5. Two Views of Botany Bay: George Barrington's *An Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative* (c. 1793-4) and Mary Ann Parker's *A Voyage Round the World* (1795)

As the previous chapter has demonstrated, Henry Abbott emphatically practiced global civility when he crossed the Syrian Desert in 1784. He treated the desert Arabs, and especially the caravan leader, with respect and was always ready to be favourably impressed by the representatives of his host culture. In the present chapter, we return to the South Pacific where the ideal of global civility starts to crack under the pressure of trafficking in human lives. By retracing the routes of both the convict George Barrington and the housewife Mary Ann Parker to the penal colonies in Australia in the 1790s, we can examine not only the extent to which domestic political events influenced the experiences of Britons abroad, but also analyse the limits of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and its inclusive qualities. The differential, but complementary, subject positions of Barrington and Parker differ from those of previous travellers discussed in this study in a number of ways. In contrast to white European men, who were free to travel for commercial or career-related purposes, the two protagonists of this chapter occupy marginal positions by virtue of being subject either to legal or cultural interplays of movement and constraint. Depicting transported felons, as well as various categories of alterity such as Aborigines and slaves, Barrington and Parker's texts are much more ambivalent and selective in their representational range than the ones we have analysed so far. In this perspective, global civility becomes situationally contingent and is sometimes stretched beyond its potential breaking point.

The following analysis will investigate the ways in which Barrington and Parker both represent and contribute to the emerging discursive cracks within

global civility. This new turn on the representation of cross-cultural encounters is part of a wider cultural and political shift, in the course of which the discussion around the literature of sentiment and sensibility 'accelerates into crisis.'[1] The first part of this chapter will sketch out some of the most important developments and major fault lines of the 1790s, including the problem of excess convicts and the government's attempts of solving it, the changing representational dynamics of sensibility and the trajectories in this complex texture of both Barrington and Parker. The chapter then proceeds to the representations of felons in the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* in order to analyse how their (non-)incorporation complicates the relationship between self and other in the contexts of cosmopolitanism and class. However, social determinants are not the only markers of difference in both texts, since the presence of the Aborigines adds a cultural element to existing patterns of attraction and repulsion. In addition to convicts and Australian natives, Parker's text also comments on slaves in the Cape Colony, an especially intricate representational feature in the age of abolitionism. The following section thus discusses Barrington and Parker's depictions of cultural alterity and explores their increasing ambivalence. The final section in the present chapter will contextualise the experiences of the two travellers in contemporary philosophical and political thought. In so doing, it seeks to establish how Barrington and Parker's journeys to Australia challenge 'the Enlightenment ideal of a cosmopolitan civic exchange'[2] when marginal voices come to represent other marginal voices in politically turbulent times.

Famously dubbed 'The Prince of Pickpockets,'[3] Barrington's life had been turbulent throughout, even before he became a celebrity of his day. Born in Ireland in 1755, he left school at the age of sixteen after having stolen the schoolmaster's watch.[4] A troupe of travelling actors took him up, quickly familiarising the youth with the pickpocket's trade. It was in this 'thespian en-

1 Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 190.

2 Elizabeth Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 29.

3 Suzanne Rickard, 'Introduction,' in Rickard ed., *George Barrington's Voyage to Botany Bay: Retelling a Convict's Travel Narrative of the 1790s.* (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2001), 3-63, here 4.

4 The account of Barrington's life in this chapter is based on Suzanne Rickard's exquisite introduction to his *Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative*. Compare note no. 3.

vironment'[5] that he changed his surname from Waldron to Barrington and found his partner in crime, one John Price, who was eventually arrested and allegedly transported to America. In order to avoid arrest, Barrington fled to London, where he lived from 1773 to 1790, making a living from a 'combination of acting and stealing.'[6] Well-educated and good-looking, he gained access to fashionable circles, in which he not only appeared as young gentleman, but also found ample opportunity to steal from the aristocratic and wealthy both living and socialising in the metropolis. In 1775, for example, he famously tried to steal the precious snuff-box of the Russian Count Grigory Orlov, the lover of Catherine the Great. He was arrested and eventually released, since the Count did not press charges. Such incidents earned Barrington great popularity and '[r]umours about him spread like wildfire around London's taverns and coffeehouses.'[7] In the following years, he continued his criminal career and moved back and forth between the dock, the prison and London's streets. After a brief sojourn into Ireland and Scotland, as well as numerous further arrests, he was finally convicted in 1790 and sentenced to exile, a not unusual punishment for 'habitual offenders such as Barrington.'[8]

In September 1791, the convict celebrity arrived in Australia aboard the *Active*, one of the ships of the so-called Third Fleet. But Barrington's new life in the colonies was to be very different from both London's opulence and its opportunities:

> Beyond rations and the barest necessities, there was nothing to be found in Port Jackson and here theft was out of the question. In the penal settlement, theft was punishable by death without any opportunity for special pleading. Thus Barrington was forced to start from scratch, to transform himself.[9]

And transform he did. After his arrival in the Antipodes, he became a law-abiding member of the colony, sobered by his experiences on the convict ship. And here, too, his life continued to be scrutinised by the authorities and various other interest groups; but the 'convict returns, administrative reports and formal observations'[10] differed considerably from stories in the scandal-

5 Ibid., 6.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., 9.
8 Ibid, 13.
9 Ibid., 31.
10 Ibid, 5.

hungry press, which had engendered the Barrington myth in the first place. On the one hand, this breath-taking conversion is informed by, and consistent with, contemporary notions of improvement. Originally applied to attempts of increasing the productivity of labour, the language of improvement gained economic, and eventually wider cultural, currency in the wake of Adam Smith's economic writings. It was the moral philosopher-turned-economist himself who came up with 'the crucial extensions of the argument into the moral and social sphere.'[11] Barrington's transformation, then, is in keeping with contemporary concepts and cultural trends, not only serving as textualised role model for an offender's capability to reform himself, but also providing the authorities with a possible justification for the horrors of transportation. Accordingly, the 'trial was a turning point for Barrington in more ways than one'[12] and stands at the confluence of distinct, yet intimately connected, juridical and reformist discourses.

On the other hand, the press and rogue publishers in London continued to exploit the popularity of Barrington's case and very soon stories of the reformed convict started to circulate in Britain, presenting the former pickpocket now as 'Superintendant of Convicts'[13] in the penal colony. As a result, the *Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative* (c. 1793-4) was published with his name on the cover, but is actually a compilation of material gleaned from other contemporary texts on Australia. However, despite being a forgery, the *Narrative*, as well as the sizeable amount of publications attributed to Barrington's pen, familiarised British readers with the recently established colony at the same time as it 'was a novel attempt to personalize first contacts with Aborigines and to render such contact comprehensible to the untutored.'[14] Several accounts and travel books in this vein followed, some of which were published even after Barrington's death in Australia in 1804. Accordingly, by the early nineteenth century, he had become a 'floating signifier who does not exist apart from these and other representations.'[15] For historians and literary

11 Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy and Pornography* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 303.

12 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 14.

13 Ibid., 5.

14 Ibid., 49.

15 Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 51.

critics, Barrington's *Narrative* is thus 'of significant interest both as an outcome of the public's fascination with celebrities and as a product of its day, part of the invigorated genre of travel writing fuelled by exploration in the South Seas and the Antipodes.'[16] However, instead of situating Barrington's account in European publishing histories, the following analysis will read it into a cross-cultural context and explore the extent to which it contributes to, as well as represents, discursive changes within global civility.

Barrington's fellow-traveller in this chapter is Mary Ann Parker, who accompanied her husband to Australia in March 1791.[17] As commander of the supply ship *Gorgon*, Captain John Parker's mission was twofold: he was to sail to Cape Town in order to save the remainder of provisions from the *Guardian*, another vessel destined to the colonies, which was shipwrecked in December 1789. He was then to proceed to Australia to ward off starvation, since the 'infant colonies'[18] continued to be heavily dependent on support from the mother country. The *Gorgon* arrived at its destination in September 1791, a much-anticipated event hailed by both the convicts and their supervisors. In June of the following year, the Parkers returned to England where Mary Ann was reunited with her two children and 'her mother from whom she had never been separated for more than a fortnight.'[19] In 1794, Captain Parker died of fever, an event that left his wife in 'the greatest distress'[20] and forced her to be her family's breadwinner. In 1795, she published her *Voyage Round the World*, which she wrote 'for the advantage of her family' (P, 171). Since there was only one edition of her travel narrative, we may conclude that 'it answered the financial purpose for which it was published.'[21]

Apart from these facts, not much is known about Parker, whose family came from the north of England and probably had a military background.[22] In the preface to her account, she presents herself as an 'essentially private,

16 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 5.

17 This summary of Parker's life is based on the following work: Deirdre Coleman, 'Introduction,' in Coleman ed., *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies* (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 1999), 1-42.

18 Ibid., 2.

19 Ibid., 4.

20 Mary Ann Parker, 'A Voyage Round the World,' in Coleman ed., 169-225, here 171. All further references are to this edition.

21 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 4.

22 Ibid., 4.

financially embarrassed, and reluctant woman writer'[23] both focussing on her maternal duties and bent on securing the family's well-being. Throughout her journey, she is anxious to sustain the impression of a caring mother and loving wife, peppering her book with domestic ingredients from her outward journey over social life in Cape Town and the penal colonies to her return in the summer of 1792. However, if we follow Parker on her journey, a very different picture emerges, which contrasts sharply with her self-presentation as housewife, wife and mother. For example, she had no second thoughts about following her husband 'to the remotest parts of the globe' (P, 185), and the subsequent publication of her *Voyage* gained her financial independence at the same time as it was the first travel account of the newly-established penal colonies written by a woman. What is more, during a stopover in Tenerife she surprises her hosts with her fluency in Spanish and 'laughed as heartily as I ever recollected to have done in my life' after intrepidly descending a steep hill 'on full speed' (P, 188) on a donkey's back. Accordingly, Parker's text illustrates the complex ways in which two contrasting strategies of self-presentation can coexist within a single cultural artefact.[24] In turn, the resultant tensions inherent in such an artefact provide gateways into the complicated interplay of literature, politics and history that framed the experiences of both Barrington and Parker.

1. History, Politics and the Changing Face of Sentiment and Sensibility

Faced with a vast prison population in the late eighteenth century, the British authorities had to find new places and ways to dump excess convicts after the loss of the American colonies. In search of an immediate and cheap solution, the Pitt government took the so-called Botany Bay decision in 1786, favouring New South Wales over several options on the West African coast.[25]

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23 Ibid.

24 Andrew Hammond, 'Typologies of the East: On Distinguishing Balkanism and Orientalism,' in Keith Hanley & Greg Kucich eds., *Nineteenth Century Worlds: Global Formations Past and Present* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), 129-146, here 134.

25 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 1. For a detailed account of the Botany Bay decision see: Mollie Gillen, 'The Botany Bay Decision, 1786: Convicts, not Empire,' *English Historical Review* 47: 385 (1982), 740-66.

As a result, the penal colonies in Australasia became the site of political contestation at home, and of a struggle for survival abroad. Indeed, '[c]rime and its just punishment preoccupied reformers and administrators, although there were those who decried experiments in human transportation.'[26] Barrington was among those whose forced relocation to the Antipodes was to be a long-term affair as the result of a court decision whereas Parker's stay in Australia was only temporary, since she accompanied her husband on a relief mission to the distressed colonies. However, both witnessed first-hand the hardships of the transportees at the same time as they keep them at a representational distance. By the same token, when the two authors find themselves in close proximity to the Aborigines their texts are much more ambivalent so that '[t]he desire to naturalize and recuperate the other co-exists with a sharp sense of cultural difference as savagery.'[27] Their accounts slide between identity and difference, as well as sympathy and revulsion, and demonstrate how global civility starts to change when contact phenomena rest upon extraneous forces rather than cross-cultural curiosity.[28] The Botany Bay decision thus opened a new chapter in the history of British exploration in the South Pacific but also contributed to a new, much more ambivalent, quality in the representation of cultural alterity in the late eighteenth century.

Though far-flung, the penal colonies were inseparable from Britain's domestic affairs. Barrington's case and Parker's journey demonstrate how government action taken in London could have wide-ranging consequences, geographical, social and otherwise. But the Botany Bay decision, as well as the ensuing transports, also posed moral problems, transposing controversies over crime and punishment, 'philanthropy and reform,'[29] emancipation and exclusion onto a global level. In similar fashion, another form of trafficking in human lives was fiercely debated in contemporary political and literary circles, causing frictions across the whole spectrum of British society. Slavery had long been part of English economic life and brought considerable wealth to port cities such as Bristol or Liverpool. Towards the end of the century, however, it became a bone of contention between abolitionists and pro-slavery

26 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 23-4.

27 Deirdre Coleman, 'Conspicuous Consumption: White Abolitionism and English Women's Protest Writing in the 1790s,' *English Literary History* 61: 2 (1994), 341-62, here 345.

28 Ibid.

29 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 162.

activists, a conflict frequently articulated in the literature of sensibility.[30] But despite their eloquence, literary discussions and novelistic representations of slavery were restricted by their own potential consequences:

> [T]he sentimentalist approach, while advertising the suffering occasioned by slavery, fails or refuses to move beyond the depiction of its theme to a critique of that theme's subject, slavery proper. Sentimentalist writers found it difficult to cross certain limits in their portrayal of the victims of social and economic change without endangering the entire system of values by which their world was ordered, and this they were disinclined to do.[31]

Accordingly, when it came to translating their writings into political action, novelists, reformists and intellectuals were reluctant to see their aesthetically formulated demands through or to challenge the economic fabric of the nation. And when in the 1790s the abolition movement became increasingly associated with radicalism because of the revolutionary turmoil in France its appeal began to wane.[32] As a result, the relationship between slavery and sensibility remained an ambivalent one, especially in representational terms.

But owing to its emphasis on feelings and concomitant appeals for empathy, the literary articulation of the suffering intrinsic in slavery was popular and forceful nonetheless. The 'ambiguous, mute docility of the slave subject'[33] lent itself particularly well to comment on all sorts of inequalities, to call for reform and to advance progressive agendas. Such representations were, however, not necessarily expressive of an even-handed, emancipatory impetus, since slaves and slavery were 'often deployed transferentially, to discuss something else.'[34] But what is more, the 'recuperative features of abolitionism always coexist with a panicky and contradictory need to preserve essential boundaries and distinctions.'[35] At the heart of this ambivalent relationship is, of course, the sufferer-spectator constellation, which establishes emotional connections between characters and readers at the same time as it depends on an asymmetrical power relation, differences in social status and the uneven

30 Ibid., esp. Ch. 2 and 3.
31 Ibid., 86
32 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 29.
33 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 55.
34 Ibid.
35 Coleman, 'Conspicuous Consumption,' 358-9.

distribution of wealth.[36] In the same way, the problem-ridden penal colonies in New South Wales, as well as governmental relief missions, invoke constellations similar to those found in sentimental fiction. In this perspective, we can not only establish interconnections between sentimentalism and slavery, but also investigate the closeness of sentimental literature to other political and public issues of the day. However, whilst both Barrington and Parker comment on suffering felons in the South Pacific, sentimentalism's ambivalence frequently breaks through in their texts and global civility's inclusiveness is much more limited than in Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands*. In the 1790s, then, a complex texture of governmental decisions, political upheavals and the controversial reception of both by the British public contributed to representational ruptures and transformations in the inclusive and emancipatory configuration of global civility.

It is in this time of political vicissitudes that Barrington and Parker find themselves en route to Australia. Their accounts provide the reading public in Britain with news from the recently established colony and illuminate the increasing ambivalence in contemporary representational patterns. Right from the start of his *Narrative*, we can observe Barrington's propensity to stand out from the crowd of convicts, presenting himself as an intelligent, and sometimes extravagant, outsider among outlaws. One day before embarkation, for example, the assistance of an anonymous friend 'procured some necessaries for my voyage: government allowance being extremely slender, to one like me, who had hitherto been accustomed to most of the luxuries of the table.'[37] The rogue publishers behind the *Narrative* were no doubt keen on utilising and exploiting the Barrington myth, but since it was based on already existing information on Australia, as well as stories of the famous offender that circulated in Britain at the time, the outré tendencies ascribed to the literary persona of the 'Prince of Pickpockets' may not be unwarranted.

Upon leaving London the next day, Barrington's 'particular friend' (B, 69) resurfaces on the ship. He continues to look after the famous offender and 'prevailed on the boatswain to admit me to his mess, and also the liberty of

36 For a discussion of the adaptability of the sufferer-spectator constellation to cross-cultural contexts see chapter 3 on George Keate's *Account of the Pelew Islands*.

37 George Barrington, 'An Impartial and Circumstantial Narrative of the Present State of Botany Bay, in New South Wales…by George Barrington, now Superintendant of the Convicts at Paramata (c. 1793-4),' in Rickard ed., 67-118, here 69. All further references are to this edition.

walking the deck, unencumbered by those galling and ignominious chains, which my past conduct had consigned me to' (B, 69). From the outset, Barrington receives special treatment by virtue of both being a celebrity and his connections, resulting not only in spatial separation from the bulk of convicts, but also in the freedom of movement aboard the *Active*. This elevation above the status of ordinary convicts is not an innovation of the *Narrative*'s compilers, but typifies the public's appetite for news about Barrington and his exploits: 'the press of the day argued' that 'there were differences in *quality* between a thieving beggar and a genteel pickpocket.'[38]

Barrington's self-presentation as exceptional character deserving of preferential treatment is thus attributable to both his enigmatic personality and the audience's desire to follow the lives of such iridescent characters.

The result is a clearly demarcated, and consistently sustained, split between the protagonist and the rest of the felons, none of whom are individualised in Barrington's text.

British readers were too keen on following him to his new home once he had been transported, and rumours of his feats actually preceded him on his way to the Antipodes. As soon as he spots Barrington's name on a 'list of convicts brought out' in the autumn of 1791, Captain Watkin Tench, who had arrived with the First Fleet in 1788, comments somewhat nostalgically on the infamous man: '*Barrington*, of famous memory.'[39] As if he remembered stories in the papers published before he left England, Tench seemed to have retained a colourful image of the convict in his imagination.[40] Around this time, Tench's tour of duty neared its end; he was, however, not yet ready to leave as the following passage from his *Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson* (1793) shows:

> But before I bade adieu to Rose Hill, in all probability for the last time of my life, it struck me that there remained one object of consideration not to be slighted: Barrington had been in the settlement between two and three months, and I had not seen him.[41]

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38 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 4. [emphasis in original]

39 Watkin Tench, *A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson, including an accurate description of the Situation of the Colony; of the Natives; and its natural productions: Taken on the spot, By Captain Watkin Tench, of the Marines* (London: G. Nicol, 1793), 136. [emphasis in original]

40 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 29.

41 Tench, *Complete Account*, 157.

After having found his object of interest, Tench comments at some length on Barrington's credible transformation, stating that 'his conduct has been irreproachable.'[42] The Captain even hazards a guess as to how Barrington's development might continue: 'I cannot quit him without bearing testimony that his talents promise to be directed in future to make reparation to society for the offences he has heretofore committed against it.'[43] Since Tench is neither a sensationalist hack nor a rogue publisher his personal account of Barrington confirms the convict's spectacular conversion from sinner and celebrity to model citizen of the colony from an official point of view. But Tench's description also testifies to another, more subtle change in Barrington's circumstances: 'Of that elegance and fashion, with which my imagination had decked him (I know not why), I could distinguish no trace.'[44] It seems that in addition to raising Tench's expectations, comprehensive press coverage created not merely a larger than life portrait of the Prince of Pickpockets, but started to breed a perfectly self-contained myth that circulated on a global scale in the late eighteenth century.[45] As a result, Barrington's fate tied together the British public and the penal colonies at the same time as he was slowly but surely transformed into what Rod Edmond has described as a 'floating signifier'[46] between the familiar worlds of Europe on the one hand and the largely unfamiliar continents and archipelagos in the Pacific on the other.

Whilst his case was absorbed into a network of interconnected representations in Britain, Barrington had to live through many adventures both aboard ship and at his destination. One of them is particularly significant for the history of global civility because it demonstrates how inclusive and emancipatory discursive frameworks are immediately complicated by the presence of felons. In the following situation, the sufferer-spectator relationship evokes 'sympathy'[47] in the captain of the *Active*, resulting in an attempt to ameliorate the hardships of the transportees: 'the captain with great humanity, had released many of the convicts who had been in a weakly state from their leg irons, and they were allowed alternately, ten at a time to walk upon deck (B, 70).'

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 158

44 Ibid., 157.

45 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 4 & 17.

46 Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 24 & 51.

47 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13.

Sentimental fiction frequently utilises such relationships to draw attention to power differentials, social evils and reformist causes, establishing emotional connections between distressed characters and emphatic readers or socially responsible observers. As Keate's *Account* shows, the sufferer-spectator relationship is incredibly flexible and can also adapt to cross-cultural contexts. However, unlike the Palauans, the felons aboard the *Active* do not reciprocate favours and promptly take advantage of the captain's generosity by plotting a mutiny. There are only two people on deck when the mutineers try to take control of the vessel; as it happens, Barrington is one of them. He fights back and 'was immediately joined by the captain and the rest of the officers, who, in a few minutes, drove [the mutineers] all into the hold, and two of the ringleaders were instantly hung at the yard arm' (B, 71).

The mutiny reported in the *Narrative* is not an invention but took place on another ship of the Third Fleet, the *Albermarle*. It was subsequently transposed to the *Active* by the publishers in order to bloat Barrington's seemingly heroic character.[48] But more important than historical accuracy in this case are the representational ambivalences resulting from the captain's decision. Ships are commonly severely regulated spaces, with social relationships depending on hierarchies and strict role allocations for everyone on board. In this context, the 'distances of status, the spaces of authority, the rules of role, the functions of officers' are 'measured precisely and staged with clearly specific rubric and ceremony.'[49] This intricate performative structure 'emplots relationships in unambivalent spaces.'[50] However, the captain of the *Active* chose temporarily to suspend the otherwise clear-cut chain of authority because he had obviously witnessed the poor physical condition of those at the very bottom of the ship's social fabric. He emerges as sentimental subject, addressing 'a politically disenfranchised audience.'[51] Yet this audience ventured outside the discursive universe of the law and thus differs decisively from other sufferers in sentimental fiction, such as beggars, the working poor or slaves. But what is more, the mutineers are repeat offenders who had already broken the

48 Compare the editor's excellent and extensive notes no. 16 & 17 in Rickard ed., *George Barrington's Voyage to Botany Bay*, 125.

49 Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 27.

50 Ibid.

51 Stephen Bending & Stephen Bygrave, 'Introduction,' in Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), vii-xxiv, here xiii.

law, a complicated constellation only remediable by discipline. Accordingly, situational necessity transforms both the vessel and the social interaction it houses into a 'theatre of discipline, not of law.'[52] In addition to the two executed 'ringleaders,' the remaining 'conspirators were re-ironed' (B, 71), a move through which the captain not only reinstates the routines of disciplinary performance, but also effaces the social ambivalence his generosity had engendered vis-à-vis the suffering felons.

Needless to say, by saving the day, Barrington wins the favour of the captain who raises the protagonist's already special status even further. Indeed, 'seldom a day past but some fresh meat or poultry was sent me by the captain, which raised me in the estimation of my messmates, who were no ways displeased at the substitution of pies made of fowl or fresh meat to a dish of salt junk' (B, 71). Because of his former trade, and the fashionable circles he had access to, Barrington is well versed in social affairs and adroitly extends the captain's favours to those around him in order to consolidate his position. For the remainder of the journey, the captain keeps Barrington under his wing, giving him shore leave in both Tenerife and Cape Town. From South Africa, Barrington projects himself and the *Active* into the Antipodes, since 'nothing material happened during the voyage' (B, 73). As soon as he sets foot on Australian soil, the local authorities take over from the captain and continue to pamper him:

> From the report of the captain, I had a most generous reception with the Governor. His excellency said, he had long wanted a proper person as superintendant of the convicts at Paramata [an inland settlement, formerly called Rose Hill], that he appointed me to that office, and that I should take charge of the farm house. (B, 75)

Upon reaching the inland settlement the next day, the farm house turns out to be a pleasant cottage with cultivated gardens and a 'servant who kept the house' (B, 78). Of course, such episodes ascribed to the gentlemanly convict fed the Barrington myth and suggested to some observers in Britain that transportation to the Great Southern Continent was not a strict enough sentence, a position made explicit in the *Narrative* itself when its main voice compares the 'comfortable' situation of 'industrious' convicts with that of the working men in England (B, 78). Measured against Tench's eye-witness account of Barrington, these flowery contortions quickly lose their substance. He informs his

52 Dening, *Bad Language*, 144.

readers of Barrington's 'unavoidable deficiency of dress'[53] and thus counterbalances all too colourful representations of the convict by bringing him back down to earth. However, the mythical appeal of Barrington prevailed over sober reflections and first-hand experiences. But the *Narrative* nonetheless teaches revealing lessons in the politics of cultural production and presents its readers with 'jaunty' stories of an overly confident convict, 'who takes the voyage and the penal colony in his stride,'[54] at the same time as his fate illuminates the emerging cracks in the discourse of global civility.

Like Barrington, Parker introduces her readership to the penal colonies from a marginal position and her *Voyage*, too, demonstrates how global civility starts to change towards the end of the eighteenth century. Unlike Barrington, however, her movements are not determined by the codes of law; instead she is subject to cultural constraints by virtue of her roles as wife and mother. Accordingly, Parker's self-presentation anxiously aims at both fabricating and maintaining a strictly domestic role. Given contemporary determinants of female authorship, as well as the financial success of her publication, the appearance of a domestic alter ego in her account was probably a calculated move and a safe bet, as we may infer from her 'apology for the brevity and other great demerits of the book' caused by her 'domestic situation' (P, 171). This particular perspective provides her readers with many details of the journey proper and, in contrast to Barrington, we become witnesses of the hardships and rare pleasures of maritime long distance travel. Whilst the convict celebrity simply jumps from Cape Town to Australia, Parker becomes 'a collecto[r] of singular things and [a] connoisseur[r] of solitude'[55] at sea. As such, she experiences the downside of the je ne sais quoi, namely 'the most painful [...] interludes of navigation.'[56] But, as we shall see, Parker has her very own way of dealing with the inexpressibility of loneliness aboard the *Gorgon*.

Moving in the field of tension between privacy aboard ship and various inland excursions along the way, Parker initially seems to concentrate on the relation of putatively female pastimes and social events. In so doing, she not only conforms to the roles she assigned herself, but also finds the means to bridge the experiential gap between home and abroad. From the start, then,

53 Tench, *Complete Account*, 157.

54 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 37.

55 Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 12.

56 Ibid.

the *Voyage* paints a detailed picture of the sociable side of travelling: 'On Tuesday, the 15th of March [1791], we sailed from Spithead, by way of St. Helens; and, after a fortnight's seasoning and buffeting in the channel, I began to enjoy the voyage I had undertaken' (P, 186). Her enjoyment, however, is short-lived and she quickly comes to find the 'passage to the island of *Teneriffe* somewhat tedious' (P, 186). Once in the archipelago, Parker continues to write about dinners and invitations, but she also jumps at the opportunity to escape both the confines of the *Gorgon* and parties on shore by going on 'an excursion to *Puerto Oratava*' (187). In this situation, the carefully crafted appearance of domesticity takes a back seat and Parker emerges as intrepid and cultured woman enjoying the great outdoors. Fluent in Spanish, she relishes the 'unusual attention' paid her by local ladies, and when she is mounted on her donkey the rugged 'roads (hardly deserving that appellation)' (187) only increase her boldness: 'indeed little difficulties make social excursions more interesting' (188). Contrasting strongly with her domestic self, as well as the cosy interiors she describes throughout her journey, her public self positively accepts the excursion's challenges and expands narrowly defined modalities of gendered spaces. In addition to escaping the restrictions of such spaces, Parker discreetly complements, if not subverts, her self-imposed domesticity and demonstrates how seemingly conflicting strategies of self-presentation need not cancel each other, even if they are found within one and the same text.

By interweaving and playing with the two sides of her travelling self, Parker shrewdly employs pre-existing patterns of female subjectivity in order to secure her independence after her husband's death. Despite the contributions of a great number of women writers to eighteenth century literature and culture, their 'economic options' remained strictly limited and their legal status 'was equivalent to that of the unemancipated minor'[57] in many European countries. Parker accordingly lived in a society in which the 'full rights of citizenship' were 'generally limited to white property-owning males and invoked a far less inclusive notion of citizenship than did the model of open access to the domain of reason implicit in the Enlightenment metaphor of the public sphere.'[58] But what is more, contemporary circles of explorers and travellers consisted predominantly of men so that Parker was a female

57 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 121 & 123.

58 Ibid., 11.

exception to the rule of male circumnavigators.[59] However, the publication of her adventures is her opportunity to use the expanding literary marketplace not merely to support her family, but to gain autonomy in a society bent on naturalising 'a gendered separation between public and private spheres.'[60] The contrasting representational strands in the *Voyage*, as well as the tensions between them, thus reflect contemporary social pressures at the same time as they provide Parker with the means to subvert them by moving from one end of the public-private spectrum to the other. Hence, whilst Barrington uses his contacts and networks to elevate himself above the other convicts, Parker exploits role expectations and the conventions of female authorship to eke out a space in which she can safeguard her independence vis-à-vis society's pressures on women.

But as she travels further, Parker sustains the smooth, and seemingly innocent, surface of sociable events.[61] In Cape Town, for example, she receives numerous invitations to dinners, parties and dances, frequently commenting on the guest's social rank, relating local habits or simply expressing her enjoyment of the journey. But her accounts of 'feasting and singing' (P, 197) are interspersed with witty remarks, demonstrating her ability to distance herself from both contemporary etiquette and the polite rhetoric she frequently employs. One evening after a prolonged journey on a road, which 'was excessively bad' (P, 192), Parker and her companions arrive 'completely jostled and tired' (P, 193) at the home of the de Witt family. Her hostess seems to have been well-known among English visitors to the Cape; but before Parker provides the culinary details of her stay, Mrs. de Witt is the target of her all too honest reflections: 'her bulk, comparatively speaking, was nearly equal to that of a Dutch man of war, being remarkably low in stature, her size was rendered still more conspicuous' (P, 193). But since neither the food nor the company were to be complained of, we may assume that the rest of her time at Mrs. De Witt's house was agreeable for everyone involved.

Yet it is here in the midst of Cape Town's lavish social life that the true purpose of Parker's journey makes itself felt. One morning, curiosity 'directed my steps to a window, whence I beheld the small remains of his Majesty's ship the Guardian' (P, 194). As we have already seen, the *Guardian* was shipwrecked off the Cape in 1789. Like the *Gorgon*, it was on a relief mission to the penal

59 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 29.

60 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 121.

61 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 29.

colonies and in this situation triggers 'disagreeable reflections' in Parker, arising 'from the idea of a probability of our sharing the fate of the above vessel' (P, 194). A little later, two ships arrive on their return journey from Australia and she 'did not receive any favourable account' (P, 196) of the state of her destination. Hence, 'every circumstance served to assure us how anxiously they waited the appearance of hour happy bark' (P, 196). From then on, our female protagonist frequently reflects on the condition of both the penal settlements and their inhabitants. In so doing, Parker not only demonstrates that sentimental scenes are 'reliant on the very suffering they lament,'[62] she also transposes the literature of sentiment and sensibility onto a global level. Unlike Keate, however, who uses the same aesthetic paradigm in order to bridge the gap between the landward and seaward sides of the beach, Parker's reflections emphasise the changing nature of that very paradigm. Whilst 'the moral ambivalence of sensibility is also the source of its peculiar force,'[63] Parker considerably narrows its representational range by repeatedly anticipating the pleasure she will derive from the *Gorgon*'s arrival in the Antipodes. Just as the sufferer-spectator constellation becomes immediately complicated by the presence of felons in Barrington's account, it is rendered ambivalent in Parker's case by her excessive self-involvement when it comes to the colonists' suffering.

Accordingly, our female traveller-author frequently prioritises her emotional satisfaction over the objects of her mission: she not only assumes the role of the sentimental protagonist, but also emerges as overly egocentric in this regard. Thus, the bad weather immediately before reaching her destination is conducive to further reflections on the colony's state:

> [A] sudden squall and perverse winds coming on, deprived us of the satisfaction of reaching the wished-for haven for three long days – at least they appeared so to every one of us; when we reflected that the colony stood in such great need of the supplies with which we were so plenteously stored: however, with patience, the sovereign remedy of all evils, and the travellers best support, I passed the time in adjusting the cabin, and in other preparations prior to our going on shore. (Parker, 198)

In this passage, Parker resorts to her role as housewife in order to cope with the delay caused by the storm. But it is not long before she conjures up the

62 Bending & Bygrave, 'Introduction,' vii.

63 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 214.

British sufferers in Australia again, retelling the entire story behind her journey in the process:

> At midnight the wind shifted to the westward, which brought on fine clear weather, and I found myself once more at leisure to anticipate the satisfaction which our arrival would diffuse throughout the colony; for, owing to the loss of his majesty's ship The Guardian, the governor and officers were reduced to such scanty allowance, that, in addition to the fatigues and hardships which they had experienced when the colony was in its infant state, they were obliged, from a scarcity of provisions, to toil through the wearisome day with the anxious and melancholy expectations of increasing difficulties. What then could afford us more heart-felt pleasure that the near event of relieving them? for it is surely happiness to succour the distressed; a satisfaction we fully experienced. (P, 199)

Captain Watkin Tench, whom we already know from his eagerness to see the Prince of Pickpockets, provides a complementary perspective from the Antipodean shores. It corroborates the reports Parker received in South Africa – 'we hailed [the *Gorgon*'s arrival] with rapture and exultation'[64] –, and demonstrates the ambivalence at the heart of sentimental representations of social evils and distressful situations. However, the frequency with which Parker dwells on her own feelings runs counter to sentimentalism's reciprocal inclusiveness, widening the gap between the sufferer on the one hand and the spectator on the other. Her expectations are always reflexive in this respect and place those whose situation she comes to alleviate at a representational distance. The following passage, for instance, begins with her afflicted countrymen on shore, but quickly switches over to Parker's exultation:

> With what anxiety did they await the ship's arrival! with what eagerness did they hasten onboard! The circumstances are too deeply engraven on my memory ever to be eradicated; but, alas! My pen is utterly incompetent to the task of describing our feelings on this occasion. (P, 199)

Adding that 'our ship diffused universal joy throughout the whole settlement' (P, 200), Parker once more reinforces her own point of view without attempting to individualise either a convict or a supervisor. Her arrival in New South Wales is thus indicative of the increasing ambivalence in the literature of sentiment and sensibility towards the end of the eighteenth century at the same

64 Tench, *Complete Account*, 139.

time as it reflects transformations in the discourse of global civility. Despite the *Gorgon*'s arrival, then, the rising numbers of transported felons, as well as a lack of qualified superintendents, exacerbate the colony's situation further – a problem which Barrington experienced first-hand.

2. Watching from a Distance: Barrington and Parker on Convicts

Parker is not alone in representing the felons collectively. Even though he is always close to them, Barrington never individualises one convict, neither during the passage nor in the colony. He is at once aware of their lamentable state and reluctant to identify with them, always keeping those who are his fellow felons at a representational distance. There is, accordingly, a persistent split between the representing subject and the represented objects, which draws the reader's attention to the plight of the transportees whilst simultaneously avoiding close contact or direct action to ameliorate their situation. However, after having settled in his new home, Barrington draws a dire picture of the convicts' constitution:

> Numbers of convicts fall victims, but it must not be wholly ascribed to the weather, as the weak state in which they were, for the most part when landed, would, were it a more favourable climate, be attended with a considerable mortality; and they are generally too weak that they cannot be put to any labour. (B, 112)

As is the case with slaves shipped across the Atlantic, the reasons behind the high mortality rate of convicts are the conditions under which they are transported. Echoing Barrington's words, Tench's report is equally alarming: 'Such was the weakly state of the new comers, that for several weeks little real benefit to the colony was derived from so great a nominal addition to our number.'[65] Upon arriving in the Antipodes, Parker's husband seems to have witnessed the convicts' hardships, too; however, he acted rather promptly: 'From a most humane sugesttion [sic] of Captain Parker, of the Gorgon, the governor issued orders for a regular survey to be taken of the condition of the convicts on their landing from the different transports' (112). Suffering, we may conclude, was a pervasive feature of both transportation and colonial life, as well as frequently reported and represented by visitors to New South

65 Ibid., 51.

Wales. Yet only a few tried to ameliorate it by directly addressing its causes, such as the shortage of supplies, the want of space aboard ship and a lack of medical supervision.

From the outset, Barrington is an attentive observer of his surroundings. Witty, intelligent and well-connected even after his conviction, both his instinct and his former experiences in London's fashionable circles always seem to point him in the right direction, but when it comes to other convicts, his empathy is strictly limited. Before leaving England, his special friend made sure that the former celebrity could sail to Australia in relative comfort, especially compared to the bulk of felons aboard the *Active*. Though ready to describe their hardships, he emphasises his special status, with class, taste and education being central to his self-presentation. On the morning of embarkation, for example, he depicts his fellow travellers and draws a clear line between his seemingly civil self and its criminal others:

> This procession, though early, and but few spectators, made a deep impression on my mind; and the ignominy of being thus mingled with felons of all descriptions, many scarce a degree above the brute creation, intoxicated with liquor, and shocking the ears of those who passed with blasphemy, oaths, and songs the most offensive to modesty, inflicted a punishment more severe than the sentence of my country, and fully avenged that society I had so much wronged. (B, 69)

By describing the felons and their outrageous behaviour, Barrington marks himself off from them because they insult his delicacy of feeling and taste, which are undoubtedly qualities of a gentleman. As such, he refuses to identify with the drunkards around him at the same time as he dehumanises them. In this situation, then, his class-consciousness prevents him from seeing anything other than mere animals in the rest of the convicts. Accordingly, this clear-cut split between the genteel pickpocket and the body of felons illustrates the limits of global civility. Obviously from a different social background and well-schooled in his early life, Barrington is acutely aware of both his status and difference, and this awareness curbs his ability to express empathy in the face of suffering.

In the above passage, the limits of discursive inclusiveness and empathy are connected to social determinants. Forced by his sentence to mingle with those 'scarce a degree above the brute creation,' Barrington encounters an environment he was able to avoid during his London-years. However, the time aboard the *Active* compels him to witness the conditions of transportation and

eliminates the possibility of remaining silent, even though he is spatially separated from the offenders. They are thus a constant presence and confront him with a socially charged variation of the sufferer-spectator constellation, in which a gentlemanly offender comments on a collectively depicted mass of transportees. In this context, global civility cracks and Barrington's representational ambivalence breaks through:

> My fellow prisoners to the amount of upwards of two hundred, were all ordered into the hold which was rendered as convenient as circumstances would admit, battens being fixed for and aft for hammocks, which were being hung seventeen inches apart from each other; but being encumbered with their irons, together with the want of fresh air, soon rendered their situation truly deplorable (B, 70).

Despite calling the felons his 'fellow prisoners,' Barrington seems to be content with both the spatial and representational distances between himself and those whose appalling circumstances he describes. Upon reaching the penal colony, he is neither afraid of reiterating their distress nor of rendering the horrors of transportation understandable to his readers. Yet in this situation his empathy is strictly and sharply limited, since he refuses to single out one or two convicts in order for his readers to identify with their suffering:

> [T]he convicts were all ordered on shore; their appearance was truly deplorable, the generality of them being emaciated by disease, foul air &c. and those who laboured under no bodily disorder, from the scantiness of their allowance were in no better plight (B, 75).

In this passage, Barrington uses the narrative strategies employed by sentimental literature, but is oblivious to the emotional impetus that usually impels well-off observers to help their distressed fellow-citizens. Instead of evincing genuine fellow-feeling for the convicts and eliciting a reaction in his readers, Barrington relies on the complex theatrical apparatus of sentimental fiction and polite sociability but does not follow it through. Accordingly, he consistently sustains the split between his genteel self and the represented convicts, thereby reinforcing the power differential on which his self-presentation relies whilst simultaneously contributing to global civility's increasing ambivalence.

Immediately after being appointed to the post of superintendent at the inland settlement Parramatta (formerly Rose Hill), Barrington takes things even further. He assumes the paradoxical role of a criminal enforcing the law

and subsequently always moves 'among the convicts at one remove.'[66] When '[i]n the morning a general muster of the convicts took place' they

> were informed by the officer of the trust of the governor had been pleased to repose in me, and that any misbehavior or disobedience of orders issued from me, would be as severely punished, as though they proceeded from the governor himself: they were dismissed to their several employments. I proceeded through the different gangs of people, observing their occupations; and found them much more attentive to their business, and respectful to those over them, than I could possibly have imagined. (B, 78)

Endowed with special powers, Barrington is overly confident and represents himself in an aloof manner. Before the governor's appointment he had to rely on the social connections of his former life, but now he has acquired both a new role and a position of authority. Indeed, men 'like Barrington soon found themselves in demand for supervision of the penal settlement,'[67] but his new job also agrees with his extravagant tendencies to draw himself larger than life. And what is more, the above passage cements the division between our male protagonist and the bulk of convicts, and thus illustrates the transformations in the inclusive discourse of global civility.

Unlike Barrington, Parker did not witness the conditions of transportation, nor was she exposed to large numbers of convicts before her arrival in New South Wales. En route to Australia, the wretched condition of the young colony becomes a screen onto which she projects her expected emotional satisfaction, repeatedly conjuring up the sufferer-spectator constellation and exposing its intrinsic ambivalence by overemphasising her part in it. Accordingly, the anticipated pleasure of providing relief, as well as the relation of social events, figures as coping mechanism enabling her to deal with the je ne sais quoi of maritime long distance travel. The convicts are kept at a distance in this context not only by Parker's reflections on her emotional reward, but also by her lack of knowledge of how the British authorities organised the transportation of felons. In many different respects, Parker emerges as an educated and clever woman, using both the book market and her readership's expectations to secure her independence by skilfully crafting the impression of a housewife aboard ship. But she seems to have known remarkably little of the economics behind transportation: talking to a crew member of one of

66 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 38.

67 Ibid., 37.

the convict ships, Parker finds out that after having 'landed their convicts and discharged their lading, the masters of them were at full liberty to proceed upon their owners' employ' (P, 201). But 'the fear of losing the time of their employers' (P, 201) and monetary concerns had disastrous consequences for the felons:

> 'Their appearance,' to use the words of Captain Parker, 'will be ever fresh in my memory. I visited the hospital, and was surrounded by mere skeletons of men – in every bed, and on every side, lay the dying and the dead. Horrid spectacle! It makes me shudder when I reflect, that it will not be the last exhibition of this kind of human misery that will take place in this country, whilst the present method of transporting these miserable wretches is pursued; for, the more of them that die, the more it redounds to the interest of the ship-owners and masters, who are paid so much a-head by government, for each individual, whether they arrive in the colony or not.' (Parker, 200)

Shipping the convicts to the Antipodes was a business opportunity for private contractors who used the Botany Bay decision as a means of financing their outward journeys to the Far East. After discharging their human cargo, those with a special permission went 'to China, to take in a freight of Teas on account of the East-India Company' (P, 196). As the report of Captain Parker reveals, time, money and profit overrode humanitarian concerns and it seems that his wife was not fully aware of the 'human misery' before she departed England.

Despite becoming aware of the rationale behind transportation, Parker shuns a detailed representation of its consequences. Instead, her depiction of life in the penal colony shifts to its sociable side, which either effaces the felons or merely registers them 'as a brooding, invisible presence.'[68] Like Barrington's account of them, Parker's descriptions give way to an elevated aloofness, in which she is equally detached from those she represents. Exploring the vicinity of Botany Bay, Parker, 'Mrs. King, Mr Johnson, and the Ladies who resided at the colony' 'made several pleasant excursions up the Cove to the settlement called *Paramatta:*'

> Upon our first arrival at Paramatta, I was surprised to find that so great a progress had been made in this new settlement, which contains above one thousand convicts, besides the military. (P, 206)

68 Coleman, 'Introduction,' 31.

According to Deirdre Coleman, 'Parker never gets close enough to the felons to describe them to us.'[69] However, the consistently detailed accounts of people, events and landscapes throughout her journey create a very different impression and indicate that she was well aware of her surroundings. In New South Wales, she continues these descriptions but largely excludes the felons from them. Parker had ample opportunity to witness all transactions of the new colony and is ready to relate its progress or social life, but emerges as reluctant to focus on its most distressing side. In the same way, her mention of the military is not merely listing the properties of Paramatta and making them accessible for her readers: during the ensuing night, Parker 'found every thing perfectly quiet, although surrounded by more than one thousand convicts' (P, 206). They probably left her uneasy and she needed to reassure herself that 'the military' could protect her in the event of danger.

In order to avoid describing 'the poor miserable objects' that 'died in great numbers' (P, 200) at sea or after their arrival, Parker resorts to collective representation. Leaving the colony, she thanks the governor for his hospitality, reemphasising the pleasant and sociable side of life in Australia. However, the representationally excluded felons creep back into the picture, albeit in highly formal and abstract language:

> The uniform attention which the Governor paid us during our short stay at the colony will always be remembered with singular satisfaction: - he may be justly called, like the Monarch of Great Britain, "The Father of his People;" and the convict who has forsaken the crimes that sent him to this country, looks up to him with reverence, and enjoys the reward of his industry in peace and thankfulness. (P, 211)

Nowhere – neither in her descriptions of sociable domesticity, nor in reporting events aboard the *Gorgon* – is Parker as detached from what she relates as in this passage. Her aloofness prevents her from sympathising with the plight of the convicts, and the representational distance between the subject and the object of the relief mission develops into a constellation over which only the representing subject, but not the represented object, can exercise authority. Predicated on unilateral power rather than reciprocity, such an abstract summary of the convicts' lives effaces the moral implications of the sufferer-spectator relationship and suggests that transportation is reformative despite its human cost. Parker, like Barrington, creates a barrier between herself and the

69 Ibid., 30-1.

felons at the same time as she briefly alludes to their hardships. Accordingly, both authors are aware of ubiquitous suffering but refuse to make it accessible for their readers by individualising a convict's fate. Whilst portrayals of the distressed in sentimental literature aim at eliciting emotional responses, similar constellations in both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* remain superficial, abstract or distanced. In this respect, both authors transform the representational and discursive patterns of global civility, to which curiosity, mutuality and the readiness to be favourably impressed are essential, into a restricted paradigm in which the recognition of the other by the self is either situationally contigent or dependent on the traveller's idiosyncrasies.

3. In Unknown Territory: Barrington and Parker on Cultural Difference

The representation of convicts in Barrington and Parker's accounts illustrates the changing nature of global civility in the Pacific arena, which is connected to the Botany Bay decision on a political level, and to an increasingly controversial discussion of sensibility on an aesthetic one.[70] The presence of felons in this context complicates the overall picture considerably because they ventured outside the confines of polite society by breaking the law. In so doing, global civility, as well as the literature of sentiment and sensibility, is stretched to its limits to include a group of people beyond its representational range. However, the hardships of the transportees aboard the convict ships are reminiscent of slaves and slavery, one of sentimentalism's most popular themes. Accordingly, the transportation of convicts to New South Wales evokes the suffer-spectator constellation, through which the felons become representable in the context of sensibility and its reformist agenda. But both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* illustrate the difficulty of incorporating those who broke the law in a discursive universe dedicated to inclusiveness, reciprocity and even-handed exchange. The result is, as we have seen, an ambivalent one, in which the convicts and their plight are mentioned in both accounts at the same time as the authors keep them at a safe representational distance.

In addition to social difference, Barrington and Parker also comment on racial difference by virtue of the presence of Australian natives. Their representations of the Aborigines are more nuanced than their depictions of felons

70 Compare: Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 190-221.

and thus show the ways in which the relationship between self and other within the framework of global civility has become more complicated, without running the risk of disintegrating, however. Indeed, the 'dark-skinned visitors who exchanged fresh fish for baked bread'[71] were by no means unwelcome intruders in the settlements of the Sidney region. On the contrary, Governor 'Phillip was anxious to encourage any system of barter which could lay the foundations for cooperation and continuing peaceful relations.'[72] Barrington, too, observes that the natives' surplus of fish might be a gateway to establishing a relationship based on reciprocity and trust:

> As the natives frequently caught more fish than they could immediately use, great pains have been taken to induce them to barter it at Paramata for bread, vegetables, &c. Several of them carried on this traffic, and there was reason to hope that a tolerable fish-market would soon be established. (B, 105)

Given the state of the newly-established colonies, the English settlers depended on all the support they could get. Establishing mutually improving relations with the Aborigines was thus crucial to survival because the newcomers found themselves in unknown territory, had to put up with 'successive crop failures'[73] and suffered from a lack of agricultural skills. But by interacting with the natives, the settlers had access to local knowledge and resources. In this regard, then, initiating bi-directional traffic with the natives of New South Wales might be a means to secure bare necessities and could eventually lead to an encounter framed by reciprocity and exchange.

However, English attempts at intensifying the tentative relations between themselves and their Australian counterparts are deeply flawed from the start. Governor 'Phillip wanted an intermediary to demonstrate to the local Aborigines the benefits of mixing with the settlers'[74] and thus sent some soldiers 'to get a man or two in his possession who might be taught enough of the language to render themselves useful negociators' (B, 89). The governor's idea aimed at ongoing and peaceful relations with the natives, but results in the visible denigration of the two captured individuals:

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71 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 44.

72 Rickard, *Voyage to Botany Bay*, 149, note no. 159.

73 Rickard, 'Introduction,' 37.

74 Rickard, *Voyage to Botany Bay*, 140, note no. 92.

> Banalong [one of the two captured natives] […] was a smart, active, good-looking young man, of a lively disposition: they were treated with the utmost kindness; but least they should attempt an escape they wore each of them an iron on one leg, with a piece of rope spliced to it, and a man was ordered for each, who was responsible for their security. – Wherever they went they were accompanied by their leaders, holding one end of the rope. (B, 90)

This passage problematizes the reciprocity inherent in global civility because the encounter it depicts is neither voluntary nor based on mutual curiosity. Necessity and want rather compel the English to trade with the natives, whose readiness to do so seems to have been situationally contigent or inconsistent in the settler's perception. Although Barrington emphasises 'utmost kindness,' the two men cannot not conceive of themselves as captives, which is why this scene not only illustrates the increasing ambivalence of inclusive representational frameworks, but also prefigures the coercive, and often fatal, treatment of native peoples by Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries throughout the Pacific region. Whilst trying to educate a go-between might have seemed like a good idea, its realisation is incommensurate with the inclusive and emancipatory impulses of global civility.

But if such scenes open up the ugly face of European exploration and discovery, they also illustrate the complexities of transnational contact zones, in which forced enculturation was coeval with peaceful attempts at cross-cultural commerce, and even-handed contact was interrupted by occasional hostilities. Accordingly, Barrington's readers can find another forceful, but also slightly ambivalent instance, of Anglo-Aboriginal interaction in the last pages of his *Narrative*, in which racial difference is represented by the convict celebrity in the form of a suffering native woman. In the following situation, Barrington took a stroll in the outback with his companion, a boy called Tim. When the day draws to a close, a kangaroo suddenly appears before them and is shot dead by Barrington; but the animal being too heavy to carry home, they are obliged to spend the night in the wild. Looking for a safe place to sleep in, they suddenly hear a groan. Barrington 'was at first for retreating, but on recollecting that I might render some service to the afflicted, and that I equally stood in need of assistance' (B, 116), he decides to approach the spot where the groan was issuing from. The emotionally charged tinge of his reflections on reciprocity evokes a sentimental scenario between a distressed observer and a needy individual, and prolongs itself into the description of his ensuing discovery:

> [A]pproaching the entrance of the cave, a most interesting scene presented itself to my view: a young creature seated on a jet of rock, mournfully contemplating the extended body of a man whose expiring groan had just pierced our ears: all her faculties were so absorbed with grief so that we were yet quite entirely unnoticed: a sympathising sorrow pervaded all my frame. (B, 116)

The native woman, whose name is 'Yeariana' (B, 118), is alone with her injured brother. This doubly enticing view is both a sentimental scenario and an exotic novelty for the observer Barrington. He, in turn, evinces fellow-feeling in the form of 'a sympathising sorrow [that] pervaded all my frame' (B, 116). In the Australian outback, then, we find the sufferer-spectator relationship adapted to a cross-cultural context, demonstrating how Barrington's *Narrative* incorporates cultural difference without giving way to a reductive description of the above scene. Of course, a suffering female native is an enticing view lending itself to being expressed in sentimental terms, but this scene nonetheless demonstrates a benevolent, less egocentric side of Barrington's character.

Barrington's spatial and emotional distance from the bulk of convicts rendered global civility ambivalent both aboard the *Active* and at Parramatta. But faced with Yeariana's situation, he overcomes his extravagant tendencies and represents the encounter in sentimental terms, allowing her to exist in her own right as culturally different, but nonetheless fully recognised human being. Caution and initial mistrust are mutual when Barrington approaches the cave, but both overcome their apprehensions and enter into a (non-verbal) dialogue comparable to the one on the Palauan beach:

> I endeavoured by every sign I could suggest, to do away her fears and retired a few paces, leaving her at liberty to go from the cave had she chose.
>
> I made signs to her that if she would go and acquaint her friends with her situation, I would watch by her brother till her return: her eyes glistened with joy as she gathered my meaning, and with an assenting inclination of her head, more eloquent and expressive of her feelings than in the power of the most refined language to convey, she quitted us with a celerity quickened by fraternal love, and in a few moments was out of sight. (B, 117)

Previous representational ambivalences in Barrington's account notwithstanding, in this urgent situation, in which one party lost their way and another has to deal with a potentially fatal injury, the transported pick-

pocket and the native girl cooperate across cultural divides. Conversing by signs, both sides not only establish an even-handed and mutually enriching exchange, but also act in a fully-fledged sentimental frame. Accordingly, Barrington represents Yeariana's reaction by using sentimentalism's 'repertoire of conventions', in which 'fainting, weeping, sighing, hand-holding, mute gestures, the beat of the pulse, blushing – and so on'[75] were included. During Yeariana's absence, he successfully reanimates her brother, following 'the imperative call of humanity' (B, 117). After her return an unnamed 'old man examined the wound, and with great skill extracted the barb' (B, 118). Following this operation, the natives invite Barrington and Tim to their 'cave:' 'The reception we met with from these grateful people, almost bordered upon adoration!' (B, 118). Hence, initial trepidation on both sides of the contact zone need neither give rise to ambivalence nor conflict, but can engender friendly interaction and mutual support. This particular situation thus bends sentimentalism to cross-cultural exigencies and defies reductive notions of racial difference at the same time as it renders understandable the humanity of Australia's native population to English readers.

In Parker's *Voyage*, by contrast, there is a distinctly ambivalent undertone when she is among the Aborigines, repeatedly resurfacing in various constellations and situations. But by and large, the settlers and the natives interact peacefully in her account after tentative relationships had been established. Unlike her aloofness in the representation of convicts, Parker is frequently very close to the Aborigines, describing them in some gender-specific detail. The men 'ornament themselves with a fish-bone fastened in the gristle of the nose, which makes them appear really frightful,' whilst the women 'are extremely negligent of their persons and are filthy to a degree scarcely credible' (P, 209). And from rubbing themselves with fish oil, they 'smell so loathsome, that it is impossible to approach them without disgust' (P, 209). However, curiosity seemed to have prevailed over repulsion in Parker's case: 'Notwithstanding the general appearance of the natives,' she writes, 'I never felt the least fear in their company being always with a party more than sufficient for my protection' (P, 209). Seemingly perfectly at ease, she performs being calm because of her countrymen's 'protection' and support:

> I have been seated in the woods with twelve or fourteen of them, men, women, and children. Had I objected, or shewn any disgust at their appear-

75 Ellis, *Politics of Sensibility*, 19

> ance, it would have given them some reason to suppose that I was not what they term their damely, or friend; and would have rendered my being in their company not only unpleasant, but unsafe. (P, 209-10)

As if to reassure both herself and her readers of her calmness, she mentions the potential consequences of showing her true feelings vis-à-vis the Aborigines. Keen on observing their social life, and accompanied by her countrymen, she overcomes her disgust and finds herself in close proximity to them. But although she is ready to study a largely unknown people, she remains caught up between attraction and repulsion. In this situation, then, her reserve prevents the gathering from opening out into an encounter governed by mutual interest and reciprocity, and thus illustrates both the increasingly ambivalent representation of cultural difference and the incipient transformations within global civility.

Despite Parker's uneasiness, the encounter does not go awry, nor does it degenerate into a representation of essentialised, or unbridgeable, difference. Her experience of the Antipodes is rather equidistant from emphatic practices of global civility on the one hand, and instances of wholesale colonialism on the other. Cross-cultural curiosity in the *Voyage* is thus counterbalanced by situations that prefigure the exoticization of native lifeways for European spectators in later decades, in which differential practices were not only represented in relational terms, but also scrutinised, observed or denigrated from consolidated and unchallenged look-outs. Aboard the anchored *Gorgon*, Parker finds such a look-out:

> The natives very frequently surrounded our vessel with their canoes. [...] Sometimes, for the sake of amusement, I have thrown them ribbands and other trifles, which they would as frequently tye round their toes as any other part of their person. (P, 210)

This situation entails a crude voyeuristic and self-centred element, in which the other is caught up in a hierarchized relationality. Just as Parker's aloofness in her representation of convicts prevents her from empathising with their plight, her lack of comprehension of cultural difference obviates the intensification of already existing contacts. Yet in the paragraph subsequent to this passage, Parker performs a dramatic representational shift when she suddenly relates the fate of Banalong, one of the captured males in Barrington's *Narrative*. He was brought to England by Governor Phillip and pays Parker a

visit; upon seeing a picture of her deceased husband, 'the tear of sensibility trickled down his cheeks' and he

> spoke, with all the energy of Nature, of the pleasing excursion which they had made together up the country. The above is one amongst many instances which I could relate of the natural goodness of their hearts; and I flatter myself that the time is hastening when they will no longer be considered as mere savages; – and wherefore should they? (P, 210)

Safely lodged in the comforts of her home, Parker is ready to represent Banalong in sentimentalised terms. Though influenced by Rousseauesque tropes of the noble savage, this portrayal differs decisively from the disgust Parker related earlier, even ending on an emancipatory, inclusive note. When measured against other episodes in her account, this passage demonstrates that the representation of cross-cultural encounters has become situationally contingent and contextually dependent. In this regard, her *Voyage* presents a new turn on global civility, in which favourable representations of other cultures are replaced by ambivalent, and sometimes denigratory, depictions of extra-European peoples. This representational rupture was caused by a multifactorial set of conditions, and is rooted in the Botany Bay decision, the changing representational dynamics of sentimentality and the various degrees of cultural and social difference that Parker encountered.

Both Barrington and Parker present their readers with strangely detached depictions of felons and ambivalent, or shifting, representations of Aborigines. But in the *Voyage* there appears a category of racial difference which we do not find in the *Narrative*, and that is slaves. Parker visits the Cape colony twice – before as well as after her journey to Australia – but she consistently preserves the boundaries and distinctions between herself and the slaves, and in so doing disenfranchises them discursively and materially. Especially during her second visit to the Cape, she spends more time relating the life of its socially excluded workforce, but only to illustrate the '*mild treatment of the Slaves at the Cape*' (P, 216; emphasis in original). She tells her readers time and again that 'the slaves were treated at the Cape with the greatest humanity: and only in name bore the degrading distinction' (P, 216) whilst simultaneously mentioning that 'as a token of their servile condition, they always go barefooted, and without a hat' (P, 217). She continues her extensive survey of them by admiringly describing how in

> the houses of the wealthy, every one of the company has a slave behind his chair to wait upon him: this slave has frequently a large palm-leaf in his hand, by way of a fan to drive away the flies, which are extremely troublesome in these hot climates (P, 217).

In this passage, Parker deprives the slaves of their humanity and reduces them to the status of mere instruments, which 'drive away flies' in the 'troublesome' climate of the Cape. They emerge as silent participants and are unable to articulate themselves in similar fashion to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which he calls the 'slave [...] a living tool.'[76]

Given the popularity and thrust of the abolition movement in contemporary Britain, it is surprising that Parker neither objects to nor criticises slavery in the Cape Colony. Rather, she implicitly ponders the advantages of a slave-owning society, as her reports of everyday life in South Africa show. But even in situations in which she does not reflect on their usefulness, the relationship between herself and the represented slaves always rests on a clear-cut power differential. During her extended sojourn into South Africa on her return journey she resides again at the de Witt family's house and tells her readers that 'there were thirty slaves belonging to this house:'

> The beauty of one of the females particularly struck my attention; the elegance of her deportment, the symmetry of her features, and the pleasing curl of her fine dark hair, could not pass unnoticed by any, excepting those who were unwilling to pay that tribute to the simplicity of nature, which all the assistance of art could not place them in the possession of. (P, 216)

Unlike Parker's sentimentalised portrayal of Banalong, this passage does not balance the natural simplicity she sees with a feature of metropolitan culture, such as a tear of sensibility. Instead, the female slave before her is a distanced beauty, which is nonetheless close enough to be admired by Parker. This scene thus mirrors her attitude to slaves and slavery, which encompasses numerous episodes of their putative usefulness at the same time as it quietly, but decidedly, advertises the advantages of a slave-owning society. In Parker's case, then, global civility loses its all-encompassing impulse not only by virtue of domestic cultural changes in a politically turbulent time, but also, and more

76 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, transl., with introduction and notes, by Martin Ostwald (New York & London: Macmillan, 1962), 236.

importantly, because of a multifaceted and complex presence of various categories of social, cultural and racial difference.

4. By way of Conclusion: Barrington, Parker and Alterity in the 1790s

Barrington and Parker's ambivalent attitudes towards social and cultural difference are not merely idiosyncratic features of their travel accounts. They rather reflect conflictual constellations implicit in the age of reason in general, and the political volatility of the revolutionary period in particular. Despite the cosmopolitan spirit of the Enlightenment, its contours became blurred and started to change in the late eighteenth century, especially when European intellectuals started to respond to the reverberations of the political upheavals in France. But just as the 'enabling fiction'[77] of the European Republic of Letters was first and foremost the stomping ground of male intellectuals, so were the responses to the political maelstrom that swept Europe in the 1790s. By the same token, most of the travellers discussed in this study were almost exclusively well-educated men, who travelled for commercial or career-related purposes at the same time as they were bent on exposing themselves to a different cultural universe. And even if their experiences in foreign lands were accidental as in Keate's *Account*, they were framed in the idioms of polite culture. In other words, polite culture, and the representations of global civility it engendered, was an emancipatory, inclusive and egalitarian discourse, which is inextricably linked to the emergence of rationalist thinking from the 17th century onwards. It had its blind spots, as the non-inclusion of the Jews in Blount's *Voyage into the Levant* or the marginalisation of the Chinese sailors in Keate's *Account* show. But only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did it start to crack under the influences of a plethora of events, such as the trafficking in human lives or the increasing political influence of European countries, such as Britain and France. The long-standing history of the slave trade shows that trafficking humans was not new per se, but the Botany Bay decision for the first time subjected white Europeans to its heinous practices. Accordingly, the class-conscious Prince of Pickpockets and the wife of Captain Parker suddenly found themselves on the way to Australia, but they viewed and described contemporary events from marginal

77 Cook, *Epistolary Bodies*, 114.

positions. As a result, both the *Narrative* and the *Voyage* represent perspectives that are distinct from those who set out to the Ottoman Empire or the sea of islands before Barrington and Parker. Coupled with contemporary developments, their journeys necessitate a discursive transformation within global civility. On the other hand, the shift of power from the East to the West in the course of the eighteenth century was neither abrupt nor did it result in the immediate disempowerment of the once dominant Ottomans. Such changes take time and are accompanied by slow, uneven, but nonetheless noticeable, transformations as we shall see when we return to Islamic lands in the next chapter.