

TRANSNATIONAL AUTEURISM IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH CINEMA: THE CRISIS
OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN ANTHONY MINGHELLA'S *THE ENGLISH PATIENT* (1996)
AND *BREAKING AND ENTERING* (2006)

By

TIMOTHY MICHAEL ROBINSON

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2010

© 2010 Timothy Michael Robinson

I dedicate this thesis to all those teachers, professors, and mentors who helped nurture my intellectual curiosity throughout my career.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of this project would not have been possible without the assistance of many people, and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them. First, I thank professor Scott Nygren, who served as the Chair of my committee, for his mentorship in helping this project reach its full potential. Next, I thank Roger Beebe, the reader on my committee, for his provocative questions that forced me to reconsider various perspectives on the topic. I would also like to thank Barbara Mennell, whose graduate seminar on “National and Transnational Cinema” contributed greatly to the scope of my argument. Finally, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents Richard and Deborah Robinson, for their loving support, which means so much and does not pass unnoticed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
ABSTRACT.....	6
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	7
2 <i>THE ENGLISH PATIENT</i> : CRITIQUING NATIONAL “HERITAGE” THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY AND SPACE.....	24
3 <i>BREAKING AND ENTERING</i> : MAPPING TRANSNATIONAL NARRATIVES THROUGH FLUCTUATING ARCHITECTURE IN LONDON	36
4 CONCLUSION: MINGHELLA’S LEGACY FOR AUTEURIST TRANSNATIONALISM	50
NOTES.....	53
WORKS CITED.....	55
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	58

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

TRANSNATIONAL AUTEURISM IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH CINEMA: THE CRISIS
OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN ANTHONY MINGHELLA'S *THE ENGLISH PATIENT*
(1996) AND *BREAKING AND ENTERING* (2006)

By

Timothy Michael Robinson

December 2010

Chair: Scott Nygren

Major: English

My thesis explores the role of national cinema studies in an increasingly globalized marketplace at the turn of the twentieth-first century. Due to shifting social, political, and economic forces over the past twenty years, filmmaking industries worldwide have responded through changes in modes of production, distribution, reception, and exhibition that pose the national cinema studies paradigm as problematic. In analyzing the films *The English Patient* (1996) and *Breaking and Entering* (2006) by writer-director Anthony Minghella, I argue that these films position the “transnational” as a significant marker of identity that reaches beyond the merely geographical borders of the nation-state. The act of being transnational, then, also becomes particularly meaningful to describe contemporary cultural production in approaching the realities of making, circulating, and accessing films under globalization. This study marks an important contribution to the expansive field of national cinema studies, which has experienced a recent resurgence in the wake of such conditions. These films imagine individuals and communities at particular historical moments when the “nation” comes under crisis. Ultimately, they help us to understand contemporary forms of identity but also their limitations within prescribed modes of representation.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In the current age of globalization marked by the decline of the nation-state as a mobilizing political force, the increasing free-flow of capital across national boundaries, and the stake of transnational media conglomerates in film production, critical and aesthetic categories such as “national cinema(s)” bear little resemblance to the actual reality of contemporary cultural production. The critical construct of national cinema(s) has been used historically to promote national film cultures and to offer an image of a unified industry with well-established institutional modes of representation, thereby acknowledging the predominance of standardized communication within national media and a shared language consistent with literary tradition. The national cinema(s) paradigm, however, has come under crisis recently due to changing conditions in financing, production, distribution, and reception of films (Ezra and Rowden 1). These developments challenge the “national” as a fundamental framework for understanding cinematic practices in film studies today, while they simultaneously invite a revised approach that takes into account “the transnational” in world cinema.

In order to interrogate questions involving national cinema(s), globalization, and transnational modes of experience, I analyze two films directed by the late writer-director Anthony Minghella to suggest that they engage in modalities specific to transnational cultural production. *The English Patient* (1996), a WWII-set epic that won nine Academy Awards and remains Minghella’s most recognized film, imagines a transnational community through mise-en-scene and editing that allows for individuals to move freely across geo-political boundaries outside of the nation-state. Released a decade later, Minghella’s contemporary drama *Breaking and Entering* (2006) addresses British nationalist anxiety towards displaced refugees from Bosnia as they settle in London. In my analysis I show how each of these films embody “the

transnational” through particular modes of production, distribution, and representation. I argue that Minghella becomes a pivotal auteur in British cinema as it stakes a claim in transnational cinema production at the turn of the twenty-first century. The national pervades Minghella’s films but yields ultimately to imagining communities and identities outside of traditional prescriptions of the nation.

The concept of the “nation,” first emerged in the late 1700’s in Europe as a response to the threat of French cultural dominance prior to the Revolution in 1789. In the 1800’s philosopher and literary critic Johann Gottfried Herder became a key figure in the development of the “nation” as a mode of political and cultural sovereignty. Herder invoked the “rejuvenation” of Germany and argued for the construction of national identity based in the language and literature from the *volk*, or the common people (Koepke 181). While Herder advocated cultural nationalism as a means to legitimate German society, for “without a common ‘German’ spirit and patriotism, based on a revitalization of language and literature, central Europe would remain in a backward and decaying state,” he maintained a difference between *kulturnation* and the *staaten*, the latter of which implies arbitrary political boundaries, centralized bureaucratic power based on rational principles, and imperial expansion through colonialism (Koepke 183). Traditional Western narratives of European history figure the 1800’s as the period of the “nation-state” as the superlative form of political sovereignty. The French Revolution ushered in the movement toward rational Enlightenment propounded by the rise of individual nation-states. Europe developed into a landscape of various nation-states rooted in language and culture that found its most extreme realization in the form of the national-socialist Third Reich, which culminated in World War II and was followed by the movement toward decolonization and the destabilization of the nation-state as a legitimate form of sovereignty.

Although the “nation” no longer carries the strong political force evident in the 1800s and early 1900s in Europe, it still remains a relevant cultural and political concept as a means to unite people across various backgrounds and locations within a territorial space to form a mobilizing community capable of political will.

Contemporary discourses on globalization and transnationalism in film studies assume the “nation” to be inherently problematic. In *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson theorizes the nation as an “imagined community” that differentiates between “the ‘state,’ with its geographical borders and political legislation, and the more fluid concept of the ‘nation’ as perceived through shared cultural practices, such as television, newspapers, and cinema” (Leggott 37). Anderson’s concept of the nation involves a clear difference between the geopolitical territory of the state and the imagined space of the nation, which unites people through cultural forms and practices developed initially by innovations in and popularity of print culture in the 1800’s (i.e. newspapers and novels). In his essay “Issues in World Cinema” (2000), Asian cinema scholar Wimal Dissanayake claims that “the nation also contains within itself diverse local narratives of resistance and memory and therefore [we must] take into account the full force of these local and dissenting narratives, which are embedded in the larger narrative of the nation” (879). The “national” narrative argues for a unified sense of identity among various people in a territorialized geographic space through structures of coherence, transparency, and heroism; subsequently, this narrative often erases the multiple realities inherent in race, gender, class, and sexuality under a single, monumental narrative. The danger implicated in the “nation” as an ideological construct involves the perspective of history as unified, timeless, and teleological, which fails to integrate local narratives that may resist official narratives of the nation’s “imagined community.”

With the fall of the East Bloc in 1989, the second Russian revolution, wars in the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East, and the creation of the European Union in the 1990s, the tie between the territorial state and the imagined nation has become increasingly tenuous and outmoded in part due to the increased mobility of diasporic, exilic, and refugee communities in Europe (Sargeant 345). Other factors contributing to the accelerated movement across national borders during the 1990s and 2000s include the rise of late capitalism from the West with the desire to conquer new frontiers and tap into unfound markets, centralizing global cultural production in the form of media conglomerates, and new technology and the Internet as a popular means of communicating across nations (Higson 127).¹

Early cinema before the advent of sound (1895-1927) was similarly transnational and became markedly “national” only with sound’s restoration of language as a central element of communication in film. “National cinema,” then, arguably implies a particular modality of classical narrative production, and internet transnationalism could be said to return to a forgotten media transnationalism erased by classical studio dominance since the 1930’s. Therefore, recent advancements in technology and alternative modes of communication, operating simultaneously alongside traditional forms of national media, challenge the long-standing construct of “national cinema” that has already been de-stabilized by a post-Wall Europe.

This recent move toward globalization is significant historically because of the explicit effort made by national policies and international organization to ease the exchange of goods and services across traditional national boundaries.² In effect, the nation becomes an agent of its own demise. During the 1990s early theories on globalization often tried to make the argument that globalization is an actual phenomenon with real consequences, but these debates increasingly subsided in the 2000s as critics were more convinced of the phenomena and its expansive reach

in global concerns over the threat of international terrorism, the “Going Green” movement, and the near-collapse of the U.S. banking system and its effects on the global market in late 2007.³ The political, social, and economic realities of the 1990s contributed to the decline of the “nation” as a symbolic force but it nevertheless continues to function as a form of agency in response to changes in global capital and increased mobility at the turn of the century. The nation has become a new kind of “local” context in tension with the “global,” shifting in significance but remaining relevant and no-less problematic.

The idea of the nation has been productive for film studies as a means to conceptualize cinema in terms of national identity. When film studies entered American academia in the 1960s and 1970s, two theoretical approaches dominated the discourse and helped to legitimize the discipline as an area of study: auteurism and national cinema(s). The national cinema paradigm assumes that cinemas around the world embody a cultural or national character. Therefore, in order to understand a filmic text it is imperative that we take into consideration the cultural conditions under which the film was produced, distributed, and received. The national cinema approach to film studies gained ground primarily in academic language departments that taught film as cultural production implicated in structures of ideology. Research in national cinema and identity, which claims that we can analyze certain elements in a film in relation to larger ideological and cultural issues of a film-producing nation, has grown in recent years and indicates continued investment in film studies.⁴

While language departments contributed to the credibility of film studies as an academic discipline through the institutionalization of the national cinema approach, this methodology carries many assumptions that are challenged by globalization and transnational cultural production. In *Contemporary World Cinema* (2005), Shohini Chaudhuri states that current

research in national cinema studies “emphasize that national identity is not a fixed and unchanging ‘essence’ but is actively constructed in films, which project national imaginaries, creating imaginary bonds holding the nation together” (3). The national cinema approach assumes that each nation is unique and separate, but rather than reaffirming an “essential” characteristic we need to analyze the way in which films that are strongly “national” construct nationality through particular forms of representation. Wimal Dissanayake, a scholar in Asian, African, and South American cinemas, claims “Nationhood, as with all other forms of identity, revolves around the question of difference, with how the uniqueness of one nation differs from the uniqueness of other comparable nations” (878). Dissanayake argues that the problems inherent in the concept of the “nation” can also be seen in national cinema studies. The national cinema approach not only promotes “essentializing” Otherness and marking difference and separateness, but it also limits out understanding of the complexities within a given film text and disregards the notion that ideas (as well as people) are not simply restricted within inscribed borders of the geo-political nation-state. Andrew Higson, whose work in British cinema exemplifies this methodology, critiques the productive value of the national cinema model in his recent essay, “The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema” (2000): “The problem is that, when describing a national cinema, there is a tendency to focus only on those films that narrate the nation as just this finite, limited space, inhabited by a tightly coherent and unified community, closed off to other identities besides national identity” (18). Higson believes that national cinema research often selects only those films that reflect a “national” character and thus omits many other available films from a country that offer an alternative view of the nation. National identity then becomes only one way for a film to construct identity. National cinema studies have historically failed to account for alternate forms of identity filmmaking including

Third Cinema, feminist cinema, queer cinema, avant-garde cinema, regional, transnational, and diasporic cinema (Dennison and Lim 7).⁵ Research focused solely on the construction of national identity is then limited in its depiction of the varieties and complexities of identity outside of the “timeless” national framework.

Faced with criticism over the limitations of the national cinema framework, research in this area of film studies attempts to reconsider the parameters from which we can understand how a film text functions and signifies to audiences. Stephen Crofts, who works in postcolonial theory and in film studies, outlines seven varieties of national cinemas in order to reshape the possibilities of national cinema outside of the Western framework in his essay, “Reconceptualizing National Cinema(s)” (1993).⁶ Crofts argues that national cinemas have often been conceived in response to Hollywood, which enacts a binary system of thought rooted in a first-world, Western perspective: “This dualist model is inappropriate and must be overcome, for it authorizes only two political stances: imperial aggression and defiant national chauvinism” (781). The conventional framework positions national cinema operating in opposition to Hollywood as a form of cultural imperialism dominating the marketplace, but this has not always been or every was the primary explanation for the majority of filmmaking around the world. Crofts argues that this master-slave binary has been used historically to legitimize film as an aesthetic art form in academia: “National pride and assertion at home and abroad of national cultural identity have been vital in arguing for art cinemas” (854). Art cinema has traditionally been associated with national cinema studies in Europe, but this framework continues to function under and privilege the Western perspective that assumes a nation has a concrete geo-political border with little to no movement across state lines, which becomes increasingly problematic in heightened conditions of globalization.

Globalization refers to multiple conditions associated directly or indirectly with the flow of capital around the world whereas transnationalism signifies cultural production and exchange made possible by this recent and most extreme form of late capitalism. After discussing the assumptions and limitations embedded in the traditional model of national cinema studies, it becomes clear that a variant method of scholarship should emerge that takes into account what national cinema studies cannot: transnational movement and influences across geo-political boundaries. In their introduction to *Transnational Cinema: the Film Reader*, editors Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden claim, “Transnationalism can be understood as the global forces that link people or institutions across nations” (1). Ezra and Rowden situate cinema in debates on transnationalism to suggest that what is new about contemporary forms of transnational cinema lies in the shifting conditions of financing, production, distribution, and exhibition:

The global circulation of money, commodities, information, and human beings is giving rise to films whose aesthetic and narrative dynamics, and even the modes of emotional identification they elicit, reflect the impact of advanced capitalism and new media technologies as components of an increasingly interconnected world-system. (1)

While the nationality of a film still carries meaning, especially when circulating as a commodity in the international film marketplace (e.g. an auteur like Pedro Almodovar becomes a “Spanish” director for international audiences), Ezra and Rowden argue that the category “the transnational” allows us to discern hybridity in contemporary forms of cinema and to recognize the varying influences of global exchanges manifest in cinematic practices around the world. Films that are strongly transnational typically engage in themes regarding dislocation, migration, and diaspora. “Caught in the cracks of globalization,” transnational subjects frequently journey across permeable borders and their stories privilege the “in-between” spaces in the interstices of globalization (Ezra and Rowden 7).

The paradigm shift from national to transnational cinema studies can also be found in the changing economic structure of film industries. The classical Hollywood model, developed in the 1910s and 1920s but reaching its “classical” period between the 1930s to the 1950s, consisted of distinct film studios operating through vertical integration and ownership of most if not all means of production. With the collapse of the studio system in the 1960s, a “New Hollywood” emerged in which film studios came to resemble distribution companies that bought and distributed individual films financed through independent resources. Today, all of the Hollywood major studios function primarily as distribution companies owned by large, far-reaching multinational media corporations. These global media companies include: Time Warner (Warner Bros., Castle Rock, New Line); Disney (Buena Vista, Walt Disney Pictures, Touchstone, Miramax, Pixar); Viacom (Paramount Pictures, Dreamworks Animation SKG, Paramount Vantage); Sony (Columbia Pictures, TriStar, Sony Pictures Classics, MGM/UA); News Corp. (20th Century Fox, Fox 2000, Fox Searchlight); and NBC Universal (Universal, Working Title, Focus Films).⁷ Film companies now have access to more resources than ever before as part of media empires with investments and companies in various industries around the world.

In their latest edition of *Film History* (2010), David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson argue that mergers of multinational corporations during the 1990s due to deregulation, a move toward free-flowing capitalist economy, and the opening up of borders and quotas produced a media-saturated global terrain in which “national cultures were transformed by globalization, the emergence of networks of influence that tightened the ties among all countries and their citizens” (694). While the contemporary form of globalization arises out of specific political, economic, and social conditions, Bordwell and Thompson claim that the idea of globalization is not new,

and that its other most recent form appeared between 1850 and 1920 during which people began identifying with nationalist ideology and in which movies “became the first globalized mass medium” (695). Because modern forms of cinema production, distribution, exhibition, and marketing require a certain degree of capital to engage with far-reaching audiences on a meaningful level, cinema is inevitably going to be tied to economic forces and the market-place logic of globalization in order to return a profit on investment. However, cinema also functions as a cultural product of increasing transnational forces, which raises questions about the relationship between national cinemas, cultural imperialism, and transnationalism.

Recent national cinemas studies have attempted to situate film in relation to the transnational media environment. Shohini Chaudhuri explains: “Film now belongs to an enormous multinational system consisting of TV networks, new technologies of production and distribution, and international co-productions... Through these transnational processes of film production, financing and distribution, it increasingly makes sense to think in terms of ‘world cinema’” (2). Due to the strong economic ties made possible by globalization, Chaudhuri encourages scholars to conceive not of national cinema(s) but of “world cinema,” which implies an interconnectedness among various global forces that contribute to the production of a world cinema. Dennis and Lim echo Chaudhuri’s claim regarding the implications of globalization on world cinema: “It is also important to move beyond the discourse of resistance to place more focus on the interconnectedness of cinematic practices and cultures in the age of globalization... and theorize world cinema not in terms of ‘the West vs. the rest’ but in relation to notions such as hybridity, transculturation, border crossing, transnationalism and translation” (6). The impact of globalization on national cinema studies can be seen in its revised terminology and framework as a positive move from the Western-biased “Hollywood vs. the rest” binary

recurring throughout film studies in national cinema. Ezra and Rowden agree that one of the values of transnational cinema is its ability to incorporate Hollywood and European cinema (traditionally conceived as “art” and “national” cinemas) into the discussion of “world cinema.” Transnational cinema thus “transcends the national as autonomous cultural particularity while respecting it as a powerful symbolic force” (2).

Because transnational cinema emphasizes the hybrid and heterogeneous nature of cultural production, this approach differs from the traditional model offered by national cinema studies. In the preface to *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* (2010), editor Natasa Durovicova offers two approaches to locating “the transnational”: “First, there are those approaches in which the formation identified as transnational is a fundamentally spatial construct, reflects a relatively contemporary development within the unfolding process of globalization, and presents itself as directly political” (x). Transnational cinema can be conceived as part of a spatial phenomenon related to globalization. This is especially evident in Europe following the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the formation of the European Union in 1993. Therefore, critical film analysis in transnational cinema studies explores the way in which contemporary films construct space as a political referent to the actual redrawing of political and cultural boundaries during this period of globalization. Durovicova continues: “A second strategy...foregrounds an agenda that is oriented critically, and diachronically. Methodologically varied, they propose revisions of historiographic narratives that would accommodate the scale of ‘below-global/above-national’” (x). The second approach involves temporality and shifting historical narratives away from national narratives to include transnational influence and exchange; transnational films, then, negotiate interstitial narratives of “local” nations in “global” history. Durovicova claims that the transnational can register spatially or historically, inviting us to study how films imagine and

construct a new geo-political space in which constructions of identity can be tied to shifting narratives in history.

Another approach to transnational cinema studies involves a more systematic, categorical methodology to differentiate competing forms of transnationalism. Mette Hjort, editor of the anthology *Cinema & Nation* (2000), claims that while “transnationalism” continues to grow as a critical tool for understanding contemporary film production, many authors discuss it in general terms with little to no clarification. In her essay “On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism” (2010), Hjort outlines seven typologies of transnationalism to promote more clarified and productive research: epiphanic transnationalism, affinitive transnationalism, milieu-building transnationalism, opportunistic transnationalism, cosmopolitan transnationalism, globalizing transnationalism, auteurist transnationalism, modernizing transnationalism, and experimental transnationalism. Hjort’s attempt to qualify the term transnationalism offers specific approaches to locate the transnational as it registers on various levels and takes on many (plural and hybrid) forms in film texts. While not mutually exclusive, the most applicable forms to this study on two films directed by Anthony Minghella include “globalizing transnationalism,” for his films rely on transnational sources of finance made possible by globalization, and “auteurist transnationalism,” which implies that the director functions as an auteur of the filmic text and an icon of a national cinema.

While globalization has allowed for people to move across borders and has made a space for their stories to be told on film, the danger of globalization as it relates to film studies is the homogenizing threat of Hollywood as a dominant form of cinema in which cultural specificity may be elided in favor of strict narrative demands, easily recognizable stereotypes, and conservative (and commercially-driven) forms of representation. The cultural imperialism

argument has long been attached to Hollywood filmmaking and its role in the global cinematic marketplace. However, Hollywood is no longer the most prolific or the most successfully financial film industry in the world, operating alongside the popularity of Hong Kong cinema, India's Bollywood, and the Lagos-based Nigerian "home-movies" industry Nollywood. At the end of the article "Notes on Transnational Film Theory," Kathleen Newman claims: "What is now at stake in film studies is the question of how motion pictures register, at formal level of narrative, broad and long-term social formations, that is, changes in the capitalist world-economy at the regional and global scales and over multiple decades" (9). Films register on various levels to different audiences throughout history, and the national framework for understanding cinema cultures around the world simply does not take into account the full range of signification and meaning offered by a given film text. As Hollywood studios and European film companies have a stake in transnational media corporations which allow for greater transnational exchange and influence, it is imperative that we understand and approach the hybrid nature of contemporary cultural production.

In order to analyze the transnational in Minghella's films a brief description of British cinema will help to situate his work in relation to debates around globalization and national identity. British cinema, according to scholar Phil Wickham, never was a "real film industry in the UK of any influence—rather that great talent and great films have occasionally emerged in spite, rather than because of the structures around them" (Leggott 20). The British cinema industry has repeatedly been on the verge of collapse during the 20th-century and the successes were more often than not the exception. In the past 30 years, a number of "heritage" films emerged in the 1980's that proved financially successful both at home and abroad, particularly in the U.S. as "crossover" hits, which allowed for periods of resurgence in British national cinema

for an export market. The success created a “heritage” cycle of films and an ensuing debate among British cinema scholars including Andrew Higson, Claire Monk, Stuart Hall, and John Hill about the political implications of these films as representations of Thatcher ideology of the 1980’s and New Labour in the 1990’s. Ultimately Higson and Monk argued that these films were “ambivalent” in promoting liberal politics and negotiating new spaces for cultural identification while simultaneously offering a conservative spectacle of excess in the mise-en-scene bound up in class elitism (Dave 31). Other successful genres in contemporary British film include the horror film (*28 Days Later*), the gangster film (*Snatch*), the comedy (*Mr. Bean’s Holiday*), the realist drama (*Billy Eliot*), and the historical costume drama (*The Queen*).⁸ Traditionally British film as a “national cinema” has been associated not with genre filmmaking (epitomized by the Hollywood model) but with European “art cinema” characteristic of loose narrative structure, aesthetic experimentation, and slower pace.

The European model has historically consisted of separate national cinemas yet this has become increasingly problematic with the formation of the European Union in 1993 and the subsequent shifting populations across national borders. Writing in 2005 for *Screen*, Wendy Everett states, “‘Movement across borders’ is not only a characteristic concern of European film, but the reason for its necessity: ‘European films are open to a plurality of readings, are perpetually transformative in the open-ended personal journeys they offer, and thus capable of accelerating change, variety and difference’” (Leggott 31). The theme of migration across borders plays a significant role in analyzing the transnational in Minghella’s films, which become especially meaningful in contemporary European cinema.

Anthony Minghella was a film director often associated with British cinema. Born on the Isle of Wight in 1954, Minghella grew up as the son of Italian immigrants who owned an ice cream shop. He identified himself as British but was ultimately ambivalent about nationality:

When I was a kid, I was very conscious of the fact that we had a completely different culture to all of my friends. It was an extremely homogeneous society, except for us. There wasn't any kind of mixture, and there was no pluralism at all. That made me feel intensely foreign...I've also been very interested in nationalism—what it means to be nationalistic. (Minghella and Bricknell 34)

These views concerning problems of nationality and cultural identity have informed much of Minghella's films including *The English Patient*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999), a psychological thriller that follows four Americans vacationing in Italy during the 1950's, *Cold Mountain* (2003), a romantic epic critical of the "birth of a nation" narrative in the American Civil War, and *Breaking and Entering*. With the tremendous success of *The English Patient* at the 1997 Oscars Minghella became known as an international British director eventually becoming a chairman in 2003 of the British Film Institute (BFI), funded in part by the UK Film Council. The chief executive officer of the UK Film Council, John Woodward, described Minghella as "at home in many art forms, but ultimately he was one of the great British filmmakers of his generation...he was a top ambassador for the industry both in the U.K. and internationally" (Dawtre, Hayes, Jafaar). Minghella also established a film company (Mirage Productions) with Sydney Pollack, a veteran Hollywood producer, but his association with promoting British film continued until his sudden death from complications due to surgery in 2008. What he leaves behind are only a handful of films but his legacy remains open for debate.

Implicit in my approach to Minghella's work involves the framing of the discussion not only in terms of transnational film theory but also in auteurism. The auteur theory, originally developed in the 1950s by French film critics (Andre Bazin, Francois Truffaut) writing for the magazine *Cahiers du Cinema* and translated by American Andrew Sarris in 1962, claims that the

director has the most creative control over a film and was loosely modeled after the European “art” directors. In his essay “The Auteur Theory” (1969), Peter Wollen argues that the *politique des auteurs* emerged out of specific historical and cultural conditions in Paris following WWII: Hollywood films, previously censored during the war, flooded theater screens; critics writing for *Cahiers* frequently attended film screenings by American directors at Henri Langlois’s *Cinematheque*; and these same critics were able to discern similarities among various genre films by previously unmerited American directors. Auteurism brought credibility to “popular” American directors like Nicholas Ray, Alfred Hitchcock, and Howard Hawks, so implicit in the approach was a valorization of an often eclectic and subjective list of “auteurs.” Similar to the national cinema approach in film studies, the popularity of the auteur theory coincided with the institutionalization of academic film studies in America and was thus used as a methodological approach to film as an artistic expression. The primary attack against auteurism, however, claims that the director is not always the primary creative force of a film and film is an inherently different medium than literature, for it involves many more people and factors that problematize the notion of a single “author” of a film. Nevertheless, auteurism still functions today as one approach to film studies most prominently as a means of categorizing a group of films with a common thread (the director). Rather than starting with the director and imposing a personal “signature” onto the films, we can start with the texts themselves (the films) in order to suggest common themes or cinematic techniques regarding the director.

Although I base my discussion of the films on Minghella’s textual role as both writer and director, this does not necessarily mean that I believe Minghella is the sole creative force on any of the films. However, the discussion of his work emerges out of the film texts themselves. One can recognize strong themes of identity, nationality, and the transnational running throughout

Minghella's work. These motifs encourage a discussion not only of how they work in each individual film but also how they signify in relation to one another. Minghella began his career as an academic teaching theater at Hull University before writing plays professionally, which led to work in British television and then feature-length films. In the collection of his writings *Minghella on Minghella* (2005), he explains: "However long it took me to come to writing as an activity, that is the activity which has most defined me and still most defines me. I love writing. I find it very difficult, but it's the time when I'm most comfortable with myself, oddly, or I feel most like myself" (10). Minghella wrote many of the screenplays that he directed, but he also wrote the screenplay for a short segment in the omnibus film *New York, I Love You* (2009) and the Fellini-inspired musical *Nine* (2009) without directing either of these projects. Because of his deep investment in the writing and directing processes of his films, auteurism becomes an appealing approach to describe and to analyze his films. Pure auteurs might denounce Minghella's role as an auteur since he worked primarily in commercial cinema (either in the US or the UK); however, his films embody artistic merit and I argue that his work should be considered from an auteurist perspective.

CHAPTER 2
THE ENGLISH PATIENT: CRITIQUING NATIONAL “HERITAGE” THROUGH
TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY AND SPACE

As a means to approach the transnational dimension of Minghella’s films, I adopt a theoretical method similar to Duricova and Hjort to suggest the ways in which these films register strong or weak forms of transnationality. Duricova claims that locating “the transnational” can best be approached in terms of space (as a geo-political phenomenon compounded by conditions of globalization) or time (as historiographic narratives positioned above the “local” but below the “global”). Because narratives of mobility and migration are privileged in transnationalism, the ways in which a film constructs and imagines space becomes particularly valuable. Furthermore, Hjort suggests that scholars working in cinematic transnationalism should take into account the various forms of transnationalisms to make research more focused and subsequently more productive. To examine the multiple levels at which these films register “the transnational,” I first provide a review of the relevant literature to establish a discourse as a point of departure; second, a brief production context to reveal the film’s marked transnationality; third, the narrative to highlight themes of nationality, transnationality, and questions of identity in each film; and finally, I analyze filmic style and aesthetics in approaching these texts from a film studies perspective. Ultimately, I approach Minghella’s work from Hjort’s notion of “auteurist transnationalism” to argue that these films exhibit strong forms of transnational filmmaking yet *The English Patient* and *Breaking and Entering* possess varying degrees of transnationality that creates a tension in film form and content expressed through careful analysis.

An adaptation of Michael Ondaatje’s 1993 novel, Minghella’s film *The English Patient* has been criticized as regressive, orientalist, nostalgic, and highly romanticized compared to the novel. The film opened to generally favorable reviews in 1996 and swept the Academy Awards

by winning nine statuettes, including Best Director and Best Picture for Minghella. A surprise critical and commercial hit for “independent” distributor Miramax, a subsidiary of Disney at the time, the film was soon met with harsh criticism as an apolitical adaptation of Ondaatje’s postmodern critique of nations and identity. While critics hailed the novel as a post-colonial/-modern exploration of Western history and the dangers of nation-based identity, they fault the film for downplaying the novel’s plural narrative structure and, most significantly, the film’s marginalization of Sikh sapper Kirpal Singh. In the 2007 article “*The English Patient’s* Desert Dream,” Andrew Shin contends:

Minghella installs Almasy as the film’s central character and fixes his identity as the English patient, elides the effect of the atomic bomb on Kip’s consciousness, and celebrates Almasy’s and Katharine’s immolating passion over the rude politics of war. Together, these changes champion romance over history and assert the ethos of a world well lost for love. (229)

By foregrounding the “English” patient and his love affair with Katharine as the dominant narrative arc, Minghella (who also wrote the screenplay) had to make cuts to the novel’s competing narratives as a consequence of running time and coherence. Even though Minghella has spoken publicly about his admiration for the character Kip (lamenting his decreased presence in the film), and even though Ondaatje himself has defended Minghella’s artistic choice as a necessary demand of narrative filmmaking, this omission nevertheless dominates the academic discourse of the film.⁹

The distinction between form and content, between the film’s anti-imperialist themes bound up in a conventional Hollywood form of representation, marks another source of tension. In the article “*The English Patient: Critics, Audiences, and the Quality of Fidelity*,” David L. Kranz provides a comprehensive survey of the discourse surrounding the film. He argues that David Stenberg (“A Firmament in the Midst of the Waters: Dimensions of Love in *The English Patient*”) and Eleanor Ty (“The Other Questioned: Exoticism and Displacement in Michael

Ondaatje's *The English Patient*”) read the film as anti-nationalist, whereas Jaqui Sadashige (“Sweeping the Sands: Geographies of Desire in *The English Patient*”) and Maggie Morgan (“*The English Patient: From Fiction to Reel*”) approach the film from postcolonial discourse to claim that the film enacts a conventional romance about white individuals to create “an orientalist tale” (Kranz 100). Sandra Ponzanesi also claims in her article, “Diaspora in Time: Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient*” (2008), that the film “rather focuses on the memorable love story and the exotic appeal of the North African desert and the touristic gaze of the Tuscan landscapes,” as opposed to creating a political critique against nationhood, colonialism, and ownership (131-32). *The English Patient* remains Minghella’s most written about text, not least of all because of its popular success as well as its critical backlash. It is precisely this tension between the film’s anti-nationalist themes and the potential to recognize the transnational at work in the text that informs my reading as a productive move away from this literary/filmic binary.

Although critics tend to read *The English Patient* as particularly nationalist, the film embodies marked transnationality registering at many levels, including production. The film was a US-UK co-production released by “independent” studio Miramax in 1996. With a relatively large budget for an independent film (\$30 million), the film soon became one of the most successful “British” costume dramas of the 1990s due to crossover appeal in multiple markets (Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema* 94). In his essay “The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema,” Andrew Higson remarks on the transnational element to the film, despite its “English” qualifier: “When a British director teams up with an American producer, a multinational cast and crew, and American capital, to adapt a novel about the contingency of identity by a Sri Lankan-born Canadian resident (*The English Patient*, 1996), can its identity be

called anything other than transnational?” (19). According to Higson, the film embodies marked transnationality in many respects: British director (Minghella), American producer (Saul Zaentz) and a multinational cast (British Ralph Fiennes, Kristin Scott Thomas, and Colin Firth; French Juliette Binoche; American Willem Dafoe; British Naveen Andrews, of Indian descent) from a novel by Canadian author Michael Ondaatje, originally from Sri Lanka. The film was also produced in North Africa and Italy as the principal settings for the multiple storylines. Despite the cultural imperialist criticism on the film, it nevertheless registers strong transnationality at the level of production in line with Ezra and Rowden’s claims regarding new production modes made possible by globalization.

The transnational appeal of the film also coincides with the U.S. Congress’s passing of a new telecommunications bill in 1996 that aided the formation of large transnational media corporations including Disney, the parent company to the film’s distributor, Miramax. The bill “effectively eliminates all constraints upon both vertical integration and horizontal concentration across industries” with the threat of “unrestrained transnational communication oligopolies” (Hess and Zimmerman 97). The contextualization of the film’s release within conditions of globalization is not lost on Shin, who concludes his article on the film stating, “Hollywood’s cooptation of Ondaatje’s novel witnesses the emergence of a new inter/national panopticon, the postmodern *raj* of America’s expanding political and cultural hegemony and its inexorable domination of a culture industry increasingly disconnected from history” (231). Shin’s analysis of the film places it in the context of conditions of globalization in the 1990s but resorts to a reading of the film as strictly reinforcing the notion of Hollywood dominance through cultural imperialism. It is important to position the film within the period of its theatrical release but

ignoring the film's embodiment of transnational modes of experience in production limits a productive discussion of the hybrid film.

The strong form of transnational filmmaking evident in the production process is reinscribed in the narrative through theme and structure. The narrative consists of many characters and storylines told through cross-cutting editing effects to create a highly fragmented narrative in the model of classical Hollywood. One storyline takes place in Italy in 1944 and involving a nurse named Hana (Juliette Binoche) who takes care of a burn victim in an abandoned villa. The mysterious burn victim, Count de Almasy (Ralph Fiennes), narrates his story to Hana under the heavy dosage of morphine as flashback memories to North Africa when he worked as a mapmaker for the Royal Geographical Society during the 1930s. Prior to his physical effacement, Almasy meets desert explorers Geoffrey and Katharine Clifton from England. When her husband is sent on assignment by the British government, Katharine has an affair with Almasy in the desert, but their tragic love ends when Clifton purposefully crashes his plane with Katharine onboard. Almasy seeks refuge for the injured Katharine in the Cave of Swimmers, yet when he tries to get help he is refused by the British government for "having the wrong name." Mistaken for being German, Almasy is taken into custody but escapes and ends up selling his maps to the German government in exchange for a plane to rescue Katharine. Almasy finds Katharine dead in the cave and as he takes her body on the plane it is shot down, leaving him badly burned and transported to Italy. The film ends with a sense of closure as we elliptically return to the opening images of the plane flying over the desert in Africa. The narrative comes full circle with Almasy's death in the villa, and the last images find Hana leaving the villa on the back of a truck as she looks towards the obscured sun through the passing trees.

Although the film privileges the love story between Almasy and Katharine as the primary narrative around which supporting roles are organized, the film nevertheless still contains a critique of nationalism by narrating stories of diaspora, dislocation, and migration. In the film's Italian frame story, Hana meets Kip, a Sikh sapper from India who becomes a love interest for the war widow. While we see their sweet courtship as survivors of the war, Kip learns that his mentor Sergeant Hardy has died, which leads to his departure at the end of the film. Also at the villa is Caravaggio, a thief who knows Hana from their hometown of Montreal and who has a tangential past with the patient. The narrative in Italy thematically contrasts strongly with the narrative in North Africa. Whereas the narrative in North Africa becomes a nostalgic and romantic story of tragic love prompted by Almasy's traumatized and morphine-induced perspective, the characters in Italy are far less privileged or hopeful about the future. Hana, Kip, Caravaggio, and the patient are survivors of the war who seek temporary asylum in the abandoned, bomb-infested villa. The character Kip invokes notions of diasporic identity outside of India, but each of these characters in effect find themselves dislocated. None of these characters feel "at home" at the villa; rather, they find themselves there and try to form a community in order to survive. At the level of narrative, the film is markedly transnational in its figuration of characters who are, in the words of Ezra and Rowden, "caught in the cracks" of world events. Albeit an historical costume drama, the film nevertheless resonates with the moment of its release, particularly as we can see these characters emerging as transnational subjects forced to navigate an interstitial space created by global forces that critiques the stability of the nation-state and the artificial boundaries it erects.

The narrative of the film has been a contentious site of attack by critics who claim that the marginalization of secondary characters, in particular Kip, takes away from the postcolonial

message of the novel. The argument, found in David L. Kranz's essay on fidelity, critiques the film for privileging the storyline between Almasy and Katharine, the white protagonists, over Kip, whose story in the novel is the most critical of nationhood and Western forms of identity. The novel ends with Kip's realization about the atom bombs in Japan, which leads to his "racial awakening" and eventual disavowal of the West. The film elides this directly political ending for Kip, instead providing the death of a male friend as the impetus for his departure. Andrew Shin writes: "The film thus rescripts Ondaatje's novel to emphasize male friendship and heterosexual romance, the familiar language of nationalism as suggested by Benedict Anderson: 'Rather than a national eroticism [as suggested by Leslie Fiedler], it is I suspect, an eroticized nationalism that is at work' (qtd. in Robbins 32 n. 12)" (230). The conclusion of Kip's narrative in the film is perhaps the single most controversial aspect in the academic discourse, but it nevertheless comes from a position of prior knowledge with the source material that fails to take into account the film on its own terms. While I agree that the ending to the film is far less polemical compared to Ondaatje's novel, this does not imply that the film is apolitical. Rather, the multiple ways in which the film engages in modes of transnationality becomes meaningful and productive as a way to describe how the film functions both in terms of formal elements and narrative content.

While the marked transnationality in the narrative comes directly from its source in Ondaatje's novel, the aesthetic style of the film visualizes the thematic critique of nationhood in the narrative through sound, editing, and mise-en-scene. Diegetic and non-diegetic sound function as a site of the marked transnationalism of the film. In her book *Gabriel Yared's The English Patient: a Film Score Guide* (2004), Heather Laing outlines the sound landscape of the film:

[Yared] did not author the whole score; it encompasses, overall, two Hungarian folk songs, Arabic music, various American popular songs and jazz classics, a

Christmas carol, the British national anthem, an operatic aria and, of course, J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations*...His score absorbs the 'Eastern' sound of the song into a largely nineteenth-century Romantic idiom. (116-17)

Laing claims that the film score is comprised of various cultural sources and influences that collectively serve the transnational themes of the narrative. The sources range from high to low to popular music, among many national influences to suggest that music, like people, can travel beyond the geo-political boundaries of the nation-state. Music functions in direct accordance with the cultural imaginary that the film projects through narrative and nostalgic modes of representation.

For example, the Hungarian folk song (*Szerelem, Szerelem*) becomes an aural motif that blurs the cultural binary between East and West. The song first appears in the opening credits as we see a close-up of someone painting an ambiguous image of a desert (or a human swimmer) onto parchment (it is revealed to be Katharine's painting). The song features the voice of Marta Sebestyén, which we hear during the opening credits as it eventually leads into the Desert Theme as the graphic match of the painted image in the cave is superimposed onto the actual desert landscape. The song can be heard in improvisational forms throughout the film, most prominently during the scene in Almasy's bedroom when he plays the song for Katharine. In her description of the musical theme, Laing argues that the song features a "gentle, rhythmically and harmonically fluid improvisatory sound. The pitch range is limited largely to one octave and the melody is feely and elaborately ornamented. Its ambiguous 'Eastern' sound...contains the essence of the film's thematic concern with nationhood and identity" (118-19). The voice invokes Arabic music yet it is Hungarian, a tension that Laing describes as symptomatic to the themes found in the narrative. In his writings on music in *Minghella on Minghella* (2005), Minghella himself "thought [the song] was Arabic and then discovered to be Hungarian, which I thought was perfect index of what the book was talking about—that identity, nationality and

boundaries are illusory” (125). While not part of Yared’s score, the Hungarian folk song is a site in which the film registers an engagement with transnational cultural significance. In the commentary to the film Minghella discusses how the music functions as a “collision of a classical score and a Hungarian folk singer” to reflect the fragmented, often colliding narratives in the film. The transnational dimension of the film is not limited to the narrative; rather, the soundtrack works in relation to the narrative to produce a transnational soundscape.

The film extends a critique of nationality and borders through formal film elements like sound and editing. One of the most striking aesthetic achievements of the film remains its seamless editing motivated by graphic matches and musical cues that connect the disparate narratives and characters among multiple locations and time periods. Discussing his views on filmmaking, Minghella commented: “The cinema can manage its own poetry. Often this is achieved by manipulating the grammar of film, where shot size, camera angle and movement, the length of a shot, the amount of light on a subject, the palate of colours and, most significantly, the edit replace the syntax of noun, verb and adjective” (30). As a screenwriter and playwright, Minghella considers himself to be a man of language, and he imagines the construction of a film through linguistic metaphor. It is only fitting, then, that when asked what he tried to adapt in Ondaatje’s novel, Minghella responded that he tried to visualize his poetry.¹⁰ Minghella’s description of editing techniques in terms of language recalls the Soviet montage theorists of the 1920’s. Soviet filmmakers Dziga Vertov, Sergei Eisenstein, and Vladimir Pudovkin considered editing to be the essence of cinema, and they both theorized and practiced a dialectical form of editing in which succeeding images clash with one another in order to reflect the Marxist “clash” of class consciousness in the wake of the October Revolution. While Minghella’s theory of editing recalls the syntactical approach of the Soviets, his style does not

function as emphatically political as Eisenstein's *Strike* (1925) or *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), but his description of the editing in the film as a "poetic collision of events" becomes interesting in relation to the film's thematic concern for transnational identity.¹¹

Because the film juggles multiple characters with storylines, editing becomes a salient feature of its aesthetic functioning. Coming from a literary background in adapting the poetry of Ondaatje's novel, Minghella creates a series of visual metaphors through graphic matching to connect the vignettes in the narrative. This technique of editing can be seen in the very first cut of the film, as we see an image of desert from an aerial view superimposed onto the painted image of the desert during the opening credit sequence. The cut moves from inside the Cave of Swimmers to a high, God-like position in the sky as the camera angles down on the desert. The effect of the cut becomes a visual representation of the poetic trope of metaphor: visually, the film compares an ambiguous image of a human swimmer or desert to an actual desert, registered through montage. A similar technique appears in the first flash-back to the desert. In the frame story, when Almasy drops his scrapbook of Herodotus onto the floor of the villa, the image of the open book then fades-in to a similar image of the desert in the scrapbook, but this time Almasy is in the desert during the 1930's. While the narrative remains in North Africa as the film establishes the primary characters in this storyline, the motivation back to the villa comes from another graphic match in which the sand dunes of the desert fade-in to the wrinkles of Almasy's bedsheets in the villa. Each of these cuts reflect the syntactical approach to editing advocated by Minghella in his writings, and they serve as an intertextual adaptation of Ondaatje's poetics.

While the editing effect is well-done, it also serves to underscore the primary theme to eradicate geo-political boundaries imposed by the traditional nation-state. Almasy and Katharine

share a desire to transgress traditional boundaries (geographical, marital, physical, etc.), which are coded through discourses of nationalism and territorial boundaries of the nation-state. The editing in the film functions similarly to transgress traditional boundaries of time and space in that it constructs a fragmented narrative structure to oppose limitations of the metaphoric nation-state. The film creates a postcolonial critique of territorial nation-states by constructing a world in which the camera moves freely from one space to another, from one time period to another, thus imagining a geo-political (and filmic) landscape which knows no boundaries in the cultural imagination. Minghella's editing can function in at least two ways: as part of the imperialist discourse in eliding differences in empty space and time; or as part of the critique of nationalist discourses in suggesting that editing allows us to imagine and to traverse a terrain outside of geo-political formations.

The film imagines a transnational space through filmic elements of editing and mise-en-scene. The two primary narratives are set in the desert of North Africa and the abandoned villa in war-torn Italy, which serve as locations temporally before and after World War II. The film represents the narrative in North Africa as a pre-war exotic landscape—the desert, the market, the nightclub, the hotel, each space marked by colonization and “otherness” to the Western spectator. The post-war narrative, however, set mostly in the villa, is shot in a similar style but lacks the visual pleasure implicated in sweeping shots of the African desert in the mise-en-scene; the style is more realistic than romantic, the tone of colors muted with little sunlight, and the landscape ravished by the war. In effect, each space reflects the psychological plight of the transnational characters. The pre-war desert landscape offers a fluid geo-political space in the traumatized memory of Almasy, who portrays himself as a desert romantic fighting for the abolition of maps and ownership of land. The post-war Italian villa, then, becomes an unlikely

site of refuge for Hana, Almasi, Kip, and Caravaggio as they are “caught in the cracks” of war and left homeless in a foreign land.

Each character represents the themes of dislocation and migration, but the difference between the two forms lies in the fact that the characters in the post-war setting had no choice while Almasi and Katharine clearly did. The post-war characters are survivors and their situation resonates in the context of Europe with the Bosnian Wars of the 1990s leading to hundreds of refugees seeking asylum across the continent. In its reimagining of the historical past, *The English Patient* reflects certain anxieties about nationalism, national identity, and geopolitical borders at the time of its release in 1996. The film critiques nationhood through its embodiment of transnational cultural production which registers on many levels: production, narrative, sound, editing, and mise-en-scene. Thus, the film serves as a unique example of a 1990’s film in the British “heritage” cycle that works through a political aesthetic of representation complementary to, not in contention with, its progressive ideological message. The film creates an argument for the eradication of identity based on nationhood in imagining a community of characters who no longer subscribe to the Western teleology of history but who engage in the emerging transnational discourse propounded by contemporary conditions of globalization.

CHAPTER 3
*BREAKING AND ENTERING: MAPPING TRANSNATIONAL NARRATIVES THROUGH
FLUCTUATING ARCHITECTURE IN LONDON*

While the historical epic *The English Patient* critiques nationhood as a privileged construction of identity through a strongly marked form of transnational filmmaking, Minghella's film *Breaking and Entering*, released roughly ten years later, similarly invokes transnational modes of experience through a contemporary narrative set in London. Setting becomes an important element in the film's engagement in transnational discourse. In his discussion of postcolonial fiction in *Imagining London* (2004), John Clement Ball writes, "In a world that since the 1980s has become increasingly interlinked through a process of 'globalization,' London's 'world city' (or 'global city') identity takes on some new and more specific theoretical meanings" (26). Economic, social, and political conditions of globalization have contributed to the cultural imagining of "global cities" in which "the local" becomes so intertwined with "the global" so as to create far-reaching cause-effect events. Actions made in the "local" can be felt on a "global" scale in part through the increased transfer of digital media and finances. Ball argues that "transnational London becomes a potential replacement for attenuated, compromised, conflicted, undesirable, or unreachable spaces of national belonging. It becomes a locus for the construction of emergent sensibilities that are both transnational (in the spatial sense of inhabiting multiple geographic scales) and postcolonial" (32). The notion of a "transnational London" offers, then, an alternative construction of identity that supersedes nationalist discourse, which has traditionally prescribed either/or binaries based on essentialist notions of culture, ethnicity, linguistics, and gender. Because the physical site of London operates through expansive modes of globalization, it takes on a new significance during this period.

The critical study of London as a site for conflicting forms of representation has produced a large amount of research in film studies. Recent work on cinematic representations of London include *London in Cinema* (2007) by Charlotte Brunson and *London from Punk to Blair* (2003) edited by Kerr and Gibson. *Breaking and Entering* is only one in a series of films about globalization set in the metropolitan “global hub” of London; other films include *Beautiful People* (1999), *The Last Resort* (2000), *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002), and *Calais* (2003).¹² London has become a city in which filmmakers can explore issues relating to transnational identity as it both signifies a global city and a national capital. During the 1990’s London was often represented as magical and fantastical, epitomized in a film like *Notting Hill* (1999), but the 2000’s ushered in a darker form of representation that interrogates this romantic vision: *28 Days Later* (2002), *Creep* (2004), *Children of Men* (2006), *From Hell* (2001), *V for Vendetta* (2005) (Leggott 39). James Leggott argues in his book *Contemporary British Cinema* (2008) that London has primarily been represented in two ways: as a “transitional, mediatory zone for those merely passing through” and as a “psycho-geographical investigation of a London haunted by its literary and political inheritance” (Leggott 39). While it may not fit nicely into either of Leggott’s categories, *Breaking and Entering* can best be described as a socially-aware melodrama set in London that not only represents the city at a moment of transition but also as a site for interrogating a new experience of the “psycho-geographical” landscape created through forces of globalization and transnational migration.

Breaking and Entering has received little academic attention, due partly to its recent theatrical release date and its initial critical response. Unlike Minghella’s other film *The English Patient*, *Breaking and Entering* was neither a hit at the box-office nor a critical success. In fact, it earned less than \$9 million in its theatrical release at the global box-office, far less than

Minghella's subsequent films following *Patient*.¹³ Because of the enormous attention surrounding *The English Patient* and its sweep at the Academy Awards, academics in literature and film studies produced ample work on the film, its adaptation of Ondaatje's novel, and its style of representation. One of the benefits of analyzing *Breaking and Entering*, however, is that the secondary literature has been limited and remains unexplored in detail. The film received generally average to mediocre reviews that may be responsible for the limited research. Writing in *Sight & Sound*, Liese Spencer summarizes his view of the film: "The suspiciously verbose characters, sprawling focus and overtly tidy plotting combine disastrously. If Minghella's first film, *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1991), was cloyingly whimsical, *Breaking and Entering* is almost unbearably earnest: striving for an intellectual gravitas that just isn't present in either screenplay or direction." The primary critique of the film concerns Minghella's screenplay, which assumes importance with its tackling of social issues but is ultimately uninteresting and uninvolved. In his review in *The New York Times*, A.O. Scott calls it "a schematic exercise in liberal, privileged guilt" that "moves through a series of moral and social crises as if they were yoga poses and comes to rest with a smile of virtuous complacency on its face." Scott and Spencer attack the privileged white perspective adopted in the film, which attempts to explore issues of identity in globalization and transnationalism but ends up reinscribing certain binaries associated with "liberal guilt." Its form of representation too conservative and its screenplay too schematic, the film paints an unrealistic and pretentious gloss of cultural identity in contemporary London.

While the critical panning of the film may have contributed to the lack of academic work on the subject, the film has been referenced in a few works on British cinema. British cinema scholar James Leggott discusses the film in the context of contemporary representations of class in Britain. Leggott observes that "diagnoses of class friction have been embedded within a

number of films intended (wholly or partly) as ‘state-of-the-nation’ critiques” (89). *Breaking and Entering* is one example of a contemporary film set in Britain that addresses the state of the nation in conditions of globalization. Within these changing political and economic conditions outlined by Leggott, the notion of a British “national identity” has been called into question through cinema. Ultimately Leggott argues that *Breaking and Entering* “is more insightful as a film about the unease of the professional middle-classes than as a nuanced social mapping of multicultural London” (89). Leggott echoes the popular opinion that the film embeds a perspective of white privilege that reflects anxiety more than cultural specificity. The particular area of London in which the film is set (“King’s Crossing”) is also addressed by Charlotte Brunsdon in her book *London in Cinema* (2007), in which she praises the film for its unique exploration of a city in flux through the metaphor of architecture (217). Except for the viewpoints from Leggott and Brunsdon, the film has received little academic scholarship since its release in 2006.

Through the careful analysis of production context, narrative, and formal style (shot properties and mise-en-scene), I argue that the film functions as a meaningful attempt to engage in contemporary notions of identity in globalization but ultimately it embodies a weak form of transnational cultural production marked for a specifically national audience. The film was co-produced by Miramax films, which has produced Minghella’s films ever since *The English Patient* and which has a reputation for serious, award-worthy films, and Mirage Enterprises, the company co-owned by Minghella and Sidney Pollack. Minghella both directed and wrote the screenplay, a contemporary-set drama unlike his previous work in historical epics (*The English Patient* and *Cold Mountain*). The casting choices resemble the transnational appeal of *The English Patient*: Jude Law (British), Juliette Binoche (French), Robin Wright Penn (American).

The film, however, was not a success with audiences or critics, but it did receive three nominations by the British Independent Film Awards, including two for best actress (Binoche and Penn) and one for most promising newcomer (Rafi Gavron).¹⁴ The specific casting choices in the film, particularly the French Binoche playing a Bosnian refugee and Penn playing a Scandinavian housewife, producing an unintentional “Euro-pudding” production, in which the transnationality of the film becomes so marked that it is difficult to watch the film in terms of realism.¹⁵

At the time of its production in 2005 and its release in 2006, the film situates itself into contemporary discussions of British national identity. Leggot claims that Britain experienced an identity crisis through anxieties regarding a perceived “break-up” of the nation: “the expansion of the European Union and the influx of economic migrants from Eastern Europe, a fluctuating political relationship with and the US, and an acknowledgement of ethnic and cultural diversity that has found bold new expression through second and third generations of immigrant filmmakers” (38). Minghella, who was born to an Italian-immigrant family on the Isle of Wight, is a second-generation immigrant filmmaker in the context of British cinema, and the film can be read as an exploration of nationalist attitudes towards a new wave of immigrants in globalization. In their discussion of transnational cinema, Ezra and Rowden support Leggot’s contextualization of the film in response to contemporary transnational migration in Europe: “As some boundaries disappear, others spring up in their place... For example, with the blurring of national boundaries that accompanied the huge expansion of the European Union in 2004, tirades against asylum seekers reached near fever pitch in countries such as Britain and France (‘Old Europe’), whose national newspapers braced their readers against the impending arrival of ‘floods’ of immigrants from former Easter bloc countries (‘New Europe’)” (9). Ezra and

Rowden discuss Britain as a country specifically dealing with issues related to conditions of globalization evident in the national newspapers, which have been used historically as an instrument to promote nationalist discourses.¹⁶ Therefore, the production context of the film reveals an active positioning within British debates on the “nation” as a pretext to understand how the film functions through transnational cinema.

The narrative involves transnational themes such as migration across borders, living in the diaspora, and hybrid constructions of identity in the interstitial metropolis. Will is a stereotypical white, middle-class architect who stands in as the “traditional” representation of the British urban professional. The firm for which he works is located in the King’s Cross district of London, “an area in flux” as described by the detective Bruno Fella. When Will’s firm is broken into and his plans for reconstructing the urban space are stolen, Will assumes responsibility for finding the burglar. His search eventually leads him to Amira and Miro, a mother and son who escaped from Bosnia to seek refuge in London. After Will asks Amira, who works as a seamstress, to tailor his clothing, they sleep together, and Amira’s friend captures their affair on camera for evidence. When Amira’s son Miro, one of the perpetrators who broke into Will’s office, faces either prison time or expulsion to Sarajevo, it is up to Will to decide Miro’s fate. Faced with an either-or binary, Will can either enable Miro to return home by publicly admitting his discretions with Amira, which would expose his infidelity to girlfriend Liv, or he can send Miro to prison by denying any previous encounters with Miro or Amira and claiming Miro broke into the office and stole equipment. Ultimately Will owns up to his affair and lies to the court about Miro’s involvement with the break-in, thus dismissing Miro of the criminal charges and allowing him to return with his mother to Sarajevo. The film suggests that this is a happy ending for the principal characters (Will, Liv, Amira, and Miro) because Amira and Miro are able to leave the diaspora

and “return home” while Will and Liv’s relationship grows stronger with his proposal for marriage.

The narrative effectively maps out characters from various backgrounds to suggest the “break-up” of contemporary British life. Besides Will, Amira, and Miro, other characters include Liv, Will’s live-in girlfriend who is half-American and half-Swedish and who ran away from her husband in Sweden with her autistic daughter, Bea; and Oana, a prostitute from Romania who encounters Will when he patrols his office building in the evenings. While the narrative centers around Will and his relationship among Liv, Oana, and Amira, the range of characters and their importance in the unfolding of the narrative depict London as a city in flux that is opening up to previously underrepresented cultural and ethnic minorities. Amira and Miro’s stories symbolize an attempt to represent modes of transnational identity in London. Amira and Miro have been displaced following the Bosnian conflict and their migration to London carries resonance in actual events following the expansion of the European Union in 2004 (Ezra and Rowden 8). When Will meets Amira for the first time at her apartment, she expresses anxiety about being in “this city” away from Sarajevo, suggesting a discomfort associated with geo-political displacement. Amira and Miro are Muslim, and late in the film, after Miro has been detained, we see Amira attending a community event in which individuals join in song. This scene shows Amira’s desire to retain part of her cultural and religious identity following transnational migration. Amira also tells Will at one point that Miro’s name is “made for Sarajevo, not London,” and that names are like flags—people live or die by names. This statement echoes the larger themes at stake in *The English Patient* regarding names and national markers of identity, but rather than changing Miro’s name to assimilate in the culture Amira keeps Miro’s name as a reminder of their “home” and his father who was left behind. Amira and

Miro become transnational subjects working through issues of diasporic displacement, but the representation of certain characters undermines the agenda of the film to engage in a critical discussion of identity politics in contemporary London.

The film tries to explore contemporary forms of transnational identity but the reliance on binary thinking obscures its potential for meaningful critique. Because the narrative is told mostly from the perspective of Will, Amira and Miro become exoticized Others in relation to his girlfriend, Liv, and her daughter, Bea. The film opens with a head-on image of Will and Liv riding in a car through the streets of London; the voice-over narration by Will along with the reflection of the glass on the windshield suggests both aurally and visually that their relationship is in a state of crisis. Scenes between Will and Liv open and close the film, in effect providing a frame for understanding the transgressions and closure within the narrative. We learn through Liv's use of light therapy that she is frigid and prone to depression, whereas Amira is figured as the sexualized foil who sleeps with Will and attempts to blackmail him. In fact, Amira's agency comes directly from her sexuality, which conforms to xenophobic stereotypes of "exotic" women as hyper-sexualized (similar to Oana as the foreign prostitute). Likewise, the film structures Miro as the stereotypical immigrant who turns to crime instead of attending school, while Liv's daughter Bea becomes the "good" bourgeois child who attends school and participates in extra-curricular activities like gymnastics. The binaries between Liv/Amira and Bea/Miro reveal a structuring principle to understand how the narrative works in the film, but it ultimately becomes the point at which its progressive values become most regressive. The reliance on binary structures for the narrative carries with it the dichotomy between Us vs. Them, which enacts xenophobia in discourses of transnational identity. By using binary structures in service of the narrative, the film creates a boundary between people of varying cultural backgrounds whose

identity is structured outside of strict national binaries. Transnational identity itself implies both- and as opposed to either-or constructions of selfhood. Rather than engaging in a nuanced exploration of transnational identity in London, the film draws upon ethnic stereotypes and reverts to either-or binary forms of narrative and representation to construct a conservative view toward diasporic communities and transnational modes of experience.

Problematic nationalist binaries also appear in the style of the film through elements of cinematography and mise-en-scene. The film mostly conforms to classical modes of narrative in the Hollywood continuity tradition, which privileges the role of narrative and identification as guiding principles for other elements involved in the filmmaking process. However, the film exhibits a few noteworthy camera techniques that help to visualize the narrative through images. For example, a racking focus is used in an early scene in Will and Liv's bedroom when they discuss the social value in his architectural project in King's Crossing. The scene begins with sharp cuts between Will and Liv in their dialogue, but the racking focus in the final shot connects Will and Liv in the same frame and focus in order to suggest an overcoming of distance in their relationship. Another salient camera technique, the camera zoom, is used when cutting to Will at work. He receives a call on his cell phone and realizes he is late for his appointment with Liv at therapy, and the camera zooms in on Will at the construction site. At another point in the film, after Will's first visit inside Amira's apartment, we see graffiti on the wall outside of the apartment and the images become surprisingly blurry and unfocused when Will exits through the staircase. Because the narrative motivates many of the formal elements of the film, stylistic features relating to camerawork are mostly used to serve the narrative and create an illusionistic form of representation. That being said, these three instances of unconventional camerawork stand out in the formal context of representation but it is significant that they remain tied to Will.

The film privileges Will as the protagonist and his perspective stabilizes most of the events in the narrative. Therefore, the unconventional camerawork involving racking and blurring focus help to visualize the thematic conflicts of perspective and identity in London as a “global city,” but they only serve to disrupt Will’s perspective and fail to experiment in scenes with characters more markedly transnational like Amira, Miro, and Oana.

The mise-en-scene functions as another stylistic element through which the film explores the transnational. The most significant feature of the mise-en-scene is its setting in London. In *Cities and Cinema* (2008), transnational cinema scholar Barbara Mennel discusses the representation of cities in globalization. She argues that “transnational films integrate the topography of metropolitan areas with the transnational movement of characters...Connected by narrative topics and representations of the city as a space of alienation and solidarity, the films show the visible effects of globalization and its subcultural and submerged illegal underside” (201). Mennel claims that cities become a privileged space for cinematic narratives in globalization because they create space in which people are connected through globalized modes of production and their very make-up suggests changing demographics of society. *Breaking and Entering* supports Mennel’s notion that transnational films reveal the often criminal consequences within positive narratives of globalization through Miro’s delinquency as a transnational refugee who chooses crime over education. The film encourages us to understand London as an appropriate setting to explore issues of transnational identity in part through the trope of architecture. Architecture plays an important role in global cities because it can represent both the “local” as an actual building site and the “global” as a marker of transnational influences. The architecture of the city changes according to the inhabitants, and the changing social demographics through conditions of globalization has a visual effect on the urban

landscape. The fact that Will is an architect also compounds the importance of architecture and space in the transnational dimension of the film.

Architecture functions as a visual metaphor for the changing global metropolis in transnational migration. The film begins with a head-on shot of Will and Liv driving through London as the city's modern structural architecture reflects on the windshield. We begin in a space of mobility and the film next cuts to the *in medias res* construction project that Will oversees in King's Crossing. King's Crossing is popularly marked as a low-rent area of London inhabited by cultural and ethnic minorities, and the film acknowledges this problematic image through Will's project to "clean up" the area by constructing parks and natural landscape. This is evident in the digital slideshow that Miro finds on Will's stolen laptop. The video features Will's voice-over claiming that people's behavior is directly related to the space around them, and their project to renovate the slum will alleviate the current state of urban decay. Architecture provides an interesting site for the film's exploration of transnational identity as it suggests a city in-flux, a construction project "in progress" as we see shots of unfinished buildings in the area. While the project may appear as a progressive attempt to raise living standards and quality of life for the primarily immigrant and diasporic communities, the prostitute Oana critiques the source of Will's motivation for the project. When Oana meets Will in his car later in the film, she says he is constructing the project for people he does not even understand, like Oana herself. Oana critiques Will's move as classist and ignorant. His late-night encounters with Oana reveal that while his agenda is good-natured it nevertheless comes from a particular privileged class position that marks his ignorance to understand the very people that he tries to help.

The interiors of the mise-en-scene also operate according to binary forms of representation that challenge the film's exploration of transnational identity. The film contrasts the experiences

of Will and Amira as cultural binaries occupying a similar urban space. Will and Liv's apartment is represented as immaculate, modern, open, and white in both furnishings and the color scheme. The film shows us the space through soft beiges, grays, whites, and mirrors to highlight the "whiteness" of Will (as an indicator of class) but especially Liv (as part-Nordic). Elsewhere, Amira's apartment door has a gate that immediately bars any visitor from entering the space; indeed, the gate functions as a literal physical barrier between Amira and Will when he first asks for her tailoring service. The interior is represented as cluttered and busy; Amira works from home as a seamstress so garments can be seen hung up or laid out in various places. Even Miro's bedroom carries a sense of claustrophobia; as he filters through Will's laptop and displays the architectural models that he stole, the tight walls seem to be closing in on him. Miro has little mobility in such strict confines, whereas Bea can easily practice gymnastics in her room (evident in her first scene). Miro displays similar acrobatics as Bea, but his actions are performed outside on the playground or on the rooftops as a means of escape. His ability to jump from building to building, and to break into Will's office through the ceiling, position Miro as a mobile character that further signifies his transnational identity.

The film sets up binaries between the two private spaces in the *mise-en-scène* to suggest a fundamental difference of inhabiting the same urban space. It is right to assume that Will has a vastly different construction of private space than Amira and Miro based on class, economic, and cultural factors, but the film erects a binary between the two characters that fails to consider hybridity within that construct. The film suggests a clear difference between Will and Amira's experience but the binary approach to representation hinders the credibility of the political and cultural issues at stake. Transnational modes of experience are often characterized through a hybrid sense of identity and space produced by displacement and mobility, and the film easily

slips into a binary thinking that makes little room for nuance or hybridity in its construction of the mise-en-scene.

Ultimately, *Breaking and Entering* is a conventional melodrama that wants to address contemporary discussions of the “break up” of Britain in globalization and transnational migration while at the same time features conservative forms of representation to construct a binary that only emphasizes difference rather than understanding. Returning to the ending of the film, Will can either admit to the affair and save Miro’s fate from prison or he can deny his involvement with Amira and blame Miro for the break-in. The ending is problematic not least of all because it places Miro’s fate in the hands of Will, falling into the conventional stereotype of the helpless immigrant who needs to be rescued by a wealthy white man. The film offers no other choice for Miro besides a prison cell or deportation; it assumes Miro can only survive in London as a criminal. However, Will decides to spare Miro’s life, and the last shots of Miro and Amira appear optimistic as he leaves Will’s office and returns to his mother’s open arms as they exit. While the notion of the “return home” is an importance concept in diasporic communities, Miro and Amira’s relief at the news is problematic because their return is not a conscious decision on their own doing. They are at the hands of Will, serving as pawns of his access to power. Rather than finding a way for Miro and Amira to survive and to prosper in London as transnational subjects in the urban “global hub,” the film offers a xenophobic portrait in which the audience is encouraged to view their expulsion as a “happy ending.” Although the film directly engages in narratives of globalization through Amira and Miro, it nevertheless falls into conventional traps of representation by constructing a binary among different modes of experience and relying on stereotypes (Amira and Oana as sexualized and exotic; Liv as frigid and depressed; Miro as a criminal) to narrate their stories. Therefore, the film signifies a weak

form of transnationality that is marked by a strongly national audience in its re-inscription of xenophobic attitudes towards transnational figures.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION: MINGHELLA'S LEGACY FOR AUTEURIST TRANSNATIONALISM

In analyzing how *Breaking and Entering* and *The English Patient* engage in issues of transnational identity politics, I have argued for the importance of Minghella as a transnational filmmaker in British cinema while at the same time pointing to the ways in which his films, while progressive in subject matter, may rely too heavily on genre and binary thinking to make an emphatic claim on contemporary notions of the nation. In this paper I have approached the transnational dimension of British cinema through Hjort's notion of "auteurist transnationalism," but that concept can only be so productive. As I have demonstrated, each of these terms is problematic in its own right and demands further work, but the provisional concept does allow for opening a discussion of shifting contexts that can lead to productive discussions of cinema under conditions of globalization. I have positioned Anthony Minghella as an important auteur associated with British cinema during the 1990s and 2000s and whose work becomes particularly meaningful in discourses of globalization and transnational cultural production. I have also attempted to overcome the binaries between theories of national and world cinema in film studies to emphasize the rhetoric of an intervention based on increasingly visibility of transnational narrative and funding as well as the displacement of national cinemas in globalization. Minghella becomes a key figure in British national cinema as it makes a stake in transnational cultural production through the political themes and cinematic modes of representation in his films. While his films may not be particularly innovative in representation, operating primarily through traditional modes of narrative cinema, they nevertheless embody certain features of transnationalism both textually and contextually that signify a cultural shift away from national constructions of identity in favor of transnational modes of experience.

While *Breaking and Entering* would appear to be the more critical film as it directly narrates themes of migration and diaspora in a contemporary “interstitial” urban space, its derivative form of representation actually pales in comparison to the epic approach in *The English Patient*. This film is able to more effectively resonate with a transnational audience not only through narrative but also through representation, as it sets up a romantic and imaginary notion of national difference only to critique it as illusory and problematic. These films mark attempts in British cinema to respond to contemporary debates on globalization, the state of the nation, and transnational communities in the diaspora from an internationally known British director involved in building up the national industry as a chairman of the British Film Institute (BFI). If British cinema as an industry hopes to continue to circulate films in a transnational context it will need not only to represent modes of transnational experience but also to do so through a style that can adequately address and represent those experiences through nuance and specificity.

Both of these films actively question nationhood as a marker of identity, and in that sense they make a meaningful contribution to transnational cinema. However, Minghella himself embodies the role of the transnational filmmaker not only through thematic concerns of the films but also in his filmmaking process. By analyzing the production context of *The English Patient* and *Breaking and Entering*, I have shown the extent to which Minghella has relied on transnational sources of financing and production in order to make his films. He has filmed in North Africa and Italy for a majority of *The English Patient*, in London for *Breaking and Entering*, in Romania for *Cold Mountain* (2003), and in Botswana for the television pilot of *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency* (2008). His casting choices also range among various nationalities, as outlined in the discussion of both films. If as Ezra and Rowden believe

transnationalism results from new conditions of financing, production, distribution, and reception in the period of globalization following the Cold War, then Minghella's work embodies an active engagement with transnationalism under a shifting "global system" marked by migration across borders and the economic consolidation of transnational media corporations (1).

Although I position Minghella as an important figure in British national cinema, it is with hesitation that I contextualize his work as "British" for in reality his work exceeds traditional boundaries of the nation-state. Minghella at once signifies British cinema but at the same time goes beyond the geo-political territory to represent a filmmaker of transnational influences. In this paper I have analyzed Minghella's work as a means to problematize traditional frameworks of "national cinema" that have plagued our understanding of the complexities involved in filmmaking countries, specifically in the context of Europe. His films not only imagine communities of transnational characters but they also embody that very idea through production. The national frameworks for understanding cinemas around the world does not take into account the complexity of conditions involved in contemporary modes of filmmaking under globalization. Minghella's films, then, challenge the "national cinema" paradigm in film studies as limiting and ultimately unsatisfactory, embodying an argument for transnational modes of experience that take into account the structures of contemporary social and political life.

NOTES

1. Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden address the impact of digital technology on official national film cultures: “The falling cost of digital filmmaking equipment, which enables individuals to shoot and edit their own films on personal computers without studio backing, has facilitated the rise of a culture of access that functions as a delegitimizing shadow of the official film cultures of most nation-states as they have been determined by the processes of screening, censorship, rating, and critique” (6).
2. See Hall and Zimmerman’s essay “Transnational Documentaries: A Manifesto” for a discussion of the U.S. Congress passing a monumental telecommunications bill in 1996 that encouraged the rise of media conglomerates (97).
3. See Ulrich Beck’s book *What is Globalization* (2000) as an example of a text that tries to legitimize globalization as a phenomenon as part of its agenda.
4. See Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie’s “Introduction” to *Cinema and Nation* (2000), in which they outline the prevalence of national cinema studies in academic research, especially the “recent surge” during the 1990s (2). Also, see Valentina Vitali’s and Paul Willemen’s edited anthology *Theorising National Cinema* (2008) for recent scholarship concerning the theoretical problem of “national cinema” in contemporary conditions of globalization.
5. See Hamid Naficy’s *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking* (2001) for a comprehensive study of exilic and diasporic cinema as it engages in transnational modes of experiences.
6. Crofts’s seven varieties of national cinemas include: (1) European-Model Art Cinemas; (2) Third Cinema; (3) Third World and European Commercial Cinemas; (4) Ignoring Hollywood; (5) Imitating Hollywood; (6) Totalitarian Cinemas; (7) Regional/Ethnic Cinemas.
7. This list can be found in Bordwell and Thompson’s text *Film History: An Introduction* (665), and these statistics date to late 2008.
8. See James Leggott’s book *Contemporary British Cinema: from Heritage to Horror* (2008).
9. In the “Foreward” to *The English Patient: A Screenplay* (1997), Anthony Minghella writes, “I hope the army of admirers of Michael Ondaatje’s novel forgive my sins of omission and commission, my misjudgments and betrayals; they were all made in the spirit of translating his beautiful novel to the screen” (xii). In the “Introduction” to the screenplay, Ondaatje also expresses his support for Minghella’s adaptation: “What we have now are two stories, one with the intimate pace and detail of a three-hundred-page novel, and one that is the length of a vivid and subtle film. Each has its own organic structure. There are obvious differences and values but somehow each version deepens the other” (xvii).
10. See the “Foreword” to *The English Patient: A Screenplay* (1997).

11. On the DVD commentary track Minghella comments on the fragmented narrative style of the film. This quote can be attributed to his commentary during the opening sequence.
12. See Mark Leonard's Demos Report Britain in 1997 that officially claimed Britain a "global hub" and "hybrid nation" (among four other narratives) (Sargeant 325).
13. *Breaking and Entering* earned approximately \$930,469 million in the U.S., according to the website "Box Office Mojo," available at <http://www.boxofficemojo.com/>. *The English Patient* earned \$231,976,425 million at the global box-office, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999) earned \$128,798,265 million, and *Cold Mountain* (2003) earned \$173,013,509 million.
14. See "Awards and Nominations" link on the base webpage for *Breaking and Entering* available on the website <http://www.imdb.com/> .
15. Hjort in "On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism" and Ezra and Rowden in "What is Transnational Cinema?" discuss the unfortunate tendency of certain transnational films to slip into composite forms of "Euro-pudding."
16. Benedict Anderson argues that the concept of the "nation" was heavily influenced by the cultural imagination created through print (newspapers, novels, etc.) during the 1800s.

WORKS CITED

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. NY: Verso, 1991. Print.
- Ball, John Clement. *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction and the Transnational Metropolis*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004. Print.
- Beck, Ulrich. *What is Globalization?* Malden, MA: Polity P, 2000. Print.
- “The Big Bonanza.” *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency*. Dir. Anthony Minghella. HBO. 15 Mar. 2009.
- Braudy, Leo, and Marshall Cohen, eds. *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. 7th ed. NY: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.
- Breaking and Entering*. Dir. Anthony Minghella. Perf. Jude Law, Juliette Binoche, and Robin Wright Penn. DVD. Miramax Films, 2006.
- Chaudhuri, Shohini. *Contemporary World Cinema*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2005. Print.
- Cold Mountain*. Dir. Anthony Minghella. Perf. Jude Law, Nicole Kidman, and Renee Zellweger. DVD. Miramax Films, 2003.
- Crofts, Stephen. “Reconceptualizing National Cinema(s).” Braudy and Cohen 853-64.
- Dave, Paul. *Visions of England: Class and Culture in Contemporary Cinema*. Talking Images Series. Oxford: Berg, 2006. Print.
- Dawtre, Adam, Dade Hayes, and Ali Jaafar. “Anthony Minghella Dies at 54.” *Variety* 18 Mar. 2008. 15 Sept. 2010 <<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1117982586?refCatId=1236>>.
- Dennison, Stephanie, and Song H. Lim, eds. “Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem.” *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics in Film*. London: Wallflower P, 2006. Print. 1-18.
- Dissanayake, Wimal. “Issues in World Cinema.” Braudy and Cohen 877-85.
- Durovicova, Natasa, and Kathleen Newman, eds. *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*. London and NY: Routledge, 2010. Print.
- Durovicova, Natasa. “Preface.” Durovicova and Newman ix-xv.
- The English Patient*. Dir. Anthony Minghella. Perf. Ralph Fiennes, Kristin Scott Thomas, and Juliette Binoche. DVD. Miramax Films, 1996.
- Ezra, Elizabeth, and Terry Rowden, eds. *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader*. London and NY: Routledge, 2006. Print.

- . "General Introduction: What is Transnational Cinema?" Ezra and Rowden 1-12.
- Hess, John, and Patricia R. Zimmerman. "Transnational Documentaries: A Manifesto." Ezra and Rowden 97-108.
- Higson, Andrew. *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama Since 1980*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.
- . "The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema." Ezra and Rowden 15-25.
- Hjort, Mette, and Scott Mackenzie, eds. "Introduction." *Cinema and Nation*. London and NY: Routledge, 2000. Print. 1-16.
- Hjort, Mette. "On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism." Durovicova and Newman 12-33.
- Koepke, Wulf. "Kulturation and its Authorization through Herder." *Johann Gottfried Herder: Academic Disciplines and the Pursuit of Knowledge*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996. Print. 177-98.
- Kranz, David L. "The English Patient: Critics, Audiences, and the Quality of Fidelity." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 31.2 (Apr. 2003): 99. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. UF George A. Smathers Lib, Gainesville, FL. 2 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- Laing, Heather. *Gabriel Yared's The English Patient: A Film Score Guide*. Scarecrow Film Score Guides, no. 1. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow P, 2004. Print.
- Leggott, James. *Contemporary British Cinema: From Heritage to Horror*. London: Wallflower P, 2008. Print.
- Mennel, Barbara C. *Cities and Cinema*. London: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Minghella, Anthony. *The English Patient: A Screenplay*. NY: Hyperion Miramax Books, 1996. Print.
- Minghella, Anthony, and Timothy Bricknell. *Minghella on Minghella*. London: Faber and Faber, 2005. Print.
- Morgan, Maggie M. "The English Patient: From Fiction to Reel." *Alif* 18 (1998): 159-73.
- Naficy, Hamid. *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Disaporic Filmmaking*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2001. Print.
- New York, I Love You*. Dir. Shekhar Kapur. Perf. Julie Christie and Shia Labeouf. DVD. Vivendi Entertainment, 2009.

- Newman, Kathleen. "Notes on Transnational Film Theory: Decentered Subjectivity, Decentered Capitalism." Durovicova and Newman 3-11.
- Ponzanesi, Sandra. "Diaspora in Time : Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*." *Diasporic Literature and Theory: Where Now?* Ed. Mark Shackleton. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009. Print. 120-37.
- Sargeant, Amy. *British Cinema: A Critical History*. London: BFI Publishing, 2005. Print.
- Sadashige, Jaqui. "Sweeping the Sands: Geographies of Desire in *The English Patient*." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 26.4 (1998): 242-54. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. UF George A. Smathers Lib, Gainesville, FL. 2 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- Scott, A.O. "Love Means Always Having to Say You're Sorry." Rev. of *Breaking and Entering*, dir. Anthony Minghella. *New York Times* 26 Jan. 2007: 13. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. UF George A. Smathers Lib, Gainesville, FL. 2 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- Shin, Andrew. "*The English Patient*'s Desert Dream." *Literature Interpretation Theory* 18 (2007): 213-36. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. UF George A. Smathers Lib, Gainesville, FL. 2 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- Spencer, Liese. "*Breaking and Entering*." Rev. of *Breaking and Entering*, dir. Anthony Minghella. *Sight & Sound* 16.12 (2006): 46-48. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. UF George A. Smathers Lib, Gainesville, FL. 2 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- Stenberg, Douglas. "A Firmament in the Midst of the Waters: Dimensions of Love in *The English Patient*." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 26.4 (1998): 255. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 23 Aug. 2010 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.
- The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Dir. Anthony Minghella. Perf. Matt Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, and Cate Blanchett. DVD. Miramax Films, 1999.
- Thompson, Kristin, and David Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. New York: U of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010.
- Ty, Eleanor. "The Other Questioned: Exoticism and Displacement in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*." *The International Fiction Review* 27.1 (2000): 10-19.
- Wollen, Peter. "The Auteur Theory." Braudy and Cohen 455-70.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Timothy Michael Robinson was born in 1986 in Raleigh, North Carolina. The youngest of three children, he grew up mostly in the small town of Bridgewater, Virginia, graduating from Turner Ashby High School in 2004. Over the next four years he earned a Bachelor of Arts from the College of William and Mary where he double-majored in English and literary & cultural studies, an interdisciplinary degree concentrating in film studies. Additionally, his undergraduate honors thesis in literary and cultural studies received “highest honors” designation in May 2008. Later that fall, he entered the Master of Arts degree program in English at the University of Florida, where he currently holds a teaching assistantship that allows him to instruct a range of courses in the Department of English and through the University Writing Program. After completing the master’s degree program in 2010, Timothy continues to pursue his Ph.D. in English, with a concentration in film and media studies, at the University of Florida with plans to graduate in 2014.