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On the East India Company Vocabulary of the Island of St Helena, South Atlantic, 1676-1720

“at this Island the Old proverb is true about settlements that where the English settle they First build a punchhouse, the Dutch a Fort, and the Portuguese a Church”

St Helena Consultations, 7 April 1711

0. Introduction¹

The Island of St Helena, South Atlantic, was important to the English East India Company not as a factory trading-post, nor, despite initial intentions, as a plantation, but as a victualling way-station, providing water, food and respite from the sea. In return, the islanders bought or bartered for EIC goods from ships' captains, which goods either then went into the Company stores, or into planters' homes. Along with the goods came the goods' names, so that nomenclature for commodities produced in the area serviced by one factory became spread to other factories around the globe, including St Helena, *en route* for London.

After King Charles II granted the island to the EIC in 1673, a court was set up in 1676 to regulate the island including, from time to time, receiving inventories of what was in the stores. The island's inhabitants consisted of free planters, soldiers at the garrison, and slaves, as well as more temporary visitors such as sailors, ship's passengers, and certain professionals such as doctors.² The court records, known as the St Helena Consultations, were kept in duplicate and one set was sent back to the EIC in London. That set is now housed in the British Library, and the first five volumes (1676-1720) contain the evidence discussed in this chapter (the other set remains on St Helena). When the islanders came before the court, their testimonies were written down by the court recorder. From this evidence we can establish that dialectally, the main late seventeenth-century means of communication was regional Southern English, with slaves, or a subset of the slaves, speaking an English-based creoloid as well as the Southern English dialect.³ Individuals also spoke other British dialects (Scotsmen and Irishmen are mentioned), and other European languages – in particular, there was a French (but English-speaking) Governor 1689-1707,⁴ and some of the slaves are said (by other slaves) to have spoken Portuguese, though whether European Portuguese or a Portuguese-based creole is not clear.⁵ Of course, all the speakers' voices were filtered through the writing of the court recorders, but as

¹ My grateful thanks to Philip Baker for help with identifying vocabulary and also to the editors for improving drafts.

² See Wright (2006) for details of an early Island doctor, Thomas Price.

³ See Wright (2013; in press a.), Schreier and Wright (2010).

⁴ Captain Stephen Poirier.

⁵ E.g. “3. blacks Viz^{ll} Clause, Phill, and Tobey, went out and talk'd portugeeze together” (Wright 2013: 253).

the court recorders were settlers too, we can surmise that variation was greater than that which we see on the page, rather than less.

Lexemes evidenced in the St Helena Consultations are presented below that might qualify as East India Company terminology; that is, words for which the St Helena Consultations provide new meanings, antedatings, variant spellings, or contexts which amplify our understanding of words' usage. Lexemes are categorized into: a) words derived from a foreign (usually Asian) language brought to the island as a result of trade; b) words formed by compounding two words (usually of Old English etymology), many of which were applied to a new, St Helenan, or non-British, concept; c) words in use in Southern British English amongst sailors, soldiers and planters, but which only survive (or existed) in regional Englishes.⁶

Words in category a), words which are etymologically derived from a foreign language, came to St Helena via trade. Many of the nouns denoting commodities can also be found in London newspapers of the period, London being the primary market for such commodities. Words in category b), formed by compounding two words of Old English etymology, are likely to have been coined either on St Helena or in another British colony, but not in Great Britain. Words in category c), regional English words spread around the globe by British sailors, soldiers and settlers, can also be found in other extraterritorial varieties which were settled by sailors, soldiers and planters of similar provenance.

1. Category a): words which were borrowed from other languages via trade

I start with the semantic field of cloth, which can be divided into cloth-names coming to St Helena from EIC factories, and cloth-names coming to the island from non-Company, European, places of manufacture, along with other cloth-names of pre-Company origin.⁷ The first lexical item is the word *nilla*, spelt in various ways, and which came to St Helena via the EIC Bengal factory. Evidence comes from a list of goods sold from the Company stores on St Helena between 25 March – 25 April 1713:⁸

1	Nealas 28 p ^{cs} at 14 ^s & 2 ^d per p ^c ...	4 Aug 1713
	Chelloes 83 peices D ^{to} £20 15 ^s ...	
	Shalloons viz ^t	
	53 ½ yards at 2 ^s 6 ^d per yard £6 13 9	
	Sannoos 12 p ^{ces} sorted £10 18 –	
	Sallampores 25 p ^{cs} £13 2 6	

⁶ I do not treat creoloid language from slaves' testimonies, or slaves' names, here as they are discussed in Wright (2013).

⁷ The English East India Company was founded in 1600.

⁸ In the following transcriptions, abbreviations in the MSS indicated by suprascript letters have been represented as such, and abbreviation and suspension signs are expanded and italicized. < > indicates illegible material, usually due to tight binding or cropping. I have lemmatized plural forms according to the predominant spelling in the newspapers. Where *OED* is not mentioned, it is because I have been unable to find the headword within. No pagination is given as the St Helena Consultations are unfoliated but they are roughly in date order. I cite the month alone if no day is specified.

Duosotties 13 p^{cs} at 5^s 8^d per p^c £3 13 8

From a list of goods sold from Company stores to inhabitants between 25 Sept – 25 October 1713:

2	Shirts viz ^t	2 Feb 1713/14
	For 26 Chelloe D ^{to} £3 2 10	
	Gurras 7 p ^{cs} at 12 ^s 6 ^d per piece £4 7 6	
	Chints 6 p ^{cs} sorted £4 6 –	
	Neala's 4 p ^{cs} sorted £2 16 8 ...	
	Dungarees 8 p ^{cs} at 5 ^s 8 ^d per p ^c £2 5 4	

This word has an entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary* under headword *nilla*, n., with a probable etymology from Bengali *nīl*, meaning ‘dark blue’, with the form *nilley* possibly reflecting Hindi *nīle*, plural; the form *nilla* possibly reflecting a Hindi singular back-formation. The historian Singh (2006: 829) describes *nillaes* as “striped blue cloth produced either purely of silk or cotton or by mixing cotton and silk at Midnapur and Balasore mainly for export to England.” *OED*’s attestations show that the word was in use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and all are in EIC contexts. The first is from 1614 from a letter received by the EIC, the second from 1682 from a London newspaper report of a ship’s cargo, and the third is from a highly useful source, a book published in London in 1696 by a merchant with the initials J. F., called *The Merchant’s Ware-house Laid Open; Or, the Plain Dealing Linnen Draper. Showing how to Buy All Sorts of Linnen and Indian Goods, Etc.* On page 30 J. F. says “Nilleys, of which there is two sorts, strip’d and plain, by the Buyers are called Bengalls, because they come from the Bay of Bengall; ... it is of much use for Gowns and Petty-Coats, but does shrink in wearing unreasonably.” J. F. not only describes various types of cloth supplied by EIC trade but also how they were subsequently used in London⁹. From J. F. we learn that Londoners routinely dressed in Bengal cotton, silk, and cotton/silk-mixed cloth in the late sixteen-hundreds and that these were not luxury goods (upmarket cloth being sold by mercers rather than linen-drapers). *Nillaes* were still on sale in nineteenth-century London: “A list of articles, the Produce or Manufacture of the East Indies and China, subject to duties, *ad valorem*”, (*Parliamentary Papers* 1813: 27): “Muslins coloured. Nankeens blue. Nawabeys. Neganepants. Nicannees. Nillaes. Paduasoyes. Palampores. Peniascoes. Photaes. Poyes. Romals, Silk, Cotton.” The Parliamentary Papers contain accounts and papers relating to EIC trade, and are an important source for tracking commodities entering nineteenth-century Britain, showing that London cloth-merchants and tailors, at least (if not the person in the street) used the word *nilla* from some point after the start of the EIC’s operations in Bengal in 1633, through to its nationalization (and effective winding-up) by the British Government in 1857. In the seventeenth century, ships’ cargoes would be announced in the London press, and 10,800 pieces of *nilla* arrived in 1678, to be sold on by London linen-drapers:

3 ... Byram Pauts 8040; Callaway poos 500; Chints broad 12435, narrow 12185, kaddy 16000, Serunge 9520; Cossaes 157; Culgyes 500; Derebands large

⁹ Much of the cloth-terminology in the early years of the St Helena records comes from Bengal, which name then denoted Bangladesh (excluding the district of Chittagong) and the Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (Prakash 2004: 252). Orissa, an Indian state by the Bay of Bengal, was renamed Odisha in 2010.

9435, small 15000; Dungarees 14558, brown 5886; Damasks 120; Gingham 9937; Guinea Stuffs 19600; Geelings 20; Humhums 2115; Hockins 3700; Izzarees 2000; Jelolsyes 643; Junacs 125; Long Cloth 49160, brown 12500, blew 6000; Moorees 7640; Mullmulls 3427; **Nillaes** 10800; Niccanees 10264; Neckclothes 3040; Parcallaes 2760 ...

Cargo of Seven Ships from India (Broadside, London), 1 August 1678¹⁰

The seven ships in question included the *Ann*, which called at St Helena 1676, the *Scipio Africanus*, which called at St Helena from Bantam in July in 1682, the *Success*, which returned to St Helena from India in May 1682, the *Bengala Merchant*, which returned to St Helena from India in September 1682, and the *Caesar*, which called at St Helena in 1682.¹¹ Once in London, the cargoes were bought by a broker for resale, as the following newspaper announcement of 1713 describes:

- 4 That there will be expos'd to Sale at the Marine Coffee-House in Birch Lane in Cornhill, on Tuesday the 17th of Febr. 1712-13. the remaining Part of the Cargo of the Bachelor-Prize taken in the South Seas by the Duke and Duchess, private Ships of War belonging to Bristol, consisting of the following Goods, viz. Allejars, Atlases, Cuttanees, colour'd Calliocoos, Chints fine of divers sorts, Ditt. Ordinary, Chelloes, Carridarries, Damasks, Elatches, Guinea Stuffs, **Nillaes**, Niccanees, Photaes, Pelongs, Paunches, Palampores ...
Post Boy, January 13, 1713 - January 15, 1713; Issue 2759.

One might then expect East India cloth-terms to be traceable on London linen-draper's retail trade-cards, in the same way that previously-established cloth-names were itemized on London mercers' trade-cards. However, I have only been able to track generic announcement, such as on Robert and Matthew Huntley's (undated but perhaps late seventeenth-century) trade-card, now in the London Metropolitan Archives collection, which contains the wording "Keeps Great Choice of y^e very finest Hollands and Cambricks Dutch Damasks & Diapers East India Goods & all other Drapery", with *hollands*, *cambricks*, *damasks* and *diapers* all pre-dating EIC trade. The lack of itemized EIC cloth on trade-cards results from a series of protectionist Acts of Parliament from 1666 designed to narrow the British market for East India cloth in order to prevent home manufacturers from going out of business, so that retail of East India cloth in London became illegal. Acts passed between 1700 and 1720 went so far as to outlaw the wearing of East India silks and cottons (O'Brien, Griffiths and Hunt 1991: 398; Lee-Whitman 1982: 39). Therefore, anyone buying East India cloth in London during this period could only legally sell it on outside England.

The St Helena Consultations show that the islands stores also contained cloth-terms coming from the other direction, that is, from Europe out to the colonies. Terms such as *ozenbriggs*, *druggets*, *shalloons*, *durants* (all mentioned in the St Helena Consultations entry for 2 February 1713/14), *2 peices slight black silk call'd alamode to make Hoods for women* (November 1715), *fustians* (25 September 1716), entered English via earlier trade with European countries, and others were coined in Britain,

¹⁰ All ships' cargoes listed here and hereafter have been transcribed from broadsides in the British Library Newspapers 1600-1950 database.

¹¹ All mentioned in the first volume of the St Helena Consultations. They left behind not only cargo but also slaves' names: *Scipio*, *Caesar* (see Wright 2013).

or are of unknown etymology: *perpetuanoes*, *huckabacks*, (2 February 1713/14), *kerseys* (25 September 1716). For example, a list of Island stores contains:

- 5 Ribbon & **Ferriting** &c^a 24 April 1714
 1 yard Ribbon 1^s
 7 yards **Galloom** 1^s
 22 yards **Ferritt** 6^s 3^d

Galloom is treated under *OED* headword galloon, n. ‘kind of narrow, close-woven ribbon’, from French *galon*, ‘dressing the hair with ribbons’, first attestation 1604; *ferrit*, *ferritting* are treated under *OED* headword ferret, n.² 2. “usually believed to be” from Italian *fioretti* ‘floss-silk’, meaning ‘a stout tape most commonly made of cotton’, first attestation 1649. *OED* cross-references ferreting, n.² to ferret, n.², as meaning the same thing, with *ferreting* first attested in a text of 1670. However *ferreting* in the St Helena Consultations inventory above is used as a superordinate heading covering various kinds of tapes and ribbons, with *ferret* as a hyponym, that is, a specific kind of tape. Compare the contents of a London trade-card (no date, but eighteenth-century, London Metropolitan Archive), and note *garters/garterings*:

- 6 SELL’s Puke Ribbons, Silk & Caul’s, Holland and Thread Diaper Tapes, Guilder’s & Scotch Threads, fine Colour’d and Brown Threads of all sorts, Ribbons, Girdles, Silk and Worsted Quality Bindings, Worsted Garterings, **Ferrets**, **Galloons**, Silk Garters. Silk, Cotton and Soosee Handkerchiefs. Manchester Tapes and Bindings. best Silk, **Ferret**, Cotton and Thread Laces, Pins, Needles, Black Laces. Paist Earrings and Necklaces, French Necklaces and Earrings, Bristol Stone Stay Hooks and Sleeve Buttons. Muffs and Tippetts. Sattin Pin-Cushions and Chimney-Lines, Black Silk and Worsted Fringe Cards. Snail Trimmings, Fans and Worsteds, with sundry other sorts of *Haberdashery*, Wholesale and Retail. ...

Although cloth-terms have received treatment in dictionaries, there still remains room for considerable confusion. For example, were *allejaes* and *elatches* one and the same, or two distinct types of cloth?

- 7 25 March 1707

Sue says that when she was Run away she saw .3. pieces of Meat at M^r Wills house, two pieces of English Beefe, and One piece of Porke, One spoon, One Knife, One Lackered Bowle, One **Alliyar** Bag with Flower, and that Hagar gave her a Petticoate of Sarah Lansdowns, who lives with the said Parsons.

- 8 India Linnen viz^t Sept 1719
 11 p^s Long Cloth £11
 4 p^s Gurrhas £2 10s
 4 p^s Sannoos £3 5s 8d
 51 p^s Madd^{rs} Gingham £25 10s
 31 p^s Cotton Stockings £4 13s
 47 White Shirts £5 17s 6d

18 p^s **Allijarrs** No. 2 £15 16s 6d

13 p^s **Cuttanees** No. 5 £12 3s 9d

OED includes *alleja* under the headword *elatcha*, n., ‘A silk fabric from Turkestan: ‘a silk cloth 5 yards long, which has a sort of wavy line pattern running in the length on one side’,’ first attested c.1613, with spellings *alleja(r)*, *alajah*, *allajar*, *alliza*, *allacha*, from Turki *alchah*, *alachah*, ‘any kind of corded stuff’. *OED* is following Hobson Jobson here; see Hobson Jobson (1886) *Alleja*, s., where the editors Yule and Burnell dismiss an etymology via Hindi *ilachi* ‘cardemom’ in preference to Turki, ‘a stuff from Turkestan’. See also Hobson Jobson (1886) *Piece-Goods* sub *Elatches*: “almost certainly identical with *alleja*. It was probably introduced to Agra, where now alone it is made by the Moghuls.” Cox and Dannehl (2007) repeat the conflation of *allejaes* with *elatches* sub *Alleja*. Singh (2006: 813): “Alacha, alicha, Allejah: A kind of striped silk cloth. Compared to other silk stuffs, alacha was low priced. Its inferior quality possibly was mixed with cotton. Some varieties of alacha had stripes of gold or silver thread.” Guy (1998: 187): “Allegaes, G(ujarati), Striped or checked cotton cloth, sometimes mixed with silk, typically red or blue and white, supplied as uncut lengths up to 16 yds (14.6m). Made in Gujarat”. Veinstein (2007: 99, 114, 115) lists types of Indian fabric from Ottoman documentation in 1690 which include several types of *alaga*, defined as a parti-coloured cotton and silk mixture. In 1673 the ships *Rebecca*, *Barnardiston*, *Johannah* and *Loyal Subject* brought *Allejahes* to London.¹² *Allejaes* also occurred in 1678 in no. 3, the *Cargo of Seven Ships from India*, and in 1688 via the *Beaufort*:

9 The Ship *Beaufort*, being lately Arrived from Fort St. *George*, and the Bay of *Bengal* in the *East-Indies*, take the following Account of her Cargo:

Allejaes, 89 Pieces, Ditto Brown, 500. Bettellees, 24162. Ditto Podaretz 150. Ditto Rowalue, 3360. Callaway poose, 260. Comees, 10000. Cumsaloes, 300. Damask 38. Diapers, 660. Dimities, 460. Gingham brown, 350. Goaconcherulaes, 180. Long Cloth fine 1710. Ditto ordinary, 5280 ...
Publick Occurrences Truly Stated (London, England), Tuesday, September 25, 1688; Issue 32.

Allejaes were in the cargo of the *Bachelor-Prize* of 1713 on sale at the Marine Coffee-House (no. 4), which lists both *allejaes* and *elatches* as separate items, as does “A list of articles, the Produce or Manufacture of the East Indies and China, subject to duties, *ad valorem*” from *Parliamentary Papers* (1813: 27): “Prohibited goods; viz. **Alatches, Allegars, Atchabannies, Atlas**”. Milburn (1813: 221) in a list of Bengal piece-goods exported to Great Britain and elsewhere lists both *Allachas* and *Elatches*. Walsh (1818: 198) specifies that *allejars* were shipped from Fort St. George, and *elatches* from Bengal. Chaudhuri (2006: 476) specifies that *allejaes* were shipped from the Coast of Coromandel, and *elatches* from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The spelling *elatches* occurs in a list of goods sold from Company stores

10 Gurrases 8 peices £5 25 Mar – 25 April 1713
Romalls 3 3^s 9d
Druggetts 4½ yards silk £1 1 4½, 34½ y^{rds} Cloth D^o £5 14 6
Sorts of Silk viz^t

¹² For sale at the East-India-House, November 10, 1673. Wing (2nd ed.) / E100CC. EEBO.

3 peices Taffatys £3 16 3
1 peice **Elatches** £0 13 3
Perpetuanoes 40 yards £4 14 2¼¹³

OED treats *elatcha, n.* separately: ‘A silk fabric from Turkestan: ‘a silk cloth 5 yards long, which has a sort of wavy line pattern running in the length on one side’, from Turki *alchah, alāchah*, ‘any kind of corded stuff’, first attested c1613. However, *OED* follows Hobson Jobson in relating *alliyar* and *elatcha* to the same root; cf Hobson Jobson (1886) *alleja, s.* J. F. (1696: 14-15) describes *elatchis* as “an Indian Silk strip’d with variety of colours, and often with very modest colours, it is usually for Gowns, and contains just the quantity for a Woman’s Mantua, and wears very well.” Swatches of *elatches* can be seen in John Forbes Watson (1866): *Elacha Nos.* 563, 564, 568. *Elatches* were advertised in the cargo of ships from India on sale in London in the broadside *Cargoe of the Charles the Second and Sampson*, 16 November 1694, and in *Weekly Journal With Fresh Advices Foreign and Domestick*, February 5, 1715. The cooccurrence of *elatches/alatches* with *allijaes* (however spelt) indicates that the two were separate cloth-names signifying different kinds of fabric. The evidence, then, is that *alliyar/allijarrs/allejaes/allegars/allachas* were not identical with *elatches*.

Cloth-manufactury in Bengal gave rise to related administrative vocabulary, such as *cooley* ‘hired labourer, porter’ and *bustabund* ‘person hired to pile cloth in bales’:

11 19 February 1716/1717

Charges of Merchandize (viz^l)
29 Baggs £2 7s 9d
Cooley hire £1 9d
Bustabund 1s 9d
Weighman & Cooley 1s 9d
Boat Hire 2s
Fort William y^e 13th Sept^r 1716¹⁴

OED *bundobast* | *bandobast, n.*, from Hindi (Persian) *band-o-bast* ‘tying and binding’; “an arrangement, organization; preparations”; first attestation 1776. Forbes (1866: 115): “*bast-o-band*, an agreement, settlement. *bastani*, f. a cloth for binding together bundles of paper, books, ink-stands, etc.”;¹⁵ Carnegie (1877: 39): “*Basta, s.* a cloth in which papers are bound up. A bundle of papers. *Bastoband, s.* an agreement, settlement. The same as *bandobast*.” Carnegie (1877: 31): “*Bandobast, s.* settlement; the process by which government fixes its land-revenue and records existing rights and possession in land.” Hobson Jobson (1886): *Bundobust, s.* P. –H. –band-o-bast,

¹³ *Romall* is from Urdu *rūmāl*, f. *rū* ‘face’ + *māl* ‘wiping’, and was “a silk or cotton square or handkerchief, sometimes used as a head-dress; a thin silk or cotton fabric with a handkerchief pattern” (*OED* *romal* 1).

Perpetuano was “a durable woollen fabric widely made and used in England during the 17th and 18th centuries, probably derived from the word *perpetual*, with an arbitrary ending (*OED* *perpetuana, n.*).

¹⁴ *OED* *weighman n.* ‘a man employed to weigh goods’, first attestation 1883.

OED *coolie, n.* ‘hired labourer (esp. one employed by a European)’, first attested 1622, origin uncertain, probably Gujarati.

¹⁵ I am grateful to Philip Baker for this reference.

lit. ‘tying and binding.’ “Any system or mode of regulation; discipline; a revenue settlement”, first attestation in a text of 1768. Singh (2006: xxxiii, 212, 217) specifies that in the context of Indian cloth-production, *bastabands* or *bustabands* meant “Compressing the cloth in bales or piling the cloth”, and provides the following table:

12	<i>Dressing the Cloth</i>	
	Function	Performed by
	1. Washing	Dhobis
	2. Bleaching	Dhobis
	3. Straightening of thread	Nurdeahs
	4. Repairing threads	Rafugars
	5. Removing spots	Dagh Dhobis
	6. Beetling cloth	Kundigars
	7. Ironing	Istriwallah
	8. Folding cloth	Nurdeahs
	9. Compressing in bales	Bastabands
	(Singh 2006: 212)	

The word *bandobast* is still in use in Indian English to mean ‘arrangements’, but the cloth-usage is not widely treated.

Moving from cloth to the natural world, EIC employees picked up names of trees from other colonial powers, notably the Portuguese:

13 7 and 8 January 1694/5

Eliz. The wife of Sutton Isaak sworne saith that she heard the said Exeter say that the s^d Parrum slave had Laine with the s^d Marshes Daughter and That one Day walking with the said Exeter and Talking ab^t what the s^d Exeter had reported of the said Marshes Daughter ab^t Parrums Black s^d that he had himselfe Laid wth the said Mary Marsh yond^r pointing to a p^rcell of **Bonanoe Trees**

OED banana, *n.* 1., is from Portuguese *banano* or Spanish *banano* (the tree, as opposed to *banana*, the fruit), apparently the name used in Guinea (Congo). The St Helena Consultations may contain the first attestation of the compound *banana tree*. The fruit are attested from 1563 under *OED* banana *n.* 2. a., but *OED*’s first attestation of the compound ‘banana tree’ is from 1697 (spelt *Bonano Tree*, following, like the St Helena token, the distinction in Portuguese and Spanish whereby the fruit was called *banana* but the tree *banano*).

14 23 June 1716

Resolv’d ... To write to the same purpose to Gov^r Harrison to mention all the Arrack We had from him was good, the Receipt of the Copper-Money and Fanams to desire some good chints such as is sold at Madras from 20 to 40 pagodas per Corge, and that the Long Cloth may be finer, We having now a moderate Quantity of the Coarse, and to desire to send some shirts ready made

of strong Cloth, either white or chequer'd, and that if they have any Seeds or Plants that they think will grow on dry Ground to send us some, but especially the **Margosa Tree** and Banyan Tree. To write to this purpose to Bombay, but desire Quilts for Bedding sorted instead of their Goa Arrack, and in writing to Bencoolen to send for the **Porchee Tree**; to desire Blacks from every place.

Governor Pyke

Edward Byfeld

Margosa: *OED* *margosa, n.*, derived from Portuguese *margosa de mato*, ultimately from post-classical Latin *amaricosus* 'bitter'. Another name for the neem tree, *Azadirachta indica*, *margosa* is first attested in *OED* in a document of 1802, although Hobson Jobson (1886: *margosa, s.*) notes that *margoise* is attested in a Dutch dictionary of 1727. Hobson Jobson specifies that the word was used in South India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) for the neem tree.

Porchee: Hobson Jobson (1886): *Portia*, "the common name of the *Thespesia populnea*", first attested in French in 1742,¹⁶ referring to the *porchi* tree of India. *OED* *portia tree, n.*, *Thespesia populnea*, from Tamil *pūvaracu*, lit. 'flower-king', first attested in 1750 in an English translation of the above French text. John Dunn's translation of Claude Francois Lambert's *Recueil d'Observations Curieuses*. The other items of vocabulary of East India Company trade in the Governor's request are: *arrack, n.*, 'fermented drink', from *araq* 'sweat, juice', especially in *araq at-tamr* 'the (fermented) juice of the date', from Arabic. The English word comes via India, first attestation 1516. (*OED* *arrack, n.*); *banyan tree, n.*, 'the Indian Fig Tree *Ficus religiosa orindica*', from Portuguese *banian*, probably from Arabic *banyān* (16th cent.), from Gujarati *vāṇiyo* 'man of the trading caste', first attestation 1638 (*OED* *banian, n. C2. banian-tree n.*); *chintz, n.*, 'painted or stained Indian calico', from Hindi *chint*, Mahratti *chit* 'variegated', first attestation 1614. (*OED* *chintz, n.*); *corge, n.*, 'twenty, a score', widespread in India, Portuguese trade language, and Arabic; first attestation 1510 (Hobson Jobson (1886): *Corge, Coorge*); Guy (1998: 187) 'bundle of cloths packaged for shipment, consisting of twenty lengths', from Hindi *kori* 'a score'; *fanam, n.*, 'coin current in South India', from Malayalam and Tamil, first attestation 1510 (*OED* *fanam, n.*); see also *OED* *cash n.2 b.* "the monetary system which prevailed in Southern India up to 1818; in this system 80 cash = 1 fanam, 42 fanams = 1 star pagoda"; *long cloth, n.*: *OED* *long cloth, n.* 'a kind of cotton or calico manufactured in India in long pieces', first attestation 1545. J. F. (1696: 26): "Long Cloth: Indian, "usually thirty eight or forty yards in length, and is about yard half quarter wide, of which there is two sorts, fine and coarse, the coarse is only proper for Linnen of several things, the fine is much used for Shirts, Shifts, and often for stitching for Petty-Coats and Wast-Coats". Longcloth was a major item of British industrial demand for printing (Rothermund 1999: 281); *pagoda, n.*, 'gold or silver coin current in South India', from Portuguese, from Tamil, first attestation 1598 (*OED* *pagoda, n.*).

The EIC had intended to turn St Helena into a plantation economy and so had sought to introduce European crops, although mostly in vain. The word *vineroon* is testimony to one such effort:

¹⁶ Claude Francois Lambert. 1742. *Recueil d'Observations Curieuses: Sur Les Moeurs, Les Coutumes ... de differens Peuples de l'Asie, de l'Afrique et de l'Amerique*, vol. 2, 71.

15 18 June 1695

That John Gates and Thomas Jessey soldj^{rs}, both borne on this Island, Noah Debuse, John Lefever, Anthony Dehure, and <Henry> Morin being foure of those French men that Came over as **vinerouns** with Cap^t Poirier, Harmon Anthonison a Dutchman that had runned away out of ship Sampson Cap^t Bromwell and Hatton Griffen who also Runned away out of shipp seymo<ur> Cap^t Gifford Comander; all of them have Liberty and Lycences to go off in the said shipp Resolution as seamen

16 21 Nov 1710

Baggo
Sampson
Homett
Blackwall Old Vineroons

Petit Robert: French *vigneron* ‘personne qui cultive la vigne, fait le vin’. The word *vineroon* seems to have been introduced to the island by Captain Poirier and his crew. The four men mentioned in no. 16 as old vineroons (Baggo, Sampson, Homett, Blackwall) were slaves.

2. Category b): words created by compounding

Words in category b) reflect settler’s attempts to make sense of the natural world around them by relating new, unfamiliar species of flora and fauna to those known at home. The process can be illustrated by *gumwood*, from [Old French *gomme*] + [Old English *wudu*]:

17 25 March 1707

Whereas William Hague Souldier, who works about the Fortifications, was suspected by the Governor to have taken at severall times, a greater allowance of Firewood, then he ought, or Else Employed the Companys blacks without Leave of any body to fetch him some whereupon the Governour ordered Ensign Sanderson, and Gabriell Powell who Oversees the Workmen to search in the House where the said Hague Lodges, where they found six or seaven Burdens of **Gumwood**, which was brought down to the Fort Kitchin, upon suspition as aforesaid, for which the said Hague was summoned

18 19 May 1709

Resolved That fifteen Acres of Land That Lies in Plantation Valley be well ffenced in and Planted with **Gumwood**, and that Captⁿ Mashborne have six stout able Blacks to be Constantly Employed about that Business and no other

19 28 June 1709

Cap^{tn} Mashborne reports that he has planted with **Gumwood** To the Number of Five Thousand Twenty Nine Trees, in Plantation Valley in a Piece of ground appointed for that purpose at a Consultation of the 19th May last. And also Five Hundred Lemon Trees, as ordered in the Consultation aforesaid.

Gumwood can be found under *OED* gum-wood *n.* ‘the wood of the gum-tree; the tree itself’, first attestation 1683, in William Penn’s *Works* (1782) IV. 302. However, William Penn was talking about North American gumwoods, *Liquidambar styraciflua* (sweetgum, redgum), *Nyssa sylvatica* (black gum), whereas the St Helena gumwood, *Commidendrum robustum*, is native to the island. Compounding two familiar words to create a name for a newly-encountered entity was common practice and could have happened independently in various colonies, or compounds could have been coined in one colony and then transported to similar-looking entities in others. The St Helena Consultations contain references to various flora and fauna, and the same difficulty applies:

20 1 April 1676

Upon Elizabeth the wife of John <Starling> for being private wth A gen^t Man A <stranger> Looking themselves up in A roome, and <shee> s^d Elizabeth Starling the day before < > to prostitute her selfe the next day to < > stranger Amongst the **physick Nutt Trees** ... Wee ordred her for punishm^t to bee Duckt att the Crane & shee Received her punishm^t accordingly &c

OED physick nut, *n.*, is first attested in the context of Barbados 1657, with first attestation of the compound *physick nut tree* in the context of America, 1672. It is uncertain whether the physick nut trees mentioned in the St Helena Consultations of 1676 were the same species, *Jatropha curcas*, as those grown in Barbados and America, or whether the name was reapplied to something that bore a resemblance to trees encountered in other colonies.

21 25 September 1682

W^m Melling late souldj^r having bin permitted to turne free in the Council of August 28th last past, and now desireing to have his 10 acres of Land (then granted) in the **Cabbage tree** wood neere Richard Stacys land, about Sandy Bay ridge. It is Ordered That the said Melling have his 10 acres of Land rough and plaine in the said place where he desires it.

OED cabbage tree, *n.*, first attestation 1661, in reference to different species of trees growing in Jamaica (1661), John Fernando’s Isle (1697), Barbados (1756), New Guinea (1779), Port Jackson (1788), South Carolina (1796), St Helena (1805). See also EEBO, Barbados (1656), Tobago (1683), Bay of Panama (1697). The St Helena Consultations contain the first token of *cabbage tree* in reference to the St Helena cabbage trees, *Pladaroxylon leucadendron* and *Lachanodes arborea*, which are endemic to the island.

22 7 April 1696

Mathew Bazett and William Coales sworne saith y^t ab^t xmass Last past: Thomas Allises Black woman came to them desiering them to goe to her Masters house: for he had beaten her mistress and turned her out of doores: soe the went: and when they came theare the found the s^d Allis ab^t mending his house which he had much broken before: by naileing of it up: and as soone as he saw them he told them: that the last night theare weare foure men y^t lay wth his wife: and told them that they stood a mounst the **Lilly trees** y^t are just before his doore: he tooke stones and threw amongst them: then the s^d Allis came in: and side that he must goe and Looke for his wife: and desiered y^e s^d Bazett and Coales to goe a long wth him: which they did: but found her not

The compound *lily tree* has been applied to various species: the Lily Tree, *Portlandia grandiflora*, known as *Glorious Flower of Cuba*, native to Jamaica and Cuba but grows elsewhere, including India;¹⁷ the Lily Tree, *Magnolia denudata*, native of China;¹⁸ the White Lily Tree, *Crinodendron patagua* native of Chile, grows in South Africa;¹⁹ the Lily of the Valley Tree, *Clethra arborea*, native to Macaronesia (that is, the islands of the North Atlantic: Azores, Madeira, Canaries, Cape Verde); grows in South Africa.²⁰ *OED* has one attestation only, to the Lily of the Valley Tree, *Clethra arborea*, in 1885. I cannot find the name *lily tree* elsewhere on St Helena. It might have been a nonce-formation by the witnesses Mathew Bazett and William Coales, who were reporting the speech of Thomas Allis.

23 10 September 1717

That an Advertisem^t be Published as followeth (Viz^t)
Island S^t Helena
By the Worsh[~] Isaac Pyke Esq^r Govern^r & c^a Councill an Advertizem^t
Whereas the **Egg Birds** begin to lay at Shepheards hole & c^a
These are to give Notice to all persons That they are not to go to the Egg
Islands to disturb them by fetching off their Eggs least they prevent their
settling their upon their usuall places they were wont to lay on as in the former
sessions untill the end of this present month.
But after the first day of Oct^{br} next they may go on Tuesdays, Thursdays &
Saturdays every week as Usuall.
Dated at Union Castle in James Valley this 10th day of Sept^r 1717
Signed by Ord^r of the Govern^r & Councill
Antip[~] Tovey

OED lists the compound under egg, *n.* C3. egg-bird, *n.*, but defines the egg-bird as a species of tern (*Hydrochelidon fuliginosum*) common in the West Indies, where its eggs are collected for use as food, first attestation 1697, in the Caribbean. Melliss (1875) identifies the St Helena egg-bird as *Sterna fuliginosa*:

¹⁷ http://www.ntbg.org/plants/plant_details.php?plantid=9394

¹⁸ *RHS Encyclopedia of Plants and Flowers*, p. 734.

¹⁹ <http://www.treetags.co.za/>

²⁰ <http://www.treetags.co.za/>

- 24 Egg-bird. Not *very* abundant, but inhabits George's and Speery Islands, with other rocky islets off the coast, in considerable numbers. Egg-birds do not remain all the year at St. Helena, and probably migrate to Ascension, nearly seven hundred miles distant, where they are to be found in tens of thousands, and are so tame and plentiful at a spot called "Wideawake-Fair" that they may be knocked down by hundreds with a walking-stick. They are there protected for the sake of the eggs, which form an article of food with the inhabitants. They arrive in St. Helena at the end of the year, and lay in January, February, and March. Much risk of life is run in obtaining the eggs, which are brought to the market, and by some persons are considered a delicacy equal to plovers'. These birds seldom, if ever, come near the inhabited parts of the Island. (Melliss 1875: 98)

Similarly, the term *fish royal* is known from elsewhere, but referring to other species:

- 25 28 August 1682

... there haveing bin severall **Fish Royall**, comonly called amongst the Inhabitants of the sayd Island Sea Cows found in sundry places, on the Sea shore, which have yeilded considerable quantities of Oyle, Which the finders thereof have privately converted to their owne Vse without takeing notice of the said Hono^{rble} Comp^{as} Right, & Title, or the Governem^t of the sayd Island. Now for p^rvention of such neglects for the future, and to p^rserve the said Hono^{rble} Comp^{as} Royalty, and to encourage all that shall find such Fish, and take paines to boyle it into Oyle. It is Ordered That from the 1st of Sept next whatever Free Planter or other Inhabitant shall find any of the said Fish called Sea Cows, or others of the like nature, and quality on the shore of any part of the said Island, hee may boyle the same, and convert it in to Oyle, and take it to his owne proper use and behoofe, provided alwaies that he forthwith send or cause to be sent the Eighth part or gallon of all the said Oyle soe made, into Fort James, and deliver it to the Governo^r or such as he shall appoint, as an acknowledgem^t of the said Hono^{rble} Comp^{as} Royalty and Propriety, and for their use and service.

Fish royal is listed in *OED* under fish, *n.*¹ from 1776, but only in the context of English rivers. *Fish royal* occurs in Spelman (1647: 72), but not in the context of St Helena. The St Helena Consultations token may refer to the manatee: *OED* manatee, *n.* "a sirenian mammal; *spec.* any of several sirenians of the genus *Trichechus* (family Trichechidae), which have a rounded tail flipper and inhabit coastal waters and adjacent rivers of the tropical Atlantic" (see also *OED* sea-cow, *n.*, with reference to the manatee, first attestation 1613). It is thought that the St Helenan manatee might have been a different, now extinct, species.²¹

A generic EIC term for dealing in edible green-leaved plants was *green-trade*:

- 26 18 November 1707

²¹ G. C. Retching, 'The Manatee of St Helena', *Nature* 138, 33-34 (04 July 1936) | doi:10.1038/138033b0

The Govern^r and Counc^{ll} having this day Considered the Prizes of Provisions of the Produce of the R^t Hono^{rbl} Comp^{as} Plantations upon the Island < > St Helena which are as followeth./

Blacks Labour bringing said Provisions down at 6d a Turn Except Yams and Beef which is Reckoned at the Price./

Yams six shillings a Hundred Pound

Beif twenty five shillings a hundred pound

Butter ten pence *per* pound

Pork four Pence *per* pound

Potatoes four shillings *per* Bushell

Dunghill fowles 16^d a piece

Turkeys four shillings Each

Green Trade six pence *per* time

Geese att five shillings Each

Goats Eight shillings Each

Roasting Piggs three shillings Each

Bacon ten pence a pound

Milk six pence a Gallon

Sheep twenty shillings a Piece

Veale six pence a pound

French Cheese six pence a piece

New Milk Cheese six pence a pound

Beans nine shillings a bushel

two pence a pound for Runing Hoggs²²

27 August 1716

The Governor gave him 4 Basketts of **green Trade** 40 Pumpkins 2 Bags of Red Oaker such as grows here on the Hills and a Boat Load of Plantain Trees, besides lending him the Use of his Chair the whole time of his being here so that no man could have less reason to go away without signing his Bills than Captain Martin had

28 26 February 1718/9

every Family that are not over Run wth sloth will Endeavour to have something to sell the ships, which whether it be Poultry, **Green Trade**, or Fruit

I cannot find reference to *green trade* in dictionaries, but it occurs in other EIC writings:

29 y^e Dep. told us that at y^e Factory they have the best of every thing upon y^e Isl^d, as also more plenty, and many things grow there w^{ch} they have not in any other part of y^e Isl^d, especially all sorts of sallat & other **green trade**, for we could gitt nothing green from y^e freemen but pursely & another sweet cented

²² *dunghill fowl*, n., *OED* dunghill, n. C4. dunghill-fowl n. ‘common barndoor fowls, as distinguished from the game-cock, etc.’, first attestation 1796; however, *dunghill-cock* is attested in 1580 and *dunghill-hen* in 1611; *running hog*, n., *OED* running, adj. 2.a. ‘of an animal esp. a dog: that is raised or kept for pursuing animals in the course of a hunt’, first attestation c1425, although not in the context of hogs – presumably the price was for hogs that were to be turned loose.

herb, with w^{ch} we made a sallatt, adding thereto some shallat. (Tillard's *Diary*, written on board the *London*, docked at Mauritius, 1699)

- 30 The Ship Adventure, of which Thomas Gullock was Commander and Supra-Cargo, bound to Borneo in East-India, broke ground from Graves-End on the 16th of March 1697/8. and toucht at Brava one of the Cape de Verdy Islands, and having there got plenty of Refreshment, Fowls, Hogs, Goats and **green Trade**, proceeded on their Voyage, and in the Month of August fell in with the Coast of Sumatra, went to Padang to get Refreshment for the Ships Company, lay there five days, bought there four Bullocks, Fowls, Fruit, green Herbs, Potato's, &c.
(Anon. *A true relation of a most horrid conspiracy ...*, 1700, 1)
- 31 The ship was no sooner anchored, than surrounded with a number of canoes, hurrying on board with refreshments of all sorts, of the produce of the island; and it was humorous enough to mark the confusion, and strife, among the rowers, who should get first to their market, the ship. They are sometimes overset, when the sea is any thing high: but, without any danger to their persons, being excellent swimmers, and lose only their little cargoes of **green-trade**. (Grose and Charmichael, 1772, 13; Grose is describing the arrival of EIC ships at the Comoros Islands)

It is likely that *green-trade* was an EIC in-house term for this kind of ship-provisioning, which would have been vital for every ship, anywhere on the globe.

3. Category c): exported Southern English regional dialect; extraterritorial English

Category c) contains regional variants from Britain which became part of extraterritorial varieties' wordstock. Two topographical terms were *gut* n. 'defile, ravine, between steep mountainous slopes' and *hangings*, n. 'a steep slope'. The terrain of St Helena is volcanic, with deep, water-cut gorges and steep-sided valleys:

32 21 Nov 1710

First as to Yames We do find Planted In the Great Plantation ffrom the Bottom of The **Gutt** Up to old Marias spring all under 12 months old Ther Quantity of 103000 Secondly We ffind In Tewesdales **Gut** Ther Quantity of Grown Yames Fitt to Digg 25000

Several specific guts are mentioned in the St Helena Consultations: *Peake Gutt* (1682), *Rookers Gutt*, *Coles Gutt*, *Seafords Gutt*, *Jesseys Gutt* (all 1710), as well as the generic noun. Zettersten (1989: 395-395) adds *Broad Bottom Gut*, *Broad Gut*, *Long Gut*, *Powell's Gut*, *Warren's Gut*, *Dry Gut Bay*. *EDD* gut, sb. 3 3. 'a narrow passage of any kind', cf. Sussex 'An opening through the chalk cliffs on the south downs leading to the sea'. *OED* gut, n.5. 'a narrow passage' c. 'On land: A narrow passage between two declivities; hence, a narrow passage or lane of any kind', is first attested in a text of 1615. *Gut* was also used in this sense by early American settlers;

Dictionary of American Regional English gut n 2 ‘A narrow passageway, esp a ravine or narrow valley’, first attestation 1640: “By the maine branch side to the Eastward of a little Gutt or Vally”. However later-settled steep-ravined colonies used *gulch* (e.g. Tristan da Cunha, Zettersten (1969)) and *valley* (e.g. Norfolk Island, Nash (2013)). *Hangings* first occurs in an order for surveying the island of 1682:

33 25 September 1682

begining att or about y^e Horse Pasture plaines, and soe Westward to Thompstone wood High Hill &c thence as every succeeding day will permit, thorough Sandy Bay to Pauls Valley Deep Valley head soe to the great wood and lastly to the middle part of the Island to the head of Chappell valley under Sandy Bay **hangings**.

EDD hanging, ppl. adj. and sb. (3) ‘cover, a wood on the slope of a hill’; *OED* hanging, *n.* 7. ‘a steep slope or declivity of a hill. Now *local*.’²³, is first attested in a text of 1400, with only two post-1673 attestations (the date of St Helena settlement), both in 1888, one from a dictionary of Berkshire words and phrases, and the other from Suffolk. Old English *hangra* ‘slope, situated on a steep slope’ occurs in various English place-names (Ekwall 1936 [1984]: 217).

Dialect terms for animal husbandry also belong in this category:

34 7, 8 January 1694/5

Marg^{tt} Harper spinciter Complains of *Elizabeth* Suffolk and Mary Gates saying that they had reported that she the said Marg^{tt} Harper had **slunk** or miscaryed and that she was six months gone with Child and then made away with it.

Anne Orchard sworne saith that the s^d Mary Gates asked her if she did not heare of a Heifer in the valley that had **slunk** her Calfe, to which she replied what Heifer is that to which she Mary Gates answered again why Marg^{tt} Harper did miscary of a Bastard how doe you know that replied the said Orchard, said the s^d Gates I have heard it in Sandy Bay; and afterwards the said Orchard Comeing from the Country and goeing by the said Suffolks House (the said Suffolk understanding that the said Marg^{tt} Harper would arrest her and her Daughter) the s^d Suffolk called this depon^t and desir’d her not to speak of any thing of what you have heard my Daughter say for said she as you have bin play mates together d’ont bring her to Trouble ...

W^m Marsh sworne saith that he heard *Elizabeth* Suffolk ask some body (but Could not tell who) if they had not heard of a Heifer had **slunk** her Calfe which was replied that there was no Cattle in the valley to which *Elizabeth* Suffolk made answer that the young Heifer y^t had **slunk** her Calfe was a young woman that whent on board the ship with money in her Lapp to buy some Arrack.

Margery Birch sworne saith That she was on day in Company with the said *Elizabeth* Suffolk who asked her if she did not hear<> of a **slinking** for there was a Heifer that Lived at the Corner House that was gone six month with

²³ “now” refers to 1898 when this definition was first published.

Child, and y^t it was a bad Thing for a young woman to be with Child, but it was worse to make away wth it after they were so farr gone.

EDD slink, v. 2 and sb. 2 in general dialect use, ‘of a cow or mare: to give birth prematurely’. *OED* slinking, *n.* 2. ‘the action or fact of bearing prematurely’, from OE *slincan* ‘to creep’, first attestation 1844. Only two attestations are given, from 1844 and 1886, both in the context of farm animals, although the verb (*slink*, v.3.a., and also *sling*, v.12c.) is attested in this sense from 1640. Although the context is human rather than bovine, this particular case of defamation (the outcome was that Elizabeth Suffolk and Mary Gates were lashed) shows that the verb *slink* and noun *slinking* were restricted to the context of animals, and that the St Helena usage was semantically the same as that of Britain. Had the *slink* lexeme become the normal word for ‘miscarriage’, the gloss (“slunk or miscaryed”) would not have been needed and the misunderstanding (“which was replied that there was no Cattle in the valley”) would not have occurred.

35 12 March 1705/6

That on Thursday the 19th Day of ffebru^{ry} Last past The said Hatton Starling Came home from fishing, and some time after Dinner my husband and the s^d Hatton sterling went Into the Hall, to **snude** some fish Hooks as I suppose; a little while after my Husband went Up to ffrancis Wranghams house, and Left Hatton sterling Lying Down upon the Bed, where my little Girle Named Elizabeth Run to him and play’d to and fro in the Room, a little time aft^r I being setting in the kitchin, I heard the Child make a noise as tho: she had been pulling away from him (as I believe she was) and heard him say Come here betty No said she I wont I’le go to my Mumm and Came Runing to me, and said Mumm Hatton put his Cock to my Cock, whereupon I pusht her away, but she would not go, saying over again as before, Then I got Up and took her a one side, and Lookt Upon her secret parts, where to my Great amaze and Greif saw the sign of his Lustfull Nature, and some spots upon her shift, whereupon went wth the Child in my hand to the s^d Hatton starling as he Lay Upon y^e bed, and said you beastly Dog what have you done to my child

EDD snood, sb. v. 9 ‘to tie a hair-line on a fishing-hook’ Sc.; *OED* snood, v. ‘to attach (a hook) to a snood’, from OE *snod* ‘hairnet’, one attestation only: 1840, F. MARRYAT *Poor Jack* vi. 32: “He was snooding a hook.” *OED* snood, *n.*2.a. ‘In sea-fishing: One of a number of short lines, each carrying a baited hook, attached at regular distances along the main line’, with attestations c1682-1883: “c1682 J. COLLINS *Salt & Fishery* 112 “To each of these are fastned 20 Snoods, *alias* Nossels, which are small Lines, with Hooks and Baits at them.” Compare *OED* snode, *n.* ‘A piece or bit (of bread or other food); a morsel’, only attested before 1440, apparently from OE **snad*, var. of *snaed* ‘morsel cut off’; and *OED* snade, *n.* “piece cut from the tail of a mackerel for use as bait”, possibly related to *sned*, v., single attestation, 1901: F. G. Aflalo *Sea & Coast Fishing* 134 “Matt pushes the ‘snade’ well down on the bend of the hook, from which it presently dangles”; also *OED* snede, *n.* ‘small piece, morsel’, from OE *snaed*, with attestations from c1000 and c1200 only, related to OE *sníðan*; also *OED* sned, v. ‘to cut’, from OE *snaedan*, related to OE *sníðan* ‘to kill by cutting’. *Sned* is attested from OE to the present, but in the context of cutting trees, not cutting bait. There is a verb, *snithe*, from OE *sníðan*, attested before c1200,

with the exception of one attestation from Sheffield: (Addy 1888: 226): “Snithe a piece off with thy knife”. Nance (1963: 151) records Cornish *sneed* ‘a strip of bait cut from a makerel’s tail’, from OE *snaed* ‘morsel cut off’, in use by Cornish fishermen in the 1920s when Nance (1963) was compiled. *OED* does not (currently) relate the *sneed/sned/snade/snode* ‘bait’ lexeme to the *snood* ‘short fishing line’ lexeme, and the two may be entirely separate; however the *snode* variant, meaning ‘crumbs, food morsels, bites of food’ in texts dated before 1400, causes me to suggest a relationship.

OED does not mention *cock* as a term for the female genitalia, but it is so used in present-day U.S. Appalachian English dialect: Montgomery and Hall (2004) *cock*¹; *Dictionary of American Regional English* *cock* *n*¹ ‘the female genitalia’, chiefly South, South Midland.²⁴

3. Observations

Dividing the vocabulary discussed here into categories distinguishes:

- borrowings, of which a large number are commodity-names coming via the Bengal factory, and also possibly via the languages of slaves enslaved by Portuguese (*banana tree, margosa tree*). They include words from Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Assamese, Mahratti, Tamil, Persian, Turki and Arabic, and travelled via EIC trade to England. However, plenty of cloth names also went in the other direction, from European languages to English and then out to the colonies.
- words compounded by settlers, either on the island, or in other colonial settings (*cabbage tree, lily tree, gumwood, physic nut tree, egg bird, fish royal*), often composed of [Old English noun] + [Old English noun]
- words brought to the island as part of the EIC administration process (*green trade, bustabund, cooley, pagoda, fanam, corge*)
- words present in founder-settler’s idiolects which then became island variants (*gut, hangings, snude, cock, slinking*), although regional in Britain

An East India Company vocabulary on the island of St Helena can be posited, then, not only in the ways in which the first inhabitants described their surroundings, using the same compounding techniques as settlers in other parts of the globe by reaching for the same lexical material in different environments, but also in the names of commodities shipped to the island as part of a greater trade with Asia. Company culture can also be seen in names for money, weights and packaging (*pagoda, fanam, corge*), and for loading and unloading goods (*bustabund, cooley*), as terms local to one East India Company factory became spread to others. The fact that St Helena was a way-station and also a settlement meant that the traffic was two-way. Regional English vocabulary brought to the island from various parts of Britain by planters, soldiers and sailors became established on the island, as well as dispersed to other colonies and factories, and cloth-names of European etymology were carried out via St Helena to the Asian factories along with the commodities. St Helena, then, was –

²⁴ See Wright (in press) for more detail of this case.

to a certain extent – a lexical repository of all the languages encountered by the East India Company in its trading ventures.

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