings on China center mostly on the debate caused by the Confucian cult of ancestor worship, but in his treatise on Chinese natural theology, he comes to realize that what lies behind the theological controversy is the foundational hypothesis of metaphysics—the first principle. A key concern of Leibniz's theology treatise, I suggest, is the metaphysical foundation of an advanced ethical system. Leibniz's spiritual interpretation of Li is not what Zhu Xi has in mind, but this interpretation happens to reveal the conceptual strictures of a philosophical system that takes Nature or the physical world as the first principle. It is in a shared attempt to respond to these strictures, I argue, that Leibniz and Wang construct a metaphysics that situates the first principle in the mind. Where Leibniz resorts to monadic substance and "innate ideas," Wang uses the concepts of "the onto-being of the mind" and *liangzhi* 良知 "innate conscience" to illustrate the primacy of the mind and its ethical dimensions. The moral relevance of the spiritual principle and substances Leibniz tries to extrapolate from Zhu Xi's philosophy, I propose, is well captured by Wang's innate conscience. Though mediated through Zhu Xi's *liexue*, the encounter between Leibniz and Wang bespeaks a shared awareness of the limitations of a things-based metaphysics, the primary role of the mind in moral and philosophical inquiry, and the necessity of joining morals to metaphysics.

Rachana Sachdev, Susquehanna University

Wealth and Welfare: China, India, and Early Modern Europe

The first Stuart mask on New Year's night, 1604, featured "Indian and China knights"; the combined representation of the knights from two separate nations offering gifts to James I was not surprising considering the famed wealth of both Ming China and Mughal India. A continuum between India and China was also possible because early modern travelers to Asia had many opportunities to move from country to country, comparing and collapsing cultures as necessary. St. Francis Xavier is only the most famous of the early modern travelers who visited India, Japan, and China during his ten years' sojourn in Asia. Given the "cosmopolitanism" of a number of early modern travelers, we should be able to unearth not just "Asia in the making of Europe", but also "Asia in the making of Asia". My project in this paper is to compare the representations of Mughal India and Ming China in the European travelogues, focusing in particular on the ways in which both wealthy empires took care of their poor and needy. I am interested primarily in mapping out the moments of European recognition of the customs of abandonment and selling of children, and what impact, if any, these discoveries have on their understanding of early modern China and India.

Amrita Sen, Oklahoma City University

Ophir, Protestantism, and the Quest for India

Samuel Purchas in *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes* famously identifies India as the Biblical Ophir and equates the sea voyage to the East Indies as a new Ophirian quest. After extensive deliberations regarding Biblical geography, and more importantly, the material objects mentioned in the Old Testament, Purchas decides that Ophir does not lie in the New World but to the east. The accounts of English travelers that eventually follow, thus get framed within this larger context of Solomon's mythical expedition. In this paper I am interested in revisiting these intersections between English Protestantism and the language of discovery, particularly in the context of India. How did English writers situate themselves and the East Indies within a specifically Christian world view? In turn how did the contact with Asia's religious pluralities affect how England viewed itself? The earliest English travelers to India such as Ralph Fitch and Edward Terry distinguished between "Moors" and "Gentiles" in the subcontinent. Their (mis)understandings of both Islam and Hinduism would play a significant role in shaping the idea of India in English imagination. Moreover, how did religion – Protestantism, Islam and Hinduism come together to inform the early encounters in the subcontinent? By the end of the seventeenth century English travelers like Henry Lord were already writing about Sanskrit texts and words such as "Pundit" entered the English lexicon. While the East India Company stayed away from active religious conversion, religious discourses nonetheless seem to have played an important part in shaping early English experiences in India.

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Emily Soon, King's College London
'[T]o see the magnificency of this court': King James I's Indian and Chinese New Year
Asia plays a curiously prominent role in the first known masque of the Stuart era: as the sole surviving account of this relatively neglected event tells us, on New Year's night 1604, King James I watched as 'a magician of China' presented the court with a dazzling display of 'Indian and China knights'. The decision to feature emissaries from these two different countries has been read, reasonably, as staging James's dream of presiding over a court in which English and Scottish nobles work together harmoniously. However, the question as to why the combination of these two particular Oriental cultures was selected for this crucial inaugural performance of Stuart sovereignty remains unexplored, as does the reason why this initial display of interest in the distant East does not appear to have been sustained within subsequent court masques. In this paper, I interrogate these two inter-related questions. By placing the masque in dialogue with the larger political negotiations at work during the critical early days of the new king's reign, as well as with the longer historical narrative of East-West relations, I problematize the ostensible cosmopolitanism of this performance, uncovering how Asia can be said to be simultaneously integral and irrelevant to its dramatic purpose.

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Melissa Walter, University of the Fraser Valley
The Wisdom of the World, Courtly Performances, and *The Moral Philosophie of Doni*
The Moral Philosophie of Doni (1570) is a collection of mostly animal fables based on the *Panchatantra*, a Sanskrit text from about the fourth century C. E. that was translated into Arabic as *Kalila wa Dimna*, and translated from the Italian of Antonfrancesco Doni by Sir Thomas North with a dedication to Robert Dudley. North's prologue and the printer, Henry Denham's, title page for T*he Moral Philosophy of Doni* emphasize both the Italian translation and the text's Indian origins and its circulation across languages, cultures, and time, while the title page of the book features multiple globes. What is the significance of North's translation of this text for the Dudley circle, and why was the North's translation reprinted in 1601, near the end of Elizabeth's life? How do the claims of multiple translations and the multiple globes of the text's title page relate to England's marginality and ambitions at the end of the seventeenth century? At a time of insecurity and transition at court, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, often dated to 1601, and North's 1601 text both draw on animal comparisons to address concerns around human behavior including courtly deception, flattery and violence, and practices of defining humanity through and against animal behaviors. Both texts are concerned with how to be a good courtier and a good prince, and both texts articulate an early modern moment in which human-animal comparisons proliferate at a time of crisis.