

DISPLACEMENT AND TRAVEL IN FYNES MORYSON'S *AN ITINERARY*

Claudia Bujoreanu Gheorghe
Ovidius University of Constanta

Abstract: *In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, travel was the only available opportunity of finding new things and exploring new worlds. However, travel was difficult because of the limited transportation possibilities and also because of the many perils it involved. Because of these limited possibilities for travel, printing material about travel was very popular, as people were curious to find out as many things as possible about foreign places. They regarded the new places as a new world of knowledge, of civility, even though reality was not exactly as idyllic as it was imagined or represented in books. Early modern texts represent travel as dangerous and accommodation and food as poorer than at home. I argue that these ways of comparing foreign places to familiar ones is meant to persuade the readers to appreciate what they have at home. The traveller is always displaced, "travailing" in rough conditions, and missing home. Travel is, therefore, perceived as "travail," meaning hard and unpleasant work for the traveller. By observing local customs, institutions and economics in various countries, the early modern English traveller constantly compares them to the amenities available at home. Sometimes, such a traveller is a prejudiced and unreliable informant. One example to support this idea is the focus on the Catholic Italian reality in *An Itinerary*, where the convinced and earnest Protestant Fynes Moryson presents a hostile Italy, whose antiquity and monuments are compared negatively to the undesirable effects derived from the prevalence of the Catholic religion in the country. There is, however, nothing unfamiliar about the negative attitude of an Elizabethan English traveller towards Papacy.*

Keywords: *travel, displacement, foreign places, comparison, new worlds*