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Lands of Hope and Glory? Englishness, Race and Colonialism

These six queens of crime are not chroniclers of Britain when it comes to the negotiation of national identity. The kingdoms of Wales and Scotland rarely merit a murder. Northern and western regions of England occasionally appear as remote areas in which wealthy southern settlers fail to evade nefarious pasts. These six novelists are artists of the dominant region of English political culture in the twentieth century, the southern and eastern lands radiating from London. The detection of crime in the English hearth and home almost obsessively concentrates on what are still known as the 'home counties'. Therefore this chapter will look at the novels in the context of the construction of a dominant form of Englishness, still deeply imbued with class structures (see Chapter 3), but nevertheless formed in tension with a constant preoccupation of twentieth-century Britain: race and the legacy of colonialism.

The post-heroic detective and his more intuitive style of operation is one mode of illustrating or even debating 'Englishness'. Psychic construction of the detective through detection can make use of cultural difference, with the detective functioning as a kind of post-colonial focus in the novel, seeking to unite (not always successfully) diverse ethnic and racial perspectives. The issue of racism within the writings needs careful evaluation, particularly with regard to the golden age authors. Do Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers, for instance, merely reflect their period's racism and anti-semitism, or does their work reveal something more complex and nuanced? Undoubtedly, some golden age writing does engage in what Edward Said has called 'Orientalism'.¹ Here a Western identity is psychically constructed by projection onto a homogenised Eastern 'other' of precisely what the occidental is supposed *not* to be: irrational, savage and dark. Such

Orientalism within detective fiction needs consideration, in particular for the way it interacts with the self-conscious artificiality of the genre which in turn extends to the parodic development of English stereotypes.

The play of artifice and self-referentiality, which I argue is central to these writers, leads to a theatrical notion of Englishness in the sense of national identity as 'made up'. Such constructions operate in tension with both the literary and the political: with traditions of literary pastoral as well as with issues of colonialism.

Detecting England

If we take the figure of the detective and his companions in what I have described as a leaning to a more collective mode, then we can see that Englishness and ethnicity is immediately brought to the fore in the novels. The exception to the roll call of indigenous detectives is most obviously a Belgian, Hercule Poirot. Not only is he not English, he is most determinedly foreign. An affront to English masculinity in his neatness, fussiness, demands for fine food and central heating, Poirot is frequently to be found reflecting negatively on English habits and sentimentality. His ultra-English companion, Hastings, faithfully conveys Poirot's continental mannerisms, spiced with his own comically presented narrow English outlook. Taking his surname from the greatest English military defeat prior to a successful invasion by a French-speaking people, Hastings's ironic double act with his stupendously more intelligent detecting friend is a comically bathetic repetition of the national defeat of English pride and aggression. Poirot always wins. It is frequently his specifically non-English habits which prove successful against Hastings's mundane taking of stereotypical characters at face value.

Interestingly, Miss Marple's first appearance in a novel is in a collective of stereotypical Englishness: as one of a selection of gossipy elderly women entertained by the vicar's wife to tea in *The Murder at the Vicarage*.² Nevertheless, this quintessence of middle-class English femininity is flipped into a conscious 'other' by the vicar's wife, (im)patient Griselda, who characterises the women as cannibals. Her musing on which object of village scandal would be consumed for tea is foregrounded further by her need to relieve her feelings at this trying occasion by concocting a fiction about missionaries and cannibals.³ Naturally, it is Miss Marple who spots the untruth. The whole episode

emphasises an awareness of Orientalising as a self-conscious device and the construction of English identity as overtly fictional in relation to the colonial 'other'.

For the later detectives, Wexford, Dalgliesh and Cordelia Gray, relationships with detecting companions (however distant and mythical Dalgliesh is to Gray), becomes a matter of debating whether an English identity can be coherently constructed in contemporary Britain. P.D. James's more recent creation of Inspector Kate Miskin, a young police officer who grew up on an inner-city council estate, seems partially designed to emphasise the difficulty of connecting to Dalgliesh's masculine solitariness, far more predicated upon English heritage traditions of architecture, art and religion. If the professional relationship of Kate and Dalgliesh fails at times to evoke a coherent sense of 'England' from within the corporate identity of the police, it suggests that the very institutional meaning of the police force in the genre is designed to make 'England' somehow possible. For P.D. James 'England' is only 'thinkable' through institutions. By contrast to James's pessimism, liberal Wexford and socially conservative Burden's chaffing yet affectionate partnership looks remarkably successful. Nevertheless, Wexford and Burden realise that their more coherent if not mutually identical Englishness often fails to account for the dark passions they detect. For Rendell (and Vine) the Gothic becomes an aesthetic reaction to the breakdown of ethnic identity.

Albert Campion and Peter Wimsey, those scions of English aristocracy, are in danger of becoming uncanny versions of ethnicity when detecting on their own. Minus Amanda, Campion can only succeed in constructing a frail narrative of English identity if his radical otherness can forge alliances with marginality within England itself. Hence his need for the material aid of the gypsies in *Look to the Lady*.⁴ A later Allingham work, the Second World War tale *Coroner's Pidgin*, explores problems with English masculine heroism by showing that the contradictory forces shaping Johnny Carados's wartime role lead him to be suspected as a murderer and a traitor.⁵ Campion needs Amanda in *Traitor's Purse* to escape such an identity for himself.⁶ Wimsey risks turning his aristocratic Englishness into the feudal Gothic in *Clouds of Witness*,⁷ or into fragmenting into a series of uncanny masks when he actually tries to do 'a proper job' in *Murder Must Advertise*.⁸ Indeed, it takes several volumes of a complex love story to convert Wimsey from nerve-ridden 'other' to English stiff-upper-lip heroism to a country gentleman capable of a reinvention of a somewhat ironic pastoral in *Busman's Honeymoon*.⁹

In the sense that the detective's psychic construction through detection constructs a narrative for the negotiation of cultural differences, then the detective functions as a post-colonial vision. He is the focus of a novel which may explicitly cite or even include colonial or other racial characters such as black Cousin Hallelujah in Sayers's *Unnatural Death*.¹⁰ Yet the post-colonial vision need not be literalised in events or characters. Instead, it may be traced in the rhetorical modes of presentation, such as Miss Marple's threatening old maid uncanniness as a cannibal. It may also, in James and Rendell, operate in the vision of England as a land of potentially alienated separate cultures existing in colonial relationships of power to each other. This is evident in James's recent work *A Certain Justice*, in which a villainous character, partially 'explained' by his origins from the heart of darkness within an inner-city council estate, is heavily ironised when this point of view is put to Kate, another 'emigrant' from that same estate.¹¹

The writer for whom a colonial sense of Englishness must be acute is, of course, Ngaio Marsh, a New Zealander who grew up in a culture that regarded England as the 'mother country'. Marsh is a colonial writer in accepting the paradigms of Englishness and the English golden age genre as her 'norm'. She is also a post-colonial writer in her exploration of the incoherencies of colonial and English identity. For her, psychic construction through detection appears to centre upon Englishness with the homo-erotic bonding of aristocratic, nervy Alleyn recuperated by the unswerving devotion of unimaginative, lower-middle-class Inspector Fox. Their tender relationship is so deferential and imperceptible that Alleyn requires a more potentially destabilising erotic focus in artist Agatha Troy. Alleyn's travels in New Zealand are, significantly, usually without his psychic English stabilisers, and seem arranged so as to infuse him into the colonial landscape. These New Zealand novels thereby re-imagine the relations of the colony with the 'mother' country. Marsh deliberately challenges the typical gender paradigm. Alleyn visits New Zealand and finds it enlarging his values in *Vintage Murder* as he is taught respect for Maori beliefs.¹² In the more usual English country house or theatrical setting, it is typically a female colonial who is romantically re-initiated into Englishness. Additionally, the typical Marsh circle of suspects contains one or more foreigners. These figures invariably attract suspicion, so advertising English racism, but are very rarely guilty.

Ngaio Marsh's 'camp county house' fictions betray both an anxiety in identifying *with* 'Englishness' in her adopting of the golden age genre *and* the ability to criticise and dissect Englishness using the

touchstone of foreignness. Marsh's stories provide not only a psychic construction through detection, but a psychic construction of ethnicity using the deliberate 'otherness' of foreignness or colonialism. In 1963, Marsh expressed the literary problem of representing New Zealand in more overt post-colonial terms when she spoke of settlers possessing 'no Victorian formulae to encompass the violent landscape' where whites were 'interlopers' amongst a Maori people who 'had their own involuted secret culture'.¹³ Maori culture is always respected by Marsh as different, never to be completely comprehended by the whites, and *not* in an evolutionary relation to Western modernity. Maoris may attract racist suspicion in novels such as *Vintage Murder*, *Colour Scheme*¹⁴ and *Light Thickens*,¹⁵ but are never guilty. Their cultural integrity is such that they do not participate in murder, seen as a corruption of English ethnicity.

Racial difference

Golden age writers lived and wrote in a racist society. Characters in works by all four writers make unchallenged racist comments, and only Marsh emphatically addresses racism as a stain on English character. Her treatment of blackness, such as the abuse of murder suspect Dr Natouche in *A Clutch of Constables*, may seem heavy-handed today but she preserves a notion of 'difference', as Troy's announcements in the novel demonstrate, while always exposing racism as pernicious.¹⁶ With Sayers and Christie, racism is more ambiguously depicted. Yet for neither author is racism endorsed by the detective or the detecting plot. Although capable of anti-semitic remarks, Sayers has Wimsey's friend, Freddy Arbuthnot, marrying a Jew and becoming enthusiastic about the culture.¹⁷ The childlike naivety of Cousin Hallelujah in *Unnatural Death* looks like a racist creation in its condescension. Yet the pathological hysteria about possible black attackers of white women in the novel is definitely not shared by Peter Wimsey, who expresses no racist paranoia and defends Cousin Hallelujah as 'innocent'. Similarly, as well as Christie's constant debunking of pompous Englishness by Poirot, racism is to be found in appropriate English types and does not determine the choice of murderer.¹⁸ Indeed, in *Appointment with Death*, the 'suspicious Arab' is a mask employed by a murderer wholly indigent to the white upper-class tourists.¹⁹

By contrast, Allingham unthinkingly adopts a racist structure in *Police at the Funeral* when the family 'black' sheep, Cousin George, who desecrates a neo-Victorian household, is revealed as literally dark,

a half-caste product of colonial expansion bringing the violence of imperialism 'home'.²⁰ P.D. James's characters are all properly non-racist in their attitudes, but her novels reveal a passionate dislike of multicultural education which records a nostalgia for a fantasy England, one without cultural difference. Never condoning discrimination against the other as black, James is nevertheless opposed to the integration of other cultures as the importation of difference *within* England. Rendell is far more aware of the liberal dilemmas about treating all the same while/or respecting ethnic and racial differences. *Simisola*, to be examined later, is a sincere criticism of attitudes to race and cultural difference in the late twentieth-century English 'home counties'.²¹

While noting the racist rhetoric of golden age fiction, it is important to register it as precisely that, rhetoric. A major characteristic of the golden age writers (minus post-colonial Marsh) is their self-conscious deployment of Orientalism in the construction of psychic Englishness. Miss Marple among the cannibals is one example. Another is English-woman Sarah King's exploration of her own capacities for murderous sacrifice in an alien desert landscape encoded with non-Christian religions in *Appointment with Death*. Cousin Hallelujah reveals Sayers's limitations on race, but he functions as the psychic other to the real criminal, secure in her class and English identity which has allowed her to kill without suspicion. Campion, on the other hand, functions as an other within 'England', particularly when without his erotic connection to English 'hearty' femininity in *Amanda*.²² It is therefore unsurprising to find some foreign villains, such as Ali Fergusson Barber in *Mystery Mile*, serving structurally to reposition Campion as native to the home counties.²³

Allingham's England is itself riddled with divisions, darkness and otherness. This is signalled in the early works by witchcraft and the occult, in late stories by crime and corruption. Only an ambivalent detective like Campion, who explicitly rejects a class destiny as a colonial governor, can construct frail narratives of detection across a self-divided ethnic England, which will only submit to his efforts in the form of a temporary alliance against some kind of 'invader'. Since England is so riven by 'differences' within, Campion is constantly finding that maintaining an awareness of what is 'England' and what is 'other', the alien invader, is the delicate task of his detection. (Post-) colonial Marsh is most aptly illustrated by the unjust hatred heaped upon foreign Dr Hart in *Death and the Dancing Footman*.²⁴ The murderer turns out to be his greatest accuser, a non-combatant flashy English soldier in wartime. Marsh recognises English racism and

Orientalising, but her novels are far more distanced from this tendency than those of the other golden age writers.

Masquerading England

If a characteristic of the golden age is the projection of Englishness through an overtly Orientalising psyche, then it becomes one method of destabilising and parodying English stereotypes. The result in the self-referential genre is to suggest a constructed and theatrical notion of Englishness rather than a self-evident given. Golden age fiction located crime at home. It is to be found amongst the colonels, spinsters, minor gentry, middle-aged businessmen, impecunious relatives and young feckless socialites. For James and Rendell, despite going beyond golden age conventions to link their novels to mainstream literary realism, their criminals are similarly detected within a domesticated workplace (James) or the family (Rendell). The self-referentiality of the fiction *as fiction*, which partially extends to the later writers, both sets up and undermines stereotypes of dominant Englishness. Locating crime amongst the stereotypes both serves to dethrone them as emblems of English complacency and functions as a critical commentary on Englishness in its mode of upper-middle-class cultural dominance.

In *Dumb Witness*, for example, Christie exploits cultural misunderstandings of a Greek husband to forment suspicion while the true culprit lurks among young socialites and middle-class English jealousy.²⁵ Allingham provides a near-parodic England to the rescue in *The Crime at Black Dudley* as the hunt, outraged by an attack on one of its hounds, saves the English heroes from a dastardly foreign gang.²⁶

Allingham's early work appears to celebrate a rural English heritage at the expense of the foreign, yet the distinction is really more subtle. The foreign or internationally inspired gangs of *The Crime at Black Dudley*, *Mystery Mile*, *Look to the Lady* and *Sweet Danger* stand also for corporatism, big business and urban modernity.²⁷ They come to be pitted against a rural England of subversive and marginal energies characterised by arcane ritual, myth, superstition, witchcraft and the occult. In later works Allingham casts a more ironic if still affectionate eye on fantastically decaying aristocracies such as the indigent Palinodes in *More Work for the Undertaker*,²⁸ while business life, now located in London, remains capable of crime and/or of 'enslaving' its workers.²⁹

The self-conscious artifice of golden age writing does celebrate a style of conservative dominant Englishness, but at the price of ironically

undercutting its claim to be natural, genuine or stable. The self-conscious nature of these fictions is embedded in the articulation of a playful constructed Englishness. For instance, Ngaio Marsh has a double-edged colonial identification with England which simultaneously mocks by mimicking its stereotypical forms. She propounds an explicitly theatrical or masquerading Englishness both in her 'camp country house' fictions and in the frequent use of the literal theatre as setting. *Final Curtain* provides a particularly apt example of a theatrical family living in a country house whose very architecture speaks bombast and self-invention rather than tradition and heritage.³⁰ The Ancred family's overwrought emotions are proclaimed to be both theatrical and genuine. As in other golden age writers, there is a modernist distrust of the tradition and depth rendered in traditional literary realism. James and Rendell differ here. For these modern writers, Englishness is fractured rather than theatrical. The detecting narrative is unable to construct a frail edifice of English identity as continuous across society, so the novels are forced to retreat into pools of shared understanding, surrounded by the threatening unknowability of the Gothic. An example can be found in Wexford's Chinese journey in *The Speaker of Mandarin*.³¹ While travelling, Wexford experiences hallucinations and at first the story seems to erode cultural differences when chemical and literary explanations are found: Wexford had been indulging in green tea and M.R. James's ghost stories. Then it is revealed that some 'excess' or cultural differences remained, since Wexford really was trailed by an elderly Chinese woman.

Not all the apparitions can be traced to the detective's disturbed psyche, especially as crime has disrupted the overly controlled relationship between tourists and the alien culture. Ultimately, however, 'the speaker of "Mandarin"' is not Chinese but English, adopting the word 'Mandarin' as a code-word to initiate murder – a code taken from a legend of Oriental despotism. Rendell's novel does make the distinction between respect for the differences of Chinese culture and the Orientalising practice of English subjects who thereby project their criminality as 'other' or foreign to their own psychic construction of Englishness.

As in Marsh's acting companies, P.D. James's Englishness is a matter of professional identities, in her case of the police, doctors and nurses, publishers, pathologists, psychiatrists and lawyers. Unlike Marsh, James deeply distrusts difference *per se*, and longs for an imagined land of Englishness undivided. Although against racism as discrimination, her plots are nostalgic for a Christianity of cultural homogeneity

to provide moral authority and hence social stability. The loss of God for James is the loss of England as a coherent Christian society. Professional work cultures such as the police and the law supply impoverished substitute English cultures. These in turn, using traditional values of professional ethics, hierarchy and order, seek to colonise a surrounding landscape of crime, barbarism and decay. The rituals of the work cultures are supposed to re-sacralise secular society. Unfortunately, the rituals prove flawed and incoherent, and so internal conflicts result in murder. P.D. James's political vision is crucially ironised first of all by the disruption of the murder, and secondly, by both Adam Dalgliesh and Cordelia Gray's sense that the desire for a sacred past Englishness is a fantasy not borne out by history. These detectives know that England never was the ideologically whole, undivided nation they long for.

Pastoral England

All six authors express a nostalgia for England, but it is an imagined England of whole, sufficient, cultural peace. They do this through constructing a nostalgic relation to literary pastoral, the tradition of social imagining through rural landscapes that goes back to the Eden of the Bible and Arcadian Greek myths. Dorothy L. Sayers makes the most deliberate attempt to engender positive paradises in making the detective narrative purgative and re-sacralising in works such as *The Nine Tailors*, *Gaudy Night* and *Busman's Honeymoon*.³² Despite the serpent-criminals in the peaceful countryside or in the maternal paradise of Oxford, these stories do suggest a redemptive relationship possible to a conservative vision of England in the shires, and to more progressive notions of femininity in an Oxford women's college. Margery Allingham's pastoral resides in the Gothic romance of her occult rurality. It encodes a perilous ambivalence about pastoral which prevents her work from simply sliding into an uncomplicated conservative aesthetic. Far more so than all the other detectives of the six writers, it is Campion's vocation to 'save England', but he can only do so within a frail and contingent detecting narrative that is overtly temporary in effect and cannot hope to weld a stable and permanent national identity.

Christie's pastoral perspective in St Mary Mead is more simply ironic. Miss Marple not only detects sin in rural life but uses her village to supply a series of analogous types to solve crime among the English anywhere in the world, as *A Caribbean Mystery* demonstrates.³³ For

Ngaio Marsh, pastoral is an artistic post-colonial literary tool, as her work returns regularly to the problem of representing the New Zealand landscape within a Western literary tradition. In P.D. James's work, on the other hand, nostalgia for the pastoral is also nostalgia for an ideological and metaphysical genre capable of homogenising disjunctions of ethnic identity. For James, any attempt to re-create pastoral, such as the writers' community in the rural fastness of *Unnatural Causes*, is doomed.³⁴

Unlike the functioning church-based community of its near namesake, Sayers's *Unnatural Death*, which is easily penetrated by gossiping spinster Miss Climpson, James's Dalgliesh finds neither rural solitude nor literary solidarity. Instead the writing 'community' is riven by jealousies and conflicting desire. In the same way, *A Certain Justice* ends in Allingham's eastern coastal landscape around Mersea Island, but definitely *not* using the golden age author's tactic of providing a rural bulwark against city corruption. Pastoral is a dream which fails in P.D. James's perceptions of a de-sacralised England: the land is returning to barbarity now that the missionaries are withdrawing. *Devices and Desires* needs to situate a narrative of 'England' in relation to apocalypse in order to suggest anything more.³⁵

Ruth Rendell's English landscape is more politically rendered as a site for competing social groups, especially those of class. In *Road Rage*, what appears to be a kidnapping by eco-warriors is revealed as closer to a coded civil war between classes over the fate of the land, with Wexford's cross-cultural sympathies strained to breaking-point.³⁶

Colonial England

Interwoven with the evocation of pastoral is the examination of colonial relations within Englishness. As well as Christie's typical scene of English travellers realising their own otherness in foreign lands, plots can often rely upon anxiety over colonial relations of all kinds. From the simple expedient of the mysterious visitor from the colonies in *Why Didn't They Ask Evans?*,³⁷ Christie can shift sharply to colonial relations as trauma in *Sleeping Murder*.³⁸ In the latter work, what appears to be a mental breakdown in a young colonial is revealed as a repressed memory of a brutal killing of a sexually persecuted woman in wicked old England. Agatha Christie's articulation of Englishness, race and colonialism can be further understood by reading *The Hollow* as staging the English country house as the focus of colonial desire. This potent form of nostalgia is revealed as psychically as well as

criminally sick.³⁹ The novel (concerning a household headed by an ex-colonial governor) subjects characters to a hypnotic enthrallment to a past that is irretrievable and which most of them are unable to exorcise.

Allingham's typical early structure of foreign inflected corporatism versus rural Gothic is, in fact, an inverse colonial relation: 'England' functions as the threatened site of native cultures in an 'invading' world of big business. Later works develop this political trope as Campion's own otherness in detecting (an otherness to his class position) allows him to evade his family's planned destiny for him as a colonial governor, and he remains in 'colonised' England.⁴⁰ Ngaio Marsh persistently eroticises colonial discontinuities. In *Opening Night*, a colonial and destitute young actress is regarded with suspicion in a London theatre.⁴¹ Martyn Tarne is first revealed as an uncanny double of the leading actor, then as a literal relation who saves the company from embarrassment. She is finally psychically reborn into the company in ways that preserve her colonial difference (see Chapter 5).

Dorothy L. Sayers is less preoccupied with the literal colonial (apart from Cousin Hallelujah), but shares with other golden age writers a sense of the feminine as a colonised other within English society. In fact all six authors are aware of the potent intersection of gender and colonial structures. In Sayers's *Strong Poison*, Harriet functions as the colonised outsider whose unconventional sexual behaviour condemns her as other in the eyes of England's establishment.⁴² Even for P.D. James, the haunting sense of alienation within Englishness is particularly acute when gender provides an added complication. Kate Miskin, from the council estate 'colony', feels even more of an outsider to the corporate identity of the police when Dalgliesh prevents her from shooting a suspect in *A Certain Justice*.

Ruth Rendell's examination of colonialism is part of her more liberal interest in difference of all kinds, including that of gender. For Rendell, difference can be colonial and oppressive when it is that of class, such as the disastrous attempt of middle-class employers to patronise and 'domesticate' their servant in *A Judgement in Stone*.⁴³ 'Difference' also conditions desire which may be structured through colonial paradigms in England. In *Wolf to the Slaughter*, trees escaping industrial expansion are doomed 'aborigines' while desire 'enslaves' characters, uncovering a dark otherness to their middle-class English passions.⁴⁴ Colonial tropes are formative in notions of Englishness within the work of these six authors. Their novels bear traces of the woman writer's awareness of the interdependence of colonialism and gender.

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***Death on the Nile* by Agatha Christie (1937)⁴⁵**

Agatha Christie's *Death on the Nile* takes issues of colonialism, consumer capitalism and Englishness to a point of crisis by assembling a party of upper-class English and American tourists on a Nile river-boat. The resulting manners and murders are observed regretfully by Hercule Poirot. The murder of honeymoon heiress Linnet Doyle proves to be intimately connected to most of the party. Also aboard are her husband and his vengeful spurned fiancée, representatives of her two sets of lawyers, members of a family once ruined by her father, a kleptomaniac old lady after Linnet's pearls, a communist agitator who is also a British lord, a professional upper-class jewel thief, and a dipsomaniac writer of sex stories with her increasingly desperate daughter. Significantly, the scene is framed by the presence of Colonel Race, known to Poirot and on 'imperial duty' in seeking a colonial agitator of 'mongrel blood' (p. 90).

The detecting narrative must negotiate an oriental setting, colonial politics and Anglo-American ethnicities all bound up with consumer capitalism. All the characters are feeling the effects of the 1930s stock market depression. Additionally, Egypt features here not as a mere landscape but as a self-conscious 'Orientalism' on the part of characters who construct identities by consuming the 'otherness' of the alien culture in a colonialism ironised in the novel by self-referential artifice. Although Rosalie Otterbourne suggests a classic 'Orientalist' attitude when she describes the savage landscape as releasing her inner passions – 'it brings to the surface all the things that are boiling inside one' (p. 45) – her real target is the fracturing of Western femininity in her mother's ideology of sex distorted by drink. She parodies Islam by describing her mother as 'the prophet of the god, Sex' (p. 65). Both Simon Doyle and his ex-fiancée, Jackie de Bellefort, mimic the cries of native children to signify their own distress. Englishness requires a native other for representation, but it mimics rather than appropriates the authentically other culture. Rather, psychic colonialism, depicted in the characters and through their crimes, serves to 'consume' Western English or American identity by showing that it is the otherness *within* this ethnicity that destabilises society and identity through crime and desire.

This delicate delineation of colonialism as a psychic component consuming identity is explored both comically and powerfully in the person of the drunken author, Salome Otterbourne. Her vulgar, neo-Freudian reduction of all human motives to sex and 'blood lust' is never directed towards the native other, but instead provokes a violent

climax consummated by her own murder. When she announces her eyewitness account of Linnet's maid's killing as vindicating her theory of primordial urges, context and events confirm that she is accusing, with some justification, the monstrous other within the white suspects. While Mrs Ottebourne's crude simplifications of desire are not endorsed, her role is to bend an Orientalising aesthetic back within the consuming passions of the Anglo-American party.

The novel locates Englishness as beset by consumer capitalism and its international dimensions. *Death on the Nile* pitches an American heiress of business millions as a possible restorer of the grandeur of the English country house with its potency for English aristocratic identity. Perhaps unsurprisingly, American capital and sexual politics prove unable to redeem the English aristocracy. By preferring the impecunious Simon Doyle to an established but impoverished lord, Linnet proves first an invader, literally taking over her best friend Jackie's fiancé, then oppressor, then murder victim. A rhetoric of slavery surrounds the feminine members of the Anglo-American privileged group. Firstly, Linnet is accused of having wealth funded by slave workers, then the dependent Cornelia and desperate Rosalie are described as slaves to their despotic relatives. Cornelia, revealed as pauperised by Linnet's capitalist father, is called 'a black slave', but is later able to choose between two suitors, a communist lord and a neo-Freudian Austrian, Dr Bessner.

Slavery is not only a subtle critique of gender relations here, it is principally a surprisingly fierce commentary on consumer capitalism at the level of high finance. Not only is Linnet's money surrounded by issues of pauperism and enslaved workers, but her American lawyer is prepared to kill over financial speculation and Tim Allerton's so-called stock market dealings are a code for a life of crime. Replacing the English country house aristocracy with an American heiress is to replace a defunct order with a valueless one. *Death on the Nile* uses colonialism to explore English and American cultural identities in relation to capitalism. It cites Orientalism as an overly fictional strategy of self-expression and only endorses imperialism at the level of Colonel Race, whose 'mongrel' (not native) agitator is depicted as exploiting colonial subjects. Western identities in crisis are depicted as consuming any notion of a stable self through colonial aesthetics.

***Busman's Honeymoon* by Dorothy L. Sayers (1937)**

Busman's Honeymoon shifts from parody to pastoral in its detecting story. The result is a novel interrelating but not homogenising the two

modes of parodic self-referentiality, and re-sacralising pastoral. While *Busman's Honeymoon* depicts a masquerade of gender, nevertheless I would argue that it produces an ironic yet sustainable relation to a pastoral, stable, hierarchical England. The problem for the novel is the cross-class marriage of urban nervy aristocrat Lord Peter Wimsey to country doctor's daughter and detective novelist Harriet Vane. How can the narrative frame the marriage as an epithalamion reconciling the contradictions of 'Englishness' in modern society?

The answer to the conundrum appears to lie in the reversing of the dynamic of the typical country house mystery. Instead of a murder plunging an ostensibly coherent household into chaos, here the murder of Mr Noakes is revealed as the last act of the breakdown of the rural gentry-led economy: the detecting story will restore it. Upon arrival, the Wimseys are taken to be those most outlandish of impersonators, 'film actors', but immediately set about restoring the traditional household even before discovering the body (p. 43). After they re-establish, somewhat self-consciously, relations with the indispensable rural clichés of the vicar (Mr *Goodacre*), the sweep, and the stereotypical spinster, Miss Twitterton, the discovery of the murder threatens to fragment this nascent (re)construction of country house Englishness. Henceforward the drama of the novel lies in the erotic relation of Peter and Harriet. Is the structure of their marriage going to supersede the pursuit of justice as Harriet argues for Miss Twitterton's hysterical confidences to be respected? Can the relationship subsume the chaos of murder – here very much identified with post-country house modernity – and allow the (re-)creating of a country house rural economy as a pastoral vision of idealised hierarchical England?

If Peter and Harriet are to turn the detecting narrative into the re-creation of country house conservative aesthetics then it cannot be done without irony which in turn mitigates the political punch behind the vision. The honeymooning detectives are forced to face otherness within as they both reveal a primary loyalty to personal integrity which may appear to conflict with their mutual devotion. The otherness without proves to be a harsh version of the democratising forces of the modern world combined with capitalism stripped of ethics. The previous owner, Noakes, has despoiled the historic old house for money and failed business ventures. His murderer is not a native of pastoral lands, but is significantly 'from London' in a novel which establishes at length the rural origins of Peter and Harriet, overdetermining their mis-identification as 'film actors'. The murderer is motivated by the desire to move out of his subordinate class and is ready to

exploit a vulnerable spinster in order to do so. Counterpointing the love duets of Peter and Harriet, more corrupt versions of romance lead to brutality and crime. The weapon of the hanging cactus plant is both comically playful and a sign of the un-English desert that Noakes has produced.

Erotic relations between Peter and Harriet can restore (and re-story) Englishness on conservative, but not reactionary lines. Class mobility is slapped down on the part of the murderer, yet Harriet's sister-in-law's class aggression is deplored. Peter exploits his protean nature to declare himself a fraud cosmopolitan. *Busman's Honeymoon's* comic domesticity allows the reconstruction of Peter as an aristocratic country dweller, rooted by hearth and Harriet in ways not possible to the figure in the more Gothic *Clouds of Witness*. As a result, Harriet can say to herself, 'I have married England' (p. 98) and Peter tells her, 'I have come home' (p. 288). Together they represent a psychic re-formation of Englishness, continuous with country house nostalgia, yet crucially permitting both the novelist (Harriet) and the detective (Peter) to operate with integrity.

Total regression into pastoral located in an aristocratic past is prevented by the layering of the successful erotic pastoral with the tragicomic romance of Frank Crutchley and Miss Twitterton. The most passionate Wimsey love scene is preceded by Frank's brutal demolition of Miss Twitterton's 'romance' and is interrupted by the spinster's distress at the honeymooners' happy duet. As a whole, the novel is structured around two uninterrupted moments of union which are meant to redeem death. The wedding night is said to purify the house of the murder of Noakes, once the body is discovered on the morrow. In addition, the novel ends with the most extended treatment of Peter's neurosis as the death sentence is carried out on the unrepentant criminal. After the near-ritual quotation of the infamous words of the death sentence, Harriet's triumph in waiting for Peter to seek her out for comfort is reinforced by biblical citation. Validation via the sacred text is a stronger version of Harriet's earlier acceptance by the occult strain in Peter's aristocratic lineage at Duke's Denver (see Chapter 6).

What *Busman's Honeymoon* does is to re-sacralise the country house as a source of conservative and nostalgic Englishness by linking the political and literary traditions of pastoral to more progressive notions of marriage relations. It succeeds because the celebratory erotic structures retain a sense of otherness, in the first place in the cruel exploitations of sexuality. Counterpointing Miss Twitterton's experience of romance with the Wimseys' is a form of *overlapping* in the novel, a layering of heterosexual relations that prevents the re-sacralising from

becoming unambiguous. Secondly, pastoral is renegotiated into a more critical and less conservative mode by Wimsey's neurosis as he feels himself to be what he structurally is, a kind of murderer. Wimsey, the reinvented restorer of country house values of a stable England, can psychologically imagine himself into the role of the 'other', the killer, the serpent in paradise. Significantly, his breakdown threatens to poison the house for the married couple. Only alliance with Harriet, with otherness as the feminine, can superimpose a delicate restitution of paradise.

It is wholly coherent with the six authors gendering of the genre that the execution of the murderer does not expunge all the darkness from pastoral England. As the traces of otherness re-appear in Wimsey, the trumpets that sound for Harriet do so for her psychic restructuring of Peter into signifying England. This 'England' is one in which self and cultural stability is depicted as a fiction to be constantly remade. Sayers crime writing is far less a matter of *discovery* and far more so stories of imaginative *re-creation*.

***Traitor's Purse* by Margery Allingham (1941)**

Unlike other literary detectives, Albert Campion is regularly called upon to save England. *Traitor's Purse* is narrated from the point of view of a man who has lost his memory, is accused of murder, is haunted by some tremendous destiny he is neglecting and whom other people call Albert Campion. This figure learns that as Campion he may be a traitor or a potential saviour of his country. He may be an 'impersonator' of Campion in the sense of being a criminal, but he is certainly an 'impersonator' for most of the novel as he tries to trace his unknown identity in relation to an imperilled country in the early stages of the Second World War.

Traitor's Purse centres on one of Allingham's legendary landscapes with both sacred and nationalist functions. The Masters of Bridge are a secretive archaic and mercantile organisation in a position to financially aid England in war time. Their base is a neolithic fortress in the town of Bridge, so named for the legend that the land itself rose into a bridge to aid the endangered populace. What takes Bridge into a Gothic location is the growing realisation that from these Guardians of England may arise great national danger, intentional or not. Gothic ingredients of dangerously blurred boundaries are magnified through the consciousness of Campion as he tries to situate his unknown self in relation to England. Is he saviour or traitor? This existential enquiry

becomes experienced as a psychological division as Campion feels alternately mad or ghostly.

Like Wimsey, Campion needs an alliance with the feminine in order to stabilise his otherness. Amanda is explicitly named his 'other self' in the novel, but is lost romantically early on to the figure of Aubrey Lee. Amanda loves Lee, ironically, because he is like Campion, except that he seems to love Amanda. This situation is described to Campion at the point when he discovers his love and need for her for the first time (p. 51). Without Amanda, Campion has to make do with his feminised, monstrous servant Lugg to aid his rebirth and to try to construct his destined erotic relation to England, as Gill Plain has argued.⁴⁶ Whereas Wimsey is allowed to stand *for* England in an erotic relation with otherness which cites him in ironic pastoral, Campion must become the heroic saviour *over* of England. While still dispossessed of memory, Campion is told that only he can save the situation which depends upon the knowledge which he cannot remember and England's faith in herself. Explicitly, nationality must become whole and undivided, and as part of this process Campion must become whole and undivided to face the external threat. Campion's psychic conflict must no longer signal his ambivalence, but must become an undivided bond with England.

Unsurprisingly from Allingham, the threat comes from corporate big business. The plan is to put 'the British Empire on a company footing, with a personal invitation to every tax-payer to invest his all in it' (p. 157). The prospectuses prove a convenient route for the traitorous other, now forged money, to be sent to every household in a move which will destroy the British economy. There is a sense in which this Hitlerian weapon is described bitterly as a precursor of the welfare state: it forms a modern corporate attack on nostalgically described economics.

Fortunately, fragmenting Campion's self in memory loss becomes a means of resolving his ambivalence when his memory is restored in the face of national danger. Campion is stabilised both by recovering Amanda and by having his internal otherness reconfigured into his double, the true villain and mad traitor, who sought fascistically to 'restore decent order' to England (p. 197). Through Amanda, masculinity, identity and fidelity to England are finally remodelled in ways designed to prevent self becoming other, saviour into traitor. Campion admits to being 'nuts' in several senses, so indicating his doubling relation to the mad villain. *Traitor's Purse* enacts nostalgic drives for a reactionary notion of England fearful of contamination by modernity,

commerce and welfare. Yet it demonstrates that traitors and otherness lurk within the desirable sites of Englishness within a continuum of betrayal from the corrupt, the mad or the merely unwitting. Therefore identity becomes as much a psychic battle within as a thriller narrative without. In this intriguing novel, to detect the self is to (re)construct national identity.

***Photo-Finish* by Ngaio Marsh (1980)⁴⁷**

Photo-Finish takes Alleyn and Troy together to New Zealand near the close of Marsh's career. Both are engaged in professional duties: Troy is to paint Sicilian opera diva Isabella La Sommita amongst her entourage; Alleyn is ostensibly to be consulted about a photographer stalker, but in reality seeks a drug gang. Country house aesthetics are replicated by the operatic gathering taking place on a remote lake island owned by La Sommita's consort, enigmatic businessman Montague Reece. Artistic and sexual passions conflict over the semi-professional staging of a juvenile opera specially composed for the diva by her new young lover, the vulnerable Rupert. It is aptly, we are told, called *Alien Corn*. The novel allows Marsh to stage post-colonial anxieties about constructions of ethnicity, sexuality and gender, all in relation to her persistent artistic problem of the depiction of the otherness of New Zealand in Western literary forms.

In the first place, the term 'primordial' is repeatedly and obsessively applied to the landscape. It is not so much 'primordial' in suggesting an evolutionary colonial aesthetic, but instead situates the land *outside time*, specifically the Fallen time of the Westerners and their murder. The landscape is allied with Maori culture in the evocation of the legend of the sacred creation of South Island, and in the Island murder setting as 'tapu', a sacred burial site now violated by the Europeans. With the New Zealand wilderness and Maori legends, Marsh's novel delicately establishes her post-colonial position of respecting difference while not appropriating it. The pristine and archaic power of the landscape and Maori culture remain 'other' to the murder plot yet not absolutely external to it, as the act of respecting otherness sets up echoes in the psyches of the suspect group. The country house motif of isolation is cemented by a storm on the lake known as the Rosser after a Westerner who died as a consequence of violating Maori tapu. Not respecting cultural difference leads to a narrative not of social but of 'natural' violence from a culture where nature and narrative cannot be easily distinguished. The storm becomes an actor in the murder

drama; but more than just a practical instrument, it becomes a motif of violence, of the exposure to extreme otherness recorded in the spectralisation of Alleyn:

The voice of the wind, which he was always to remember as a kind of leitmotif to the action, invaded their room. The window pane... was a black nothing with vague suggestions of violence beyond. When he leant forward his ghost-face, cadaverous with shadows, moved towards him.

(p. 141)

New Zealand 'natural' violence, transformed into a legend of white colonial violation, brings the otherness of death and violence to Alleyn after the discovery of La Sommita's body.

What is also noticeable here is the use of art, here opera, as a metaphor to structure a meaning out of alien nature. Troy functions in this story as a post-colonial artist who respects difference and who can also represent it without devouring its otherness. It is she who intuits a 'consonance' between the 'dramatic' effect of the landscape and future murderous events. Later she considers it 'brave' of painters to try to capture the land, and hints of some future artistic work using metaphors not unrelated to Maori legends of making, in 'bones' and 'anatomy'. Yet Troy ends the novel by reconfiguring post-colonial difference, emphasising the alien nature of Western intrusion in a final statement that is explicitly *not* conversation with other characters: 'This landscape belongs to birds: not to men, not to animals: huge birds that have gone now, stalked about in it' (pp. 217-18). That art is not a facile tool for colonial representations is demonstrated by the failure of *Alien Coma*, Rupert's opera. Its title alerts us to the potential for artistic *exploitation* of cultural difference and it is the novel's attempt to distance itself from such a possibility.

Troy is not only a sensitive artist of the post-colonial, she is also positioned differently in relation to differences of all kinds due to her gender. The murder plot comes to focus upon Sicilian ethnicity, and in particular sexuality, since a feud fusing sex and murder between two families is discovered to be the key. (Post-)colonial rhetoric portrays Isabella La Sommita, murder victim, as other in terms of gender, ethnicity and voracious sexuality as she is termed 'cannibal' in a house of 'slaves'. 'Gargoyle' is repeatedly used to describe her, suggesting also her masquerade of diva-dom in terms of gender and power, a masquerade significantly penetrated by Troy who 'translates' her into art.

Photo-Finish has pushed Marsh's self-referential camp country house form to its limits and beyond in ways that are in danger of over-exposing the constructed nature of gender and ethnicities. It marks the end of an outmoded literary genre. Simultaneously, the novel tackles what it discerns as more fundamental post-colonial issues of New Zealand art. In the portrayal of New Zealand 'difference', the exploration of the potentials of art to work with 'the alien', Marsh has her New Zealand novel.

***Devices and Desires* by P.D. James (1989)**

P.D. James's conservative nostalgia concentrates upon lamenting the consequences to modern English society of the decline of Christian faith that ought to provide an ordered governing authority. In *Devices and Desires* she suggests that a religious vision has returned in demonic form: nuclear power provides a material narrative of apocalypse to rival and echo the Christian one. Although the novel opens with a serial killer stalking his victim, this dallying with crime realism blends subtly into golden age aesthetics as it is discovered that one of a group of suspects all associated with the power station has killed in a way imitating the now dead serial killer. Such a beginning establishes the 'Fallen' nature of rural England, here located in East Anglia.

Despite the opening note of random violence, *Devices and Desires* is strongly related to pastoral in that the nuclear complex (psychological and literal) allows a Protestant vision of Englishness in relation to faith, martyrdom, landscape and time. Failure to remain a unified society (without cultural difference), James seems to suggest, opens England to a demonic other not only in nuclear power, but also in terrorism dreaming of apocalyptic consummations. Faith in science can function as a psychological substitute for God in some characters, but its boundary with the demonic is frail as science fanatics destroy for their god or science apostates come to feel that the power station is apocalyptic.

What particularly ties this novel to pastoral is the use of metaphysical landscapes of nostalgia. The nostalgia is for a unified English religion which would guarantee (for James) a unified English cultural identity. This desire is embedded in the novel's landscape of the natural beauties of the headland: a ruined abbey used for lovers and political trysts and the sinister lights of the nuclear power station. Yet what prevents James's conservative nostalgia from sliding into purely reactionary art is the sense that a religious vision of unity and order cannot

be simply identified with the past. A vital ingredient to the metaphysical landscape is Martyr's Cottage, so named for a female Protestant martyr whose violent burning is not only evoked in the novel but used to counterpoint and to suggest structures of understanding for the murder plots' martyrs to faith in science. Even the killer is a possible martyr to love for kin and to past sexual oppression. James's distrust of 'difference' within England is shown by the martyrdom of sympathetic Meg, a school teacher banished to the headland by cruel applications of multicultural education.

Martyrdom seems to work two ways in the novel: on the one hand it is an attempt to sanctify and unify the diverse cultural energies the novel discerns in modern England, an attempt to find a religious narrative to mitigate difference and subsume cultural diversities under a construction of Englishness. On the other hand, the martyrdom narrative encodes terrifying violence and prejudice within Christianity. It is a narrative of national disintegration, of the other within, imaged in the metaphysical landscape here in the Protestant martyr's cottage and the ruined abbey whose Catholic associations are substantiated by being the object of pilgrimage for bereaved Catholic Theresa. The forlorn abbey stones stand as a motif of a time of one faith for all England, yet also incarnate the realisation that their first despoliation was likely to be at the hands of Protestant fervour. The pastoral of *Devices and Desires* is one of a complex relation to a religious past.

The novel's implicit recognition of the dangers of identifying the past with a dream of cultural homogeneity finds further realisation in the treatment of time as not always linear. The theology of religious martyrs places them outside time which is the curse of the Fallen world. Therefore, the potentially sacralising structure of martyrdom can be revisited as the plot appears to return to the original legend of Martyr's Cottage at the end; although the possibility of contemporary martyrs flipping over into demonic 'others' is not negated. The headland, similarly seems to be without linear time in ways that dwarf human concerns. The martyred teacher, Meg, finds her final comfort in this sense of a landscape outside of time, so outside narrative and culture: it is the novel's only alternative to the pastoral of martyrdom – as the fate of the faithful of all kinds in divided England – and to the pastoral of apocalypse.

As in the majority of James's works, the narrative is diffused through many different characters to emphasise the discontinuities in English cultural identity. This leads to suprisingly acute examples of 'gender martyrdom', as in Amy, the single mother who thinks she is engaged

in secret animal rights subversion but is, in fact, employed by terrorists, and Alice, who has a secret history of abuse. Both these characters die mis-labelled by the authorities as feckless single mother and frustrated spinster respectively. Adam Dalgliesh may achieve his usual function of providing a connecting conscience in intuiting truths he does not directly know, but here he may equally well fail, leaving a sense of Englishness as irredeemably discontinuous, traversable by no one narrative form.

This is a pessimistic novel of Englishness as only imaginable in relation to apocalypse. 'Martyrdom' provides a structure flexible enough to drive landscape into metaphysics and pastoral, to problematise James's nostalgia for an imaginary religious society in the past. As well, it can represent heterogeneous passions because of the otherness of violent hatred contained within the sanctity of religious martyrdom. In *Devices and Desires*, martyrdom is a structure of both likeness and difference. It provides a fictional construction of Englishness that does not want to be so self-evidently a fiction.

***Simisola* by Ruth Rendell (1994)**

Simisola could be read as an answer to *Devices and Desires* on the need to construct a place for racial and ethnic otherness within Englishness. It is a warning not to try to cast difference outside, where it may recur as a demonic other. The novel follows Wexford as he learns what *Photo-Finish* already knew, that difference needs to be respected and not appropriated.

In a work devoted to the exploration of colonialism, racism and ethnicity, the crime plot progressively indicts middle-class white Englishness. The disappearance of middle-class black Melanie Akande comes to be linked to the murder of a white woman treated as a sex slave and then the murder of an African girl who had been living invisibly as a tortured slave in a wealthy white family. Much of the power of the analysis comes from the detection that violence against blacks exists in a complex continuum with the racist assumptions made partly in ignorance by well-meaning whites, including Wexford and Burden. The professional relationship between the two men brings to consciousness unrealised racism in the white middle-class dominant English culture. Ignorance becomes racism when it leads to the assumption that all blacks are alike, therefore interchangeable. Wexford falls down badly when he asks the Akande parents to identify their dead daughter only to discover that not only is the victim not

Melanie, but that their distress is the direct result of his neglect of his professional duty. The neglect would not have occurred for a white victim.

Differences between middle-class Melanie and the enslaved girl prove significant despite their common racial origin in Nigeria. The power relationship of slavery is shown to interact with blackness, but not be identical to it. The slave girl is found dumped in an archaeological site linked to an English heritage of slavery, when the Romans enslaved the Celts and may have practised female infanticide, reminding the reader of connections between gender and colonial power here. Indeed, slaves are more uniformly female than black, since the first discovered murder victim is a middle-class white woman sexually enslaved to a coldly professional married man, aptly named Snow.

The novel investigates the condition of slavery in relation to race, colonialism and servants. Several households possess servants, mostly Filipino and all women. Wexford explains to sceptical Burden the potential for exploitation of servants brought in from abroad with limited immigration rights. Weird hostess Cookie Dix proves a relatively enlightened employer of a Filipino maid, but conservative electoral candidate Anouk Khoori, who pretends to the Akandes that her 'soul is black' (p. 288), is justifiably accused of treating her maids as slaves. The argument that the objectionable Khoori needs to be supported to keep out a far right candidate completes *Simisola's* presentation of cultural identity as also a political matter. Without legal safeguards, ethnicities perceived as other, especially darker-skinned Filipinos and blacks, are vulnerable to class and power exploitation which may culminate in murders such as that of the slave girl.

Wexford's cruel mistake with the Akandes indicates what Anouk Khoori's crass adoption of a 'black soul' confirms: that to crudely homogenise or appropriate difference is as racist as the opposite danger of defining the ethnic other as so 'other' as to be outside human standards, the 'other' who can be made your slave. Burden maintains a distrust of cultural difference so that Wexford has to return home in search of his familial psychic construction as healing. Here he finds it is his 'other' daughter, the less sympathetic, less beloved Sylvia, who can help him understand the dangers of 'purity' in regarding otherness. She describes a theory of negritude that seeks to account for the systematic degrading of another human being. It is therefore significant that the slave girl victim does not remain unnamed in Wexford's investigation. Slaves were deprived of their names as one means of erasing their identities. Wexford calls his slave Sojourner, and tells

Burden (and the reader) that she was a slave who became an artist, who found her voice as a poet of protest. Yet the novel does not cease with the bestowal of a name of potential liberation. Virtually the last word is the revelation of her true name, Simisola, which simultaneously solves the riddle of the title. It is now revealed as signalling the restoration of a black slave's identity.

There is a sense in which the artificiality of the golden age genre seeks parodically to account for death (see Chapter 5). Ruth Rendell is too attached to realism to account for, or to solve, the brutality of the death of Simisola. Indeed, here realism makes a moral claim as it clothes the generic detecting structure of the crimes with a far more politically motivated detecting of racism and colonialism within Englishness. However, *Simisola*, the novel, does reflect Rendell's faith in literature, to restore, if not the victim's life, then some awareness of her identity which would liberate her from the role of nameless slave.

When Wexford retreats to his healing familial setting, he quotes Tennyson's languishing Arthur setting sail for 'Avilion, where I will heal me of my grievous wound' (p. 164).⁴⁸ Returning to solve the case, Wexford is Arthur, an English monarch, come again. Tennyson's Arthur vanished defeated by the break-up of a unified culture organised through a nationalist and religious hero myth. Wexford returns able to learn a different kind of Englishness: one that needs to renegotiate the legacy of colonialism and respect a diversity of ethnic cultures living within England.