

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: "WHEN ALL THE WORLD IS  
BUT A MARTIAL STAGE":  
REPRESENTATIONS OF WARRIORS  
IN EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE,  
1624-1827.

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This dissertation examines the literary history of the soldier in early American literature by bringing texts such as travel accounts, sermons, expedition accounts, and novels in conversation with military treatises and military manuals. I argue that colonial soldier-writers employed rhetorical models developed in European and American technical military literature in order to challenge the authority of non-military colonial writers. In particular, I show that soldier-writers and writers of texts about warfare represented warriors in colonial and U.S. American literature by emulating the emphasis on practical knowledge and on the body developed in European military texts. The rhetorical models found in technical military literature allowed these writers to privilege the authority of the figure of the soldier. The writers of the technical military literature examined in this dissertation made significant contributions to the development of science during the

sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and their influence can be seen across genres in colonial and early national American literature. My introduction describes the historical moment that produced the military literature examined in this dissertation, the characteristics of that body of literature, and the influence of the figure of the warrior on early seventeenth-century literary forms. Chapter 1 examines how John Smith in *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624) emulates the rhetorical model of the "perfect soldier," the soldier who possesses both empirical and theoretical knowledge. Smith emphasizes his physical presence in Virginia and links that presence with the value of the information he includes in his account. Thus, he privileges the rhetorical model of the perfect soldier over that of the self-effaced traveler-explorer such as Thomas Harriot. Chapter 2 considers how Samuel Nowell in his sermon *Abraham in Arms* (1678) privileges the figure of the temporal soldier over the spiritual soldier in order to challenge strictly typological explanations of King Philip's War and shift hermeneutical authority away from the colonial authorities and towards merchants as well as soldiers and militiamen of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Chapter 3 examines representations of soldiers in John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition in Surinam* (1796) and argues that Stedman privileges the authority of the colonial soldier-writer by emphasizing that the immediacy of soldiers' observations produces more accurate and truthful information about Surinam's nature than the accounts by enlightened travelers. Chapter 4 considers how James Fenimore Cooper in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827) fashions the figures of the militia and the professional soldier in response to political debates regarding what kind of military the U.S. should have. He attempts to restrain the individualism of Jacksonian democracy by containing the

expansion of the individual warrior while making the professional soldier the agent responsible for westward expansion. The conclusion examines the continuing influence in contemporary culture of the figures of the militia warrior and the professional soldier.

"When all the World is but a Martial Stage": Representations of Warriors in Early  
American Literature, 1624-1827

By

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Special thanks to my parents for their help and support throughout this long and demanding journey. They were always there when I needed help and never stopped supporting my dreams. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Rebecca M. Lush, for her understanding, her support, and for reading my work and listening to my ideas for so many years. Oliver and Ellie, thank you too for your silent, and sometimes not so silent, support throughout this process.

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## Introduction

"This is the century of the soldier," wrote Italian poet and diplomat Fulvio Testi in 1641, and it is not hard to understand why. Testi lived on a continent that experienced only ten years of complete peace in the sixteenth century and only four in the seventeenth century. According to a study on European warfare, the years between 1500 and 1700 were "the most warlike in terms of the proportion of years of war under way (95 per cent), the frequency of war (nearly one every three years), and the average yearly duration, extent, and magnitude of war."<sup>1</sup> During this same period, there was a dramatic increase in the number of soldiers in Europe; the number of men at arms during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries increased tenfold. The world on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean was no less belligerent. In North America there was either a declared war or an armed conflict for 79 of the 179 years from the time of the founding of Jamestown until 1785.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, warfare and the figure of the soldier dominated the trans-Atlantic literatures and cultures during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

"'When all the World is but a Martial Stage': Representations of Warriors in Early American Literature, 1624-1827" examines the literary history of the soldier in colonial and early national American literature.<sup>3</sup> During the period studied by this dissertation the

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), i.

<sup>2</sup> Kyle Zelner, *A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militia during King Philip's War*, (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>3</sup> I use the term "warrior" to mean "a person whose occupation is warfare; a fighting, man, whether soldier [or] sailor. While today "warrior" mostly connotes a non-Western fighting man or woman, during the late sixteenth century the term was employed for all men participating in war. Warrior, *n*," *Oxford English*

figure of the soldier populated most literary forms of Early American Literature, from official documents and records, histories, published and unpublished sermons and letters, news pamphlets, drama, and many other forms. Many of the early texts in North America were works of military observation, and many of the early writers in North America, such as Captain John Smith and John Underhill, were soldiers who had extensive participation in European warfare. In addition, during the period examined most colonial men were part of the militia system, which was constructed after the militia model of England. This dissertation explores the connections between the figure of the European, and subsequently American, soldier and the literature of colonial and early national America. The professional soldiers of the period I examine came primarily from the artisan classes rather than the nobility. As members of the artisan classes, these soldiers believed that knowledge was gained through the process of experience and labor rather than solely from studying theoretical knowledge contained in texts.<sup>4</sup> This epistemology, which developed in military manuals, military treatises, and other similar military texts during the period, placed the body of the soldier at its center and emphasized the importance of experiential knowledge. This dissertation considers the influence of the rhetorical models

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*Dictionary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. For instance, Thomas Digges, the famous Elizabethan mathematician and astronomer wrote in 1604 his text *Four Paradoxes, or Politique Discourses. 2 Concerning Militarie Discipline, written long since by Thomas Digges Esquire. 2 of the Worthiness of warre and warriors*. Thomas Digges, *Four Paradoxes, or Politique Discourses*, (London: Lownes, 1604). His use of the word "warriors" shows that during this period that term referred to any man participating in war, whether western or not. This use of the word warrior comes partly from the influence of classical military literature on early modern military literature. Roman and Greek historians used the words "warrior" and "soldier" interchangeably. For example, the Roman historian Livy writes that "to those souldiors that were by the Consull mustered and levied, were the old Centurions, experienced and skilfull warriors, adjoined." T. Livius, *The Romane Historie*, (London: Adam Aslip, 1600), 196. I use the terms "soldier" and "warrior" when they appear in the primary texts, but distinguish the connotation and period specific definition as appropriate.

<sup>4</sup> Pamela Smith, *The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 8.

developed in technical military literature on American literary forms by bringing colonial and early national American literature in conversation with technical military literature written by and about soldiers.

It is the main contention of this dissertation that colonial soldier-writers employed rhetorical strategies developed in technical military literature, specifically the importance of representations of the body, to create a discursive space for the figure of the soldier in colonial and early national American literature. These writers created accounts of embodied experiences that interacted with the rhetorical practices of exploration accounts, sermons, and natural histories. Representations of the traveler-explorer, the spiritual soldier, and the enlightened traveler were most often characterized by a rhetoric of self-effacement. Soldier-writers challenged those accounts by emphasizing and privileging the physical presence of the soldier and, thus, constructed a rhetorical model that allowed them to claim authority. Gradually, non-military writers also employed these rhetorical strategies both to privilege and to challenge the authority of the figure of the soldier.

### **Early Modern Soldiers and Military Literature**

The early modern period in Europe was a period of rapid transformations of both the political and military structures of the continent. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, European economies and societies were in crisis; the medieval social formations of Western Europe were gradually breaking down in Western Europe, and absolute monarchies were emerging. As the absolutist states were emerging, a more

cohesive national policy was being formed, with a foreign and domestic policy closer to “national goals” rather than the separate missions of feudal lords. However, although the states required large armies in order to impose their foreign policies, they did not dare arm their own peasants. Thus, they increasingly resorted to mercenary forces, which were the beginning of military professionalization in early modern Europe.<sup>5</sup>

Although national armies would gradually form throughout Europe, the Elizabethan state would provide a fertile soil for the development of a strong national military class earlier than the rest of the European states, mainly because its imperial ambitions combined with its “isolationist” nature. England was the strongest medieval monarchy in the West. Although the noble class would remain powerful throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was forced to operate with one fundamental limitation in comparison to other European states: it lacked a substantial military apparatus to support it.<sup>6</sup> England’s insular situation did not force it to develop modernized armies for the perpetual warfare of mainland Europe, and so it did not develop a military machine of the level and complexity of the French or the Spanish. Within this context the English nobility was gradually demilitarized much earlier than the rest of its European counterparts. While in 1500 every English noble bore arms, by Elizabeth’s time only half of the aristocracy had any fighting experience, the rest following alternative career opportunities opened up in royal and regional bureaucracies,

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<sup>5</sup> On the absolutist states in Western Europe, see Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, (Verso, 1985).

<sup>6</sup> Anderson notes that “the steady growth in the size and expense of armies in the early modern epoch, and the transport problems of ferrying and supplying large numbers of soldiers across the water, rendered the medieval type of overseas expedition in which England had once excelled, increasingly anachronistic.” Anderson, 123.

estate management and diplomacy.<sup>7</sup> Thus, there was a progressive dissociation of the nobility from the basic military function which defined it in the medieval social order.<sup>8</sup>

This dissociation would prove crucial for English professional soldiers, who would eventually make up the core of the warriors traveling across the Atlantic. The martial involvements of the English in both Europe and the New World during the late sixteenth century led to the need for a more populous and trained military. Between 1585 and 1603 the Crown conscripted close to a hundred thousand men, mostly from the middling sort to send to the Low Countries, a number equal to more than ten percent of the male population aged sixteen to thirty-nine.<sup>9</sup> This group used the military status relinquished by the demilitarized noble class and, in conjunction with England's imperial expectations, rose within the rigid social hierarchies of early modern England. Professional soldiers claimed that they possessed a rapidly changing body of knowledge and promoted the importance of a military career that would be associated with the continuous education in the art of war.<sup>10</sup>

At the same time, during the late sixteenth century warfare in Europe was changing and military practice was becoming increasingly important. The introduction of the musket in the 1550s gradually drove off the battlefield most other military specialists like the crossbowmen and the halberdiers. However, pikemen remained, and they were used in conjunction with musketeers in large formations. The combination of pikemen and musketeers along with the development of "volley fire," where multiple lines of

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<sup>7</sup> Frank Tallet, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe: 1496-1715*, (New York: Routledge: 1992), 101.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, 125.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Bochulz and Newton Keys, *Early Modern England 1485-1714: A Narrative History*, (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 140.

<sup>10</sup> John Hale, *Renaissance Europe 1480-1520*, (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1971), 231, 232.

soldiers would fire in sequence so as to keep the enemy at bay, created the need for better coordination among soldiers because it was essential that whole armies be able to march together, fire together, and maneuver together. Thus, military practice became essential for any successful early modern army.<sup>11</sup>

The need for increased training and specialization led many Englishmen to advocate for the institutionalization of military training in the practical and theoretical military arts. Sir Humphrey Gilbert proposed to Queen Elizabeth in 1570 to erect a military academy in London in order to raise “perfect trained souldiour who shall teach [the trainees] to handle the harqubuz,” and to study “examples and stratagemmes both antick and moderne.” Gilbert’s proposal failed to lead to the creation of the first military academy in England. However, its curriculum shows the increasing realization by the English that warfare was becoming complex and that education in the practice of war and the theory of war was essential if England were to have a successful army.<sup>12</sup>

The need for reform and training led many former and current soldiers to begin writing military books to help disseminate knowledge of military affairs more efficiently. These books were written in the genre of technical writing, a genre that primarily employed a utilitarian rather than embellished style and was not speculative but rather provided specific instructions on practical matters such as farming, husbandry, and many more.<sup>13</sup> The first influential English text of such nature was Peter Whitehorne’s *Certain waies for the orderynge of Souldiers in battleray* (1560). The book contained instructions on how to organize men into battle formations, how to build fortifications, and how to

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<sup>11</sup>Parker, 20.

<sup>12</sup>Humphrey Gilbert, *The Erection of an Achademy in London*, (London: 1570), 23.

<sup>13</sup>Elizabeth Tebeaux, *The Emergence of a Tradition: Technical Writing in the English Renaissance, 1475-1640*, (London: Baywood, 1997), 10.

use artillery. After Whitehorne's text was published, many other soldiers followed his example and began writing similar military manuals. Texts like Thomas Digges' *An Arithmetical Warlike treatise named Stratoticos* (1579), Giles Clayton's *Approved order of Martiall Discipline* (1591), William Garrard's *The Arte of Warre* (1593), and many others were printed in order to train English soldiers. By the end of Elizabeth's reign in 1603, seventeen works devoted specifically to the military arts had been printed in England, and those were just the ones originally written in English. There were also numerous other military texts that had been translated primarily from French that also dealt with military training and education.<sup>14</sup> Visual and textual representations of the body became increasingly central to representations of warriors, with military manuals dedicated solely to the correct training and correct positioning of the soldier's body.

Early modern military texts emphasized the need for both theoretical and practical military education in order for soldiers to be "perfect." Military writers repeatedly emphasize the importance for soldiers to read military theory and to practice the military arts. "A souldier ought to be learned and read, the which conjoynd with experience, makes him a perfect man of warre," writes Robert Barret in *The Theoricke and Practice of War*.<sup>15</sup> William Garrard similarly reminds his reader that "everie art doth spring of experience and knowledge, and knowledge doth arise by meanes of studie and continuall

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<sup>14</sup> In addition to military texts written in the late sixteenth century, the rise of humanism led to increased attention in Roman and ancient Greek texts, including the many military texts of the classical period. Texts like Caesar's *Commentaries*, Onasander's *O Strategos* (The General), Sextus Julius Frontinus' *Strategemata*, and the more famous Flavius Renatus Vegetius' *Epitoma Rei Militaris* (A Summary of Military Matters), were only a few of the works widely circulating during the early modern period.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Barret, *The Theorike and Practike of Modern Warres Discourse in Dialogue Wise*, (London: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1598), 199.



practise."<sup>16</sup> Simply reading about the military arts was not enough; one had to also go out and practice them. David R. Lawrence provides an example of the way early modern soldiers studied military theory in order to complement and enhance military practice. Sir Philip Sidney became in the 1570s increasingly interested in reading about military theory. He began to read treatises about the art of soldiering, especially the art of siegecraft and manoeuvring. However, he considered simply reading about these topics inadequate, and, thus, he travelled to the European continent to learn the military arts from the Imperial commander, Lazurus von Schwendi. Sidney spent a considerable amount of time serving alongside von Schwendi and gaining experience in the military arts.<sup>17</sup> Only by combining both practice and theory could a soldier like Sidney claim to have complete knowledge of the military arts.

Military texts, then, elevated the value of practical knowledge to be equivalent to theoretical knowledge. In the Aristotelian scheme of knowledge, theory was separate from practice. As practice, or the collection of experiences, could not be formed into a deductive system, it was considered to be not as certain as theory. The kind of practice relating to manipulating matter and making things was seen as inferior to theory and was considered the act of "animals, slaves, and craftspeople."<sup>18</sup> However, the explosion of technical treatises enabled practitioners of arts to enter the knowledge-making process and demonstrate in their texts that knowledge gained through bodily practice mattered. Pamela Smith argues that the articulation of this epistemology, which she calls "artisanal epistemology," by practitioners in technical writing enabled artisans to create an identity

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<sup>16</sup> William Garrard, *The Arte of Warre*, (London: 1593), 4.

<sup>17</sup> David R. Lawrence, *The Complete Soldier: Military Books and Military culture in Early Stuart England*, (London: Brill, 2009), 58-60.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, 17.

through which they could "express claims to authority on the basis of their knowledge of nature."<sup>19</sup> Practitioners of the military arts, whose devotion to practical knowledge and bodily military skills had prior to this period classified them as inferior to educated Europeans, entered the knowledge-making process. Soldier-writers were able to create a discursive space for the literary figure of the soldier by expressing claims to authority on the basis of practical knowledge rather than social status or theoretical knowledge. Therefore, practical skill became integral to the soldiers' identity.<sup>20</sup>

The military arts, and especially military treatises and manuals, became the space where elite, learned individuals, who primarily claimed their authority on the basis of their theoretical knowledge, would communicate with artisan practitioners, who primarily claimed authority on the basis of their practical knowledge. Therefore, these texts became what Pamela Long calls "trading zones" in which learned men and artisan practitioners exchanged knowledge.<sup>21</sup> These negotiations were not restricted to the early seventeenth century but, rather, continued up until the nineteenth century. Ken Alder, in his study of the education of French Artillery Corps in the late eighteenth century, introduces the notion of the "middle epistemology." He notes that French artillerists were expected to combine theory and practice because mechanical knowledge by itself made them workmen, while theoretical knowledge by itself made them unskilled.<sup>22</sup> In London a few decades later William Muller wrote *The Elements of the Science of War* (1811), in which

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>21</sup> Pamela O. Long, *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship: Technical Arts and the Culture of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 15.

<sup>22</sup> Ken Alder, "French Engineers Become Professionals; or, How Meritocracy Made Knowledge Objective," William Clark, Jan Golinski, Simon Schaffer, eds, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999): 96-126, 104, 106.

he explained the importance for military engineers to have knowledge of both "practical and theoretical rules of fortification" in order to possess "perfect knowledge;" they should have both knowledge of mathematics and a familiarity with "corporeal exercises."<sup>23</sup> A few years later and across the Atlantic, William Tone, a former officer of the U.S. light cavalry, emphasized in 1819 the need for American soldiers to both "study and practice military duties."<sup>24</sup>

Soldiers were among the first, and most populous, groups that crossed the Atlantic on behalf of the English Crown. As Karen Ordahl Kupperman notes, war was England's "first sustained activity in the Americas." The first group of English settlers sent to Roanoke, Kupperman continues, were young men under military authority.<sup>25</sup> The majority of the soldiers who joined the various expeditions to what would become New England and Virginia came out of the ranks of English professional soldiers who had been for years fighting in the Low Countries. John Smith himself had spent years fighting in the Low Countries. Major John Mason, the leader of the colonial forces in the Pequot War and the writer of *A Brief History of the Pequot War*, begins his introduction by noting that the two main actors of the conflict, himself and Captain Miles Standish, the military leader of New England, were "bred to arms in the *Dutch Netherlands*."<sup>26</sup> Similarly, John Underhill, one of the Massachusetts commanders in the expedition against the Pequot and author of *News from America* (1638), had served in the Low Countries before continuing his military career in North America.

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<sup>23</sup> William Muller, *The Elements of the Science of War*, (London: 1811), xiv.

<sup>24</sup> William Tone, *Essay on the necessity of Improving our National Force*, (New York: 1819), 25.

<sup>25</sup> Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 4, 31.

<sup>26</sup> John Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War*, (Boston: Thomas Prince, 1746), ii.

These colonial soldier-writers repeatedly emphasized their awareness of, and dialogue with, European military writers. They constantly referred to European military works and often challenged or agreed with the assertions made by European writers of military literature. Additionally, the founding of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts in 1638, which was modeled after the Honorable Artillery Company of London, further enabled the exchange of rhetorical practices between the colonies and England. Thus, when Mason and Underhill were writing their accounts of colonial military expeditions, they were aware that they belonged to a larger trans-Atlantic group of military authors.

The influence of these writers in colonial American culture and literature helped propagate their rhetorical strategies; in time, many colonial writers employed the rhetorical strategies of technical military literature in order to construct a rhetorical space for colonial writings. Colonial writers would claim that their empirical observations of American nature privileged their accounts over those of European men of science. However, by the early nineteenth century and the founding of the United States, the kind of knowledge soldier-writers once privileged is gradually associated with the past rather than the present of the nation, and with Native American warriors rather than U.S. soldiers. As the Republic starts to privilege scientific over purely practical knowledge, the figure of the practical soldier surrenders its place to the figure of the scientific soldier.

## **Scholarship**

Scholars who have examined the figure of the warrior in colonial literature have mostly done so solely within the context of other colonial texts and in isolation from the military literature I read for this dissertation. Richard Slotkin constructed a genealogy of the figure of the soldier in colonial and early national U.S. literature by tracing the cultural archetypes that emerged from the "historical experience of the American colonial frontier." Slotkin reads war narratives, particularly those written by Puritans in New England and argues that violence and the myth of regeneration through violence "became the structuring metaphor of the American experience."<sup>27</sup> However, by reading the figure of the soldier in the context only of colonial frontier violence and of colonial soldiers and Native warriors, Slotkin ignores the crucial influence of European soldiers in the formation of the literary figure of the soldiers. Even though he mentions writers like John Underhill, who was a professional soldier who had spent a large part of his military career fighting in Europe, he treats them in a manner similar to colonial writers. Slotkin's reading of the experience of the colonial frontier as in a way transforming Europeans into Americans erases the European literary forms that European soldiers like Underhill brought with them to North America.<sup>28</sup>

Scholars have recently begun looking at the influence of English literary forms on American literature. Specifically, scholars such as Marie Ahearn and T.H. Breen have been studying the influence of the literature surrounding the Stuart militia system on

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<sup>27</sup> Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier: 1600-1860*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 4, 25.

<sup>28</sup>On readings that emphasize the "exceptional" nature of the American experience and its effects on American literature, see Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

Puritan sermons in Massachusetts Bay.<sup>29</sup> However, these studies rarely examine the origins of the rhetorical elements they consider beyond simply locating them in English texts. Therefore, their scope is narrow. Scholars studying Elizabethan drama in the last decade have been increasingly looking at the influence of military texts on late sixteenth-century plays. In particular, works such as Nina Taunton's *Drama and Militarism* have explored the role of military literature on English literary discourses and have begun exploring in depth the influence on drama of representations of warriors developed in military texts.<sup>30</sup> However, this type of scholarship has restricted its focus to mainland England and to drama. My dissertation continues the work of scholars such as Nina Taunton and Henry J. Webb, who have been exploring the books and practice of Elizabethan military science, by examining how the military literature that developed in England crossed the Atlantic and influenced American literature.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, my dissertation fills an important gap in early American scholarship by introducing a body of literature whose influence on American literary forms has gone largely unexamined.

### **Chapter Description**

In this dissertation I read texts about North and South America and cover a variety of genres such as histories, sermons, expedition accounts, and novels. In Chapter 1 I argue that John Smith in his text *The Generall Historie of Virginia* reproduces the rhetorical

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<sup>29</sup>Marie L. Ahearn, *The Rhetoric of War: Training Day, the Militia, and the Military Sermon*, (New York: Greenwood Press), 1989; T. H. Breen, "The Case of the Covenanted Militia in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts," *Past and Present* 57 (1972): 74-96.

<sup>30</sup>Nina Taunton, *1590s Drama and Militarism: Portrayals of War in Marlowe, Chapman and Shakespeare's Henry V*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001).

<sup>31</sup>Henry J. Webb, *Elizabethan Military Science the Books and the Practice*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965).

model of the "perfect soldier," the soldier who values both theoretical and practical military knowledge. Smith displays theoretical military knowledge, stemming from classical military texts, and practical military knowledge, stemming from military observation. Smith emphasizes the physical presence of the professional soldier in North America, while contemporaries such as Thomas Harriot efface the presence of the traveler-explorer; thus, the two figures are constructed as dramatically different rhetorical models and fashioned as valuing different ways of knowing.

In Chapter 2 I focus on the figures of the temporal soldier and the spiritual soldier in Puritan sermons of the late seventeenth century, primarily Samuel Nowell's *Abraham in Arms*. In this chapter I argue that the figure of the temporal soldier as it is described in Samuel Nowell's sermon *Abraham in Arms* is heavily influenced by representations of the temporal soldier in earlier, English sermons. The genealogy of the temporal soldier in sermons about warfare challenges the narratives of secularization that describe the Puritans as being more religious and then more secular. Rather, I argue that the figure of the temporal warrior shows that the secular and the religious co-existed in Puritan culture. Additionally, this chapter argues that the presence of the temporal soldier in Puritan sermons shows the different hermeneutical frameworks employed by members of the military on the one hand and the religious authorities on the other; the temporal soldier becomes the manner in which Puritans with heterodox beliefs attempt to shift interpretative authority from the ecclesiastical authorities to the military ones.

In Chapter 3 I examine representations of soldiers in John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796). In this chapter I argue that Stedman creates a discursive space for the colonial soldier-writer

by emphasizing that the immediacy of soldiers' observations produces more accurate and truthful information about Surinam's nature than the accounts by enlightened travelers. Stedman claims that accounts by enlightened travelers are accounts of disembodied experiences and, thus, contain mediated and inaccurate knowledge.

In Chapter 4 I focus on James Fenimore Cooper's novels *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie* and argues that Cooper fashions the figures of the militia and the professional soldier in his two novels in response to the debates of the period in military and political circles regarding what type of military the new republic should have. While the militia soldier was fashioned after Native American warriors and represented a relatively loose government and individual independence, the professional soldier was fashioned as educated in the military sciences and represented an organized and structured republic. I argue that Cooper attempts to contain the individualism of Jacksonian democracy by restricting the westward movement of the individual warrior and, instead, making the professional soldier, and thus the republic, the agent that controls westward expansion. In the conclusion I examine the continuing influence in contemporary culture of the representations of the militia warrior and the professional soldier and reiterate the importance for scholars of American literature to look more closely at the figure of the soldier which was central to American literary history and culture.



Thus may you see how many good partes are requisite to a perfect souldier; not learned by hearesay, nor gayned with ease: but with care, diligence, industrie, valour, practise and continuance; and most of all perfected with learning, annexed with long exercise and use." The "learning" and "practise" of the military arts result in a perfect soldier.

William Garrard, *The Art of War* (1591)

## **Chapter 1: The "Perfect Soldier" in John Smith's *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624)**

Captain John Smith's writings have for decades been at the center of scholarly debates on the relation between early American and early modern literatures.<sup>1</sup> Scholars debate the reasons why Smith appeared to privilege experience and experiential knowledge while most other contemporaneous European writers appeared to privilege theoretical, or bookish, knowledge. These scholars see Smith's emphasis on experiential knowledge--an emphasis they presume to be absent from contemporaneous European texts--as marking the beginning of a new, distinctly American, literary tradition that gives original expression to a unique historical experience in the New World.

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<sup>1</sup> In the early nineteenth century, historians such as William Gilmore Smith looked to John Smith for an alternative to the legendary European figures that English writers employed. Despite a few scholars doubting the veracity of Smith's writings, such as John Palfrey in 1858 and Charles Deane in 1860, by the late 1870s Smith's veracity was generally accepted. Gradually, Smith's writings became central to the idea of an American literature separate from British literature. For more on the history of criticism on Smith's writings, see the Introduction to Kevin J. Hayes *Captain John Smith: A Reference Guide*, (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1991), i-xxiv; see also Jarvis M. Morse, "John Smith and His Critics: A Chapter in Colonial Historiography," *The Journal of Southern History* 1 (1935): 123-137.

Scholars such as Ed White, Everett Emerson, William Spengemann, and Wayne Franklin have argued that the emphasis on empirical knowledge, which they see as the most distinctive feature of early American literature, is a consequence of the unique experience of the New World itself.<sup>2</sup> Franklin, for instance, saw the discovery of America as a transformative moment in the history of language; this was a moment when the American traveler broke through the bounds of the known world and the bonds of received language by "penetrating through words to the things which they so often misrepresented." Thus, Franklin reads accounts of writers such as John Smith as "composed in a language of events." He argues that this language of events was the result of New World travelers enjoying a certain "primary contact with the universe," an extra-textual access to knowledge that allowed them to test their ideas by reference to completely new experience of the New World.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ed White, in his essay "Captain Smith, Colonial Novelist," *American Literature* 75 (2003), argues that Smith's *The Generall Historie of Virginia* and *The True Travels* are "innovative works at the dawn of novelistic prose" that came out of the experience of discovery that was decisive for modern consciousness, and, thus, could not be adequately described through existing early modern genres (489). William Spengemann's intervention in the scholarship on Smith's texts is subtly different but makes an argument similar to White and Emerson. Spengemann reads Smith as a writer positioned at the origins of American literature. Spengemann's main argument is that all English literature should be considered American because the discovery of America "was the single most important event in the history of language" that drastically and permanently altered the English language. Thus, even though Spengemann does not see a break between colonial and continental literature written in the English language, he sees Smith as a writer whose work had to create "its own rules out of its own experimental actions." According to Spengemann, Smith's use of the "plain style," the relatively unadorned rhetorical style found in many colonial and early modern texts, stemmed from Smith's need to accumulate useful data "regarding this unwritten place [which] demanded a reportorial style." William Spengemann, *A New World of Words*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 59-61. Even Spengemann's Smith, then, is a writer forced to cope with the "newness" of a New World that demands the invention and use of new rhetorical tools. Wayne Franklin argues that America was an epistemological problem for Europe because in its attempts to describe the newness of America, the Old World was "almost literally at a loss for words." Wayne Franklin, *Discoverers, Explorers, Settlers: The Diligent Writers of Early America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Franklin, 9, 10. The narrative that Franklin calls upon is often called the "shock of discovery." It sees the discovery of the New World as having a radical effect on the Old World, and it has been a dominant framework through which many scholars have read Smith's texts. On the shock of discovery, see Anthony Grafton *New World, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery*, (Cambridge:

These exceptionalist readings of early colonial texts partly stemmed from scholarly attempts to find points of origin for a specifically American literary history; among those points of origin were the works of John Smith. Everett Emerson argued emphatically that "Above all, John Smith was an American...not European, not English, not Jacobean."<sup>4</sup> Mary Fuller notes that scholars of American literature saw in Smith an exemplar of what would become American traits; he was a man of actions, or practice, rather than a man of words, or theory.<sup>5</sup> He chastised the English aristocracy for not sharing the burden of the New World expedition and supported meritocracy, which is a value often associated with the birth of the United States. Thus, the scholars who saw in Smith one of the first "Americans" mostly read his texts in the context of his North American experiences rather than in the context of his trans-Atlantic and Mediterranean influences.

In this chapter I depart from such exceptionalist readings of colonial literature by reading Smith in the context of representations of early seventeenth-century soldiers. I emphasize the consistency of Smith's rhetorical style with the tradition of English military literature and especially the figure of the "perfect soldier."<sup>6</sup> Smith fashions himself as a soldier-author writing in the style of authors of earlier military texts such as

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Harvard University Press, 1995). Also, see John Elliott, *The Old World and The New 1492-1650*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 103.

<sup>5</sup> Mary C. Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 103.

<sup>6</sup> Here I follow the leads of scholars such as Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Jennifer Goodman. Cañizares-Esguerra traces the Iberian chivalric influences in English exploration narratives and argues against scholars who have read English colonial literature in isolation from earlier European texts. Similarly, Goodman argues that exploration narratives were a product of the late medieval chivalric imagination and proceeds to call Smith the "Chivalric Biographer" because of the numerous romantic influences in his texts. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Nature, Empire, and Nation: Explorations of the history of Science in the Iberian World*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Jennifer Robin Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration*, (Rochester: Boydell Press, 1998), 20.

William Garrard and Robert Norton.<sup>7</sup> He emulates the rhetorical models used in military literature, particularly the concept of the “perfect soldier,” who claimed knowledge gained both from reading books and from physical military practice. European authors of military literature developed complex writings, which were deeply engaged in the debates on the relationship between empirical and theoretical knowledge, decades prior to the English conquest of North America.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, they accompanied their emphasis on practical knowledge with an emphasis on the bodily skills necessary to produce that knowledge. Critics have failed to recognize that Smith reproduces these continental debates in his colonial writings.

I compare the figure of the soldier with that of the traveler-explorer, which has dominated scholarship on colonial American literature, to argue that by fashioning himself as a perfect soldier, Smith privileges his rhetorical authority over that of the traveler-explorer. He does so by emphasizing the superior value of the information he provides to his readers. Most scholars have read the conquest of North America in terms of colonization rather than military expedition.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, literary scholars have

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<sup>7</sup>The writers of these military texts, such as William Garrard, Thomas Smith, William Bourne, Robert Norton, were part of a growing class of writers consisting of former or practicing professional soldiers who used their experiences in, and knowledge of, the art of war to produce military texts. The texts dealt mostly with practical military knowledge such as the training of soldiers, the building of fortifications, and the use of artillery. Frank Talett, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe: 1495-1715*, (London: Routledge, 1997), 39.

<sup>8</sup> The literary history that describes the rhetoric of experience as uniquely American is partly based on the misconception that soldiers such as Smith were relatively uneducated writers. Their lack of formal education allegedly prevented them from being rhetorical sophisticated in their accounts of the New World. Thus, this lack of rhetorical sophistication forced soldiers to provide faithful and unadorned transcriptions of the colonial experience. As Nina Taunton notes, however, military literature was “profoundly rhetorical.” Nina Taunton, *1590s Drama and Militarism: Portrayals of War in Marlowe, Chapman and Shakespeare's Henry V*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), 2

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed discussion of the use of the term “colonization” in the English endeavors, see David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), which, as the title demonstrates, sees the English migration to the Americas in terms of the scattering of seeds on a new soil. Even as recently as Winter, 2011, Ken MacMillan, in “Benign and

often conflated the two figures of the traveler-explorer and the soldier.<sup>10</sup> Scholars who have read Smith's *The Generall Historie* as a text about travel and trade similar to Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588) have focused on the similarities of the two figures at the expense of the differences in their authorial styles. Some common rhetorical features exist between Smith's and Harriot's texts; however, Smith writes the body of the soldier in Virginia while Harriot effaces the body of the traveler-explorer. While the traveler-explorer's role was to simply observe and record the land and the Natives of Virginia, the soldier's role was to physically interact with the Natives of Virginia. The perfect soldier was expected to provide an account of military observation, a "true discription and full relation" of future and current battlefields.<sup>11</sup> He had to provide the information that would be of general or particular interest to his military readers, the English Captains and Generals.<sup>12</sup> Thus, when Smith emphasizes his bodily presence in Virginia, he does so because the veracity and usefulness of an account of military observation hinged on the physical presence of

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Benevolent Conquest? The Ideology of Elizabethan Atlantic Expansion Revisited" *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 9, (2011), 59-99, discusses the unsuitability of the word conquest for the English ventures in North America.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, the title of Wayne Franklin's *Discoverers, Explorers, Settlers* points to the absence of scholarly consideration of the figure of the soldier. Franklin studies what he calls "kinetic literature," the body of literature focused on characters moving across the space of North America. In this body of literature, Franklin includes Smith as well as Thomas Harriot. Franklin discusses both of these writers in his chapter "Exploratory Narrative" and does not distinguish between a soldier and an explorer. Similarly, Gordon Sayre reads the soldiers in *The Generall Historie* primarily through the lens of ethnography and travel narrative rather than the lens of discourses related to conquest. Gordon Sayre, *Les Sauvages Americains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Finally, Richard Slotkin, in *Regeneration Through Violence*, reads colonial explorers and soldiers without distinguishing between the two figures. He argues that "explorers and conquerors...tended to see the landscape of America through lenses colored by their reading of romance-epics and pastoral verse." He goes on to examine the acts of British "seamen-adventurers, soldiers, and scholars-navigators" in the context of the same myths. Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, (Oklahoma City: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 31.

<sup>11</sup> William Garrard, *The Art of Warre*, 84.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 84.

the soldier who was providing the account. By emphasizing his physical presence, he elevates the accuracy and, thus, the value of his information.

I reconsider Smith's emphasis on empirical knowledge in his representations of soldiers by building on the work of historian of science Pamela Smith. Smith re-examines the role of artisanal knowledge and the artisan's body in the production of knowledge during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>13</sup> She focuses on what she calls "artisanal literacy," a kind of non-verbal literacy which had to do with "gaining knowledge neither through reading nor writing but rather through a process of experience and labor."<sup>14</sup> Pamela Smith writes that "one of the most important components of the shift [in beliefs and practices involving nature] was that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the pursuit of natural knowledge became *active* and began to involve the body; that is, one had to observe, record, and engage bodily with nature."<sup>15</sup> My reading of John Smith and of his emphasis on empirical knowledge applies Pamela Smith's re-examination of the role of practical knowledge to the under-theorized figure of the colonial soldier in order to enhance our understanding of the literary history of this figure.

I also build upon the work of scholars, such as Jim Egan, who have seen in Smith's writings a distinctly American rhetorical strategy that produced a "potentially

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<sup>13</sup> By artisans Smith refers to craftspeople, such as sculptors and painters, who possessed practical craft knowledge transmitted through practice rather than the study of books. For more, see the Introduction to *The Body of the Artisan*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 3-30.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, *The Body of the Artisan*, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 9, 18. The sculptors, engravers, and painters that Smith examines considered the individual's "struggle with nature," for instance many years of apprenticeship, as the primary manner through which knowledge was gained. On the rise of new science, see the Introduction to Pamela Smith's *The Body of the Artisan*, specifically pages 17-20. William Eamon notes that part of the importance of studying what he calls the "maker's knowledge," or the mechanical arts, lies in the importance this body of knowledge had for the emergent middle class.

new way of authorizing the individual subject."<sup>16</sup> Egan writes that Smith's model of individual subject formation emphasized experience, unlike models employed by members of the English aristocracy. Smith, Egan continues, called upon the knowledge of the "generic subject," the knowledge that any man would accumulate under similar circumstances, to challenge the authority of the members of the aristocracy in order to detach "knowledge from rank."<sup>17</sup> While I agree with Egan that Smith's rhetorical model is unlike the ones employed by aristocratic authors, I argue that Smith does not call upon the knowledge of a generic subject but, rather, the knowledge of a soldier. Smith reproduces the rhetorical models of sixteenth-century European military writers who had already endowed the category of experience with rhetorical authority.

### **John Smith, the Professional Soldier**

In *The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captaine John Smith in Europe, Asia, Affrica, and America* (1630), John Smith describes his life prior to his travels to the New World in a manner similar to other seventeenth-century English professional soldiers, such as William Garrard and Barnabe Rich. By professional soldiers I refer to ensigns, lieutenants and captains mostly, since these were the officer positions available to soldiers coming from the middling sort, and to that relatively small part of the nobility whose only occupation was war. These non-aristocratic soldiers were members of the Elizabethan militia, and many of them were sent to fight alongside other European

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<sup>16</sup> Jim Egan, *Authorizing Experience*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 36.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

Protestant armies in the Low Countries.<sup>18</sup> They were mostly drawn from the lower strata of English society, and they were mostly minor artisans and shopkeepers, wage laborers, smallholders from the countryside, subsistence farmers, ousted tenants and casual laborers.<sup>19</sup>

Smith is described as a soldier from as early as the dedicatory poems and the introduction that preface his text. In these poems Smith is repeatedly described as a soldier, "Prou'd thy *Selfe* a *Souldier* true in all parts," a "Deare noble Captaine...who canst with skill designe the Forte...Whose sword and pen in bold, ruffe, Martiall wise."<sup>20</sup> Smith positions himself among early modern soldiers when at the end of his dedicatory epistle to the Earls of Pembroke and Lindsey he writes: "I cannot make a Monument for my self, and leave [my co-partners] unburied in the fields, whose lives begot me the title of a Souldier."<sup>21</sup> In his introduction to *The True Travels*, Smith once more fashions himself as an early modern soldier. He describes that the narrative of his travels, adventures, and observations was a product of his participation in military expeditions. Smith describes that he found himself in France, the destination of many Elizabethan professional soldiers. There "he first began to learne the life of a souldier. Peace being concluded in *France*, he went with Captaine Joseph Duxbury into the Low-countries, under whose Colours having served three of foure yeeres"<sup>22</sup> In the rest of the *True Travels* Smith describes his elevation to the rank of Captain and his subsequent role in the colonial

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<sup>18</sup> For more on the English military contingents in the Low Countries during the end of the sixteenth-century, see the Introduction to this dissertation.

<sup>19</sup> Tallett, 88.

<sup>20</sup> John Smith, "The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captaine John Smith," in *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*, ed. Philip Barbour, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 123-250; from the dedicatory poems of Tanner and Richard James, A5, A6.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, *True Travels*, A2.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, *True Travels*, 9



expeditions of the early seventeenth century. Smith's experiences and military exploits in the Low countries were directly linked to his participation in the expeditions to North America came as a direct result of his military exploits in the Low Countries. After all, Richard Hakluyt and Bartholomew Gosnold picked Smith for the Jamestown expedition after soliciting for years to employ the right person who had the military experience necessary for the conquest of America.<sup>23</sup>

Smith's interaction with Robert Norton, the author of *The Gunner* (1628), a treatise that described the “practice of Artillery” and the making of fireworks, provides another indication of Smith's self-identification as a soldier and of the influence of military literature on his texts. Norton wrote one of the dedicatory poems to “His much respected Friend Captaine John Smith” in *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624), the *Accidence for young Sea-men* (1626), and *A Sea Grammar* (1627). Smith, in his dedicatory poem in Robert Norton's *The Gunner* (1628), returned the favor:

Perfection, if it hath ever been attained,  
In Gunners Art, this Author hath it gayned,  
By Study and Experiences, and he  
The Fruite of all his Paynes hath offered Thee,  
A Present well befitting this our Age,  
When all the World is but a Martiall Stage...  
This benefite: Wee Soldiers doe imbrace  
This Rare and usefull Worke, and o're the face

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<sup>23</sup> Laura Polanyi Striker, *The Life of John Smith, English Soldier by Henry Wharton*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957).

Of all the World, let thy Fames Echo sound...

Captaine John Smith,

Hungariensis<sup>24</sup>

Smith's assertion that "wee Soldiers do imbrace" indicates his attempt to include himself in the ranks of early modern military men. Additionally, the presence of Smith's dedicatory poem in a military text shows his interest in and interaction with military writers of the period.

In addition to the content of Smith's dedication, the fact that Smith wrote a dedicatory poem in a military text unrelated to New World expeditions demonstrates once more that Smith's works should not be read solely in the context of his New World experiences and writings; rather, those works should be situated within the tradition of military writings. After all, although the New World expeditions were important for the nascent English empire, European warfare had a greater influence on the everyday life of the English at a time "[w]hen all the World [was] but a Martiall Stage." Furthermore, it is important to consider the audience that Smith addresses in his writings. He addresses *An Accidence or the path-way to experience* (1627) and *The Sea-mans Grammar and Dictionary* (1627) to "the Counsell of Warre" of England, and proceeds to explain to his readers that his texts are for those who "are desirous to learne what belongs to a Seaman."<sup>25</sup> The highly specialized language he employs in his descriptions of the various roles that one can inhabit in the military and the inclusion of "A Table of proportions for

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas Norton, *The Gunner Shewing the Whole Practice of Artillery*, 1. The cognomen "Hungariensis" comes from John Smith's adventures in Hungary against the Turks.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, *An Accidence or the Path-way to Experience* (1627), 1, 2; Smith, *The Sea-mans Grammar and Dictionary* (1627), 1.

the use of great Ordinance" show that his audience is a military audience educated in the art and language of war rather than the general public.<sup>26</sup>

### **Military Literature, Military Epistemology, and the Perfect Soldier**

John Smith produced his texts during a period that saw a dramatic rise in the writing and publication of military texts in Europe. This body of literature consisted of reprints of classical military texts, such as Caesar's *Commentaries*, Onasander's *O Strategos* (The General), Sextus Julius Frontinus' *Strategemata*, and the more popular Flavius Renatus Vegetius' *Epitoma Rei Militaris*.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, it consisted of treatises on fortifications and artillery, drill books, and descriptions of military expeditions.<sup>28</sup> The classical military texts mostly contained instructions on the organization and training of soldiers. Even though more than a millennium had passed between the original publication of these classical texts and their reprinting, their information on which physical and mental characteristics make the best soldiers was as useful to the warring armies of early modern

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<sup>26</sup> Smith, *An Accidence or the Path-way to Experience* (1627), 10.

<sup>27</sup> The importance of these ancient military texts for the military literature of the time was manifold: both Rome and the Greek states had powerful armies that were essential to the imperial ambitions of their leaders. English soldiers were aspiring to rise to that position of importance within English society. Additionally, as Tallett remarks, the status of classical military texts had been enhanced by the respect which the Renaissance encouraged for classical scholarship. (26)

<sup>28</sup> John Hale provides an example of the spreading of military literature in Europe. He describes that in Renaissance Venice there were 145 works of military literature printed. Of these, 53 were titles printed originally in Venice; 32 were editions of works first printed elsewhere; 48 were new editions or issues of works first published in Venice; three were translations of books already first published in Venice; four were new editions of translated works.<sup>28</sup> These 145 military books produced over 66 imprints, with 31 different printers responsible for the 53 original titles. See John Hale, *Renaissance War Studies* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), 227.

Europe as they had been for the classical armies.<sup>29</sup> For example, Vegetius' *Epitoma Rei Militaris* includes chapters useful to every European officer of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such as "The Selection of Recruits," "Signs of Desirable Qualities," and "The Trades Proper for New Levies."

The military texts written during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries examined similar themes as those found in classical military texts. Most of them belonged to the genre of technical writing alongside other "how-to books," or "procedure manuals," and covered topics such as farming, gardening, and animal husbandry.<sup>30</sup> Books on the military arts were written in a utilitarian style, were characterized by directness in sentence structure, content, and presentation, and used clear and precise terminology rather than adorned language.<sup>31</sup> F.S. Ferguson describes that authors wrote these texts to help individuals correctly perform the various actions of their professions. The texts included accurate directions on "how to do something, how to produce something tangible, [how to produce ]a practical result for human use or convenience."<sup>32</sup> Thomas Digges, for example, describes his emphasis on practical directions in *An Arithmeticall Militare Treatise named Stratoticos* (1579). Digges writes that his military treatise came about because he "wholy bent [himself] to reduce those Imaginative Contemplations, to sensible Practical Conclusions."<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Robert Barret describes in his text *Theorike and Practice* (1598) that his treatise was written for the practical instruction of those who

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<sup>29</sup> The rise of Humanism, with its emphasis on the Greek and Roman classics, contributed to the re-emergence of classical military literature and the rise of technical books on military arts. On the role of Humanism in the rise of technical writing, see Elizabeth Tebeaux's *Technical Writing in the Renaissance*, especially pages 10-13.

<sup>30</sup> Tebeaux, 3

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Digges, *An Arithmeticall Militare Treatise named Stratoticos*, 3.

have not yet marched to war. It includes instructions on "the perfect training of men" and chapters on the selection and training of Captains, Ensign-bearers, and Lieutenants among others.<sup>34</sup>

Writers of military texts strove to differentiate between soldiers and other artisans primarily by distinguishing between the knowledge each profession required. Most military writers described military knowledge as knowledge acquired equally through practicing the military arts and reading classical and contemporary military treatises. These same writers described artisanal knowledge as knowledge acquired solely through engagement with physical matter. The "theorike," as Robert Barret calls the theoretical study of the military arts, included reading military treatises on the most appropriate manner to train soldiers and also reading military stratagems and histories.<sup>35</sup>

William Garrard, in his text *The Art of Warre* (1591), privileges the military profession and, in the process, demonstrates the differences between the artisanal and military epistemologies. He writes that the "militarie profession being then more perfect and above all other arts, consequently it is necessarie we use in the same greater studie, and more continuall exercise then is to be used in any other art."<sup>36</sup> He then proceeds to advise the soldiers reading his text to avoid idleness when not participating in warfare: [when a soldier is forced to return to his country], then it is necessarie he fall to exercise that art, wherein he chiefly hath bene brought vp, either in merchandise, handicraft, or husbandrie, or else whatsoeuer, thereby to supply his necessities, to exercise his bodie."<sup>37</sup> Thus, Garrard demonstrates that he considers artisanal occupations as mostly

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<sup>34</sup> Robert Barret, *The Theorike and Practike of Modern Warres Discourse in Dialogue Wise*, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Barret, 199.

<sup>36</sup> William Garrard, *The Art of Warre*, 21.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

engagements of the body rather than engagement of both the mind and the body. Unlike the military profession, which requires both "continuall exercise" and "studie," artisanal professions require only physical practice since they enable a soldier to simply "exercise his bodie."

The soldier that William Garrard describes as combining both exercise and study is the figure that early modern military writers referred to as the "perfect soldier."

William Garrard provides a more detailed description of the characteristics of the perfect soldier in this description of the "Myllitarie profession" and "*the true steppes of warre, the perfect path of knowledge*":

Now therefore let no man perswade himselfe, that the severall and particular experience which belongs to a perfect good souldier, can be perfectly and duely obtained by anie other way, but by a continuall delight, exercise, and observation: for no man doth bring any worke to perfection, whereof he hath not the art: everie art doth spring of experience and knowledge, and knowledge doth arise by meanes of studie and continuall practise.<sup>38</sup>

When he describes the education of the "perfect good souldier," Garrard once more emphasizes that the perfect soldier's military knowledge is the result of both "studie" and "continuall practice." Robert Barret also describes the knowledge necessary for someone to be called a perfect soldier. Barret's texts consists of a dialogue between a Gentleman and a Captain. The two interlocutors are discussing various topics related to military training when the Captain responds to a question by the Gentleman about the perfect

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<sup>38</sup> Garrard, 21.

soldier: "Thus may you see how many good partes are requisite to a perfect souldier; not learned by hearesay, nor gayned with ease: but with care, diligence, industrie, valour, practise and continuance; and most of all perfected with learning, annexed with long exercise and use." The "learning" and "practise" of the military arts result in a perfect soldier.<sup>39</sup>

### **John Smith, the "Perfect Soldier"**

Smith, in a manner similar to other contemporary military writers, often refers to the perfect soldier. In the fifth book of *The Generall Historie* Smith argues that "if perfection [in the military arts] be so hard to be obtained, as of necessitie there must be Practice as well as Theorike."<sup>40</sup> Additionally, in *The Generall Historie* Smith fulfills the requirements of the perfect soldier by fashioning himself as possessing both experiential and theoretical military knowledge. He fashions himself as a soldier who has gained experience from the battlefields of Europe and Virginia and who has the ability to combine that experience with his knowledge of early modern and classical military authors.

Smith demonstrates his knowledge of the theoretical military arts in the manner in which he often fashions himself as a Julius Caesar figure. Caesar, who was the most

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<sup>39</sup> The figure of the perfect soldier was commonly used in military literature even in the late seventeenth century. The unknown author of the text *The Compleat Soldier or Expert Artillery-man* (1681) writes:

As long as a soldier handleth not his arms, he is no Actor, for all abilites in arts arise out of a number of actions; so that no Man can attain to a perfect knowledge of arms, till he hath with care and diligence imploy'd both his study and labour therein, and upon the foundation of Practice, raised the frame of Sound, and perfect Skill (Anonymous, 3).

<sup>40</sup> Smith, *The Generall Historie*, 282.

famous ancient military figure reclaimed by the Renaissance, was a great example of a soldier-writer and was one of the classical sources frequently referenced by early modern military authors.<sup>41</sup> Smith references Caesar in several of his texts. In the dedication to the Duchesse of Richmond and Lenox in *The Generall Historie*, Smith compares himself, albeit subtly, to Caesar when he writes:

I have deeply hazarded my selfe in doing and suffering, and why should I sticke to hazard my reputation in Recording? He that acteth two parts is the more borne withall if he come short, or fayle in one of them. Where shall we look to find a Julius Caesar, whose atchievements shine as cleare in his owne Commentaries, as they did in the field?<sup>42</sup>

The reference to Caesar's *Commentaries* this early in his text indicates the emphasis Smith places upon classical knowledge even as he is introducing his own *magnum opus* to his patron. A dedicatory poem by Edward Worseley in *The Generall Historie* also identifies Smith as a Caesar-figure: "*Like Caesar now thou writ'st what thou have done.*"<sup>43</sup> The numerous references to Caesar in his writings demonstrate to Smith's readers his knowledge of one of the most important military writers in history. He leaves no doubt that he possesses the theoretical knowledge required of a perfect soldier.

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<sup>41</sup> Caesar's *Commentaries* is not only found in Smith's texts but also mentioned in works by another famous military writer, Sir Roger Williams. In his 1590 *A Discourse on War*, he addresses "all men of Warre in generall" and refers to Caesar since "although hee was highly ambitious, notwithstanding in his *Commentaries* written by himselfe, hee imputed part of his honour unto his Lieftanants and officers." In Williams' text *The Actions of the Lowe Countries* (1618), Caesar's text occupies a prominent position when in the first two lines of the address to Sir Francis Bacon, Williams notes that he is writing this history "first to incite other men of Armes to imitate in like sort their great Master Julius Caesar, who wrote exact Commentaries...of such militarie actions as happened under his command" (1).

<sup>42</sup> Smith, *The Generall Historie*, 1.

<sup>43</sup> John Smith, "The Generall Historie of Virginia," A2, in *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*, ed. Philip Barbour, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).



Smith discusses Caesar to demonstrate his bookish knowledge and to also gesture towards his own practical military knowledge. When Smith fashions himself after Caesar, he shows to his audience that bookish knowledge is important to him both as a writer but also as a soldier who mimics Caesar's strategies. In the first line of the dedication to the Privy Council and the Council of War in *The Sea-mans Grammar and Dictionary*, Smith compares himself to Caesar the soldier-writer: “*Julius Caesar* wrote his owne Commentaries, holding it no lesse honour to write, than fight.”<sup>44</sup> In this manner Smith reminds his readers that his writings, like Caesar’s, are the product of his military experiences. Thus, he alludes to his practical military experience that he will describe later in his text and will complement his theoretical knowledge.

In addition to including references to Caesar's writings, Smith demonstrates his theoretical knowledge by including references to contemporary military treatises. In *An Accidence or the path-way to experience*, Smith directs his readers to additional military texts as a complement to his own: “for your better satisfaction, read Mr. Digs his *Pantymetria*, Mr. Smith, or Mr. Burnes Arte of gunny, or Mr. Robert Nortons expositions upon maister Digs, any of these will show you the Theoricke.”<sup>45</sup> The texts that Smith mentions are Thomas Digges' *Pantometria* (1571), Thomas Smith's *The Art of Gunnery* (1600), William Bourne's *The Art of Shooting in Great Ordnance* (1587), and Robert Norton's *Of the Art of Great Artillery* (1624). These texts were all military treatises that were widely circulated and were read by active and non-active members of Elizabeth's

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<sup>44</sup> Smith, *The Sea-mans Grammar*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Smith, *An Accidence*, 33. For more details on each of these texts, see Maurice J. D. Cockle, *A Bibliography of Military Books up to 1642*, 2nd ed. (London: Holland Press, 1957).

military. Smith employs these references to demonstrate his in-depth knowledge of the military literature of the period to his military readers.

John Smith complements his theoretical military knowledge with an emphasis on practical military knowledge acquired through physical actions and experiences. In the same manner as artisans, who gained knowledge through experience and labor, soldiers gained knowledge through their experience and actions on the battlefields of Europe and the Americas. Michel Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), argues that the body of the soldier during the early seventeenth century was "a useful and intelligible body bearing a bodily rhetoric of honor."<sup>46</sup> Foucault reads the soldier as a figure that needed to be recognized from afar; he needed to bear certain signs on the body such as "a lively alert manner, an erect head, a taut stomach, broad shoulders, long arms."<sup>47</sup> Thus, the treatment of the soldier as an individual body in an organized army, rather than as part of mediaeval mob-like armies, shifted the focus of military treatises and conduct books on the individual soldier's body and actions.

Smith draws attention to practical knowledge gained through the body by comparing himself to the Roman God Vulcan. In the dedicatory poems of *The Generall Historie* Smith is described as "Vulcan like [who] did forge a true Plantation" who "is here to Anville out a peece/ To after Ages, and eternall Fame/ That we may have the golden Jasons fleece."<sup>48</sup> The reference to Vulcan indicates the importance of physical

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<sup>46</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 179-180. With the advent of military tactics based to a great degree on precise movements of large military formations, each soldier was seen as what Foucault calls small, separate cells and organic autonomies. For more on the importance of the body in representations of soldiers, see the Introduction to this dissertation.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 179.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, *The Generall Historie*, Dedicatory poem by T.T., 46.

action as a way of knowing the world. The Romans identified Vulcan with the Greek God Hephaestus, the smith-God of artisans, craftsmen, and blacksmiths, and depicted him either working on his forge or bearing his hammer. Vulcan was the only Roman god associated with physical labor and the production of material items.<sup>49</sup> Smith's identification with Vulcan enables the English soldier to point to an epistemology inherently tied to manual labor. Additionally, the reference to Vulcan turns the production of *The Generall Historie* into an artisanal process; Smith forges the account of his experiences in North America just as an artisan forges a tool out of raw materials.

### **The Soldier, the Traveler-explorer, and Military Observation**

John Smith's *The Generall Historie* and Thomas Harriot's *The Briefe and True Report* have a number of similarities in their form and content and one significant difference in the kind of eye-witness authority they appeal to.<sup>50</sup> Both are among the earliest accounts of English presence in Virginia, both provide lists of the goods of Virginia, both provide descriptions of the Natives of Virginia, and both appeal to the authority of eye-witness testimony. However, the author of each text appeals to a different kind of eye-witness; Harriot draws emphasis away from himself while Smith draws emphasis on himself. Thus, while Harriot includes only traces of English bodies in his text, Smith includes numerous descriptions of both Native and English bodies.

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<sup>49</sup> For example, Hephaestus forged a new armor and shield for Achilles during the Trojan War.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, Facsimile edition, (New York: History Book Club, 1951). Harriot's text is an account of Harriot's stay in Virginia when he accompanied Walter Raleigh's expedition in 1584. It provides descriptions of the economic opportunities and of the people of Virginia.

Harriot fashions himself as a subject who experiences "Virginia" (the area that he calls Virginia is known today as the Outer Banks of North Carolina) through his eyes but appears to be bodily absent; he is, in a way, a self-effaced eye-witness. Julie Solomon notes that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century travel guides the "specificity of the merchant-traveler's self disappears from view to be replaced by nothing more than extensive lists of objects which the traveler-observer is instructed to note."<sup>51</sup> The traveler is "self-divested;" he has to suspend aspects of his "self-desires, values, habits, customs" in order to be able to adapt to the different cultural models and circumstances that he encounters on his journeys.<sup>52</sup> The traveler-explorer seeks to de-emphasize himself because his purpose is to observe and record the natural world. Thus, his subjectivity would only be deleterious to his project.<sup>53</sup>

Unlike Harriot, Smith fashions himself as a subject who experiences North America through his eyes and through his body. Sayre calls Smith's style "centripetal" because it places the emphasis on the body of the author.<sup>54</sup> The focus in military literature on the soldiers' body and bodily actions greatly influenced Smith's discourse and was the main reason why he writes, instead of effaces, the English bodies in Virginia. The soldier emphasizes his own bodily presence because his rhetorical authority stems from the knowledge acquired through warfare and war-related activities; his role in the English

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<sup>51</sup>Julie Solomon, "'To Know, to Fly, to Conjure:' Situating Baconian Science at the Juncture of Early Modern Modes of Reading," *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991): 513-558

<sup>52</sup> Solomon, 521.

<sup>53</sup> Gordon Sayre similarly argues that most explorers "turn the narrative and descriptive eye outward, suppressing bodily difficulties." Sayre describes the traveler-explorer's self-effacing authorial style as "centrifugal." Gordon Sayre, 115. Similarly, Ralph Bauer argues that the epistemic mercantilism of this period was characterized by the effacement of the colonial subjects as historiographic authorship was centered in the imperial metropolis.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Sayre, 115. Sayre goes on to say that Smith's authorial style was the result of the author fashioning himself according to the Native chief Powhatan, who was an imposing and important presence in Native life.

imperial project is to interact physically, and most often violently, with the Native inhabitants.

In *The Generall Historie* Smith emphasizes the knowledge he gains through his physical presence in Virginia by including in his text an account of military observation. Performing military observation was expected of soldiers who would travel to new lands that were of possible military interest. Karen Ordahl Kupperman writes that the early colonies, such as Jamestown and the earlier colony of Roanoke, were military outposts.<sup>55</sup> The English constructed them in order to prepare the ground for the arrival of larger military forces in the near future. Thus, soldiers such as Smith had to provide the necessary military information to those back in England who would plan future military operations in North America. A military observation account, though, had to be very precise in the information it provided. That precision made Smith's physical presence in Virginia at a specific historical moment a necessity.

Smith describes Virginia and its people in a manner that closely corresponds to the characteristics of a military observer that William Garrard represents in *The Art of Warre*. The descriptions are so similar that they are worth quoting at length. Garrard details the kind of information a perfect soldier should collect in a military observation:

Let him diligently observe how many houtholds and houses bée in everie towne, how many persons, how many able men for souldiers upon foote, how many for horsemen, and how many for pioners... If the Rivers and floodes bée navegable, if they ebbe or flow, if they bée easie to bée kept, and their bridges, foords, and

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<sup>55</sup> Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Settling with Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America: 1580-1640* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1980), 16.

passages be defended, where they bée weake or stronge, ebbe or déepe, the which is easie to bée knowen.<sup>56</sup>

As if responding to Garrard, Smith provides precisely those descriptions of Virginia in Book II:

The most of these rivers are inhabited by severall nations, or rather families, of the name of the rivers... In a Peninsula on the North side of this river are the English Planted in a place by them called James Towne, in honour of the Kings most excellent Maiestie...The first and next the rivers mouth are the Kecoughtans, who besides their women & children, have not past 20 fighting men. The Paspahghes (on whose land is seated James Towne, some 40 myles from the Bay) have not past 40. The river called Chickahamania neare 250. The Weanocks 100. The Arrowhatocks 30. The place called Powhatan, some 40. On the South side this river the Appamatucks have sixtie fighting men. The Qutyougcohanocks 25. The Nandsamüds 200. The Chesapeacks 100.<sup>57</sup>

Smith's description of the land and the population is not an ethnographical description of the various Native tribes surrounding the Jamestown Fort. Rather, it is an account of the number of warriors each village could raise in the event of a military conflict with the English. Smith first describes the locations of the various villages to chart the area for future military planning and then proceeds to detail the number of warriors each village would be able to raise. He focuses on the number of “fighting men” for each village and

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<sup>56</sup> Garrard, 128.

<sup>57</sup> Smith, *The Generall Historie*, 103.

provides relatively precise numbers. At the same time, because this is a military observation account, he almost completely ignores the number of women, children, and non-fighting men. Smith references women and children only to state that "besides their women & children" the Kecoughtans had twenty fighting men. Smith's account is an account of a soldier to other soldiers.

In addition to requesting the numbers of possible warriors, Garrard tells his military reader that "a thing of great importance" for a military observation is "to understand perfectly whether the people bee industrious or ydle, if warlike or labourers, if quiet or disquiet, if friendly or factious."<sup>58</sup> Smith provides descriptions of the Native people's character that once more appear to respond to Garrard's instructions:

They are very strong, of an able body and full of agilitie, able to endure to lie in the woods vnder a tree by the fire, in the worst of winter, or in the weedes and grasse, in Ambuscado in the Sommer. They are inconstant in every thing, but what feare constraineth them to keepe. Craftie, timerous, quicke of apprehension, and very ingenuous. Some are of disposition fearefull, some bold, most cautelous, all Savage. Generally covetous of Copper, Beads, and such like trash. They are soone moued to anger, and so malicious, that they seldome forget an injury: they seldome steale one from another, least their conjurers should reveale it, and so they be pursued and punished.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Garrard, 128.

<sup>59</sup> Smith, *Generall Historie*, 30.

The description of strong and able-bodied natives capable of enduring the hardships of the wilderness is information that military readers would expect. Smith is describing the military ability of a possible enemy who is able to organize "Ambuscado in the Sommer."<sup>60</sup> He represents the Natives' physical characteristics in relation to their military capabilities. He portrays more than just the Natives' hardiness; he describes their hardiness in relation to their ability to organize successful ambushes. Smith notes that the Natives of Virginia are people who "seldemoe forget an injury," which could be read as a warning and an advice to future military expeditions.<sup>61</sup>

Smith's description of the Native warriors' manner of battle is similarly formulated around informing a military audience about a potential enemy. For that purpose, he employs terms and descriptions that would be understood by an English soldier. Smith writes:

They divided themselues into two Companies, neare a hundred in a company. Either army had their Captaine. These as enemies tooke their stands a musket shot one from another; ranked themselues 15 a breast, and each ranke from another 4 or 5 yards, not in fyle, but in the opening betwixt their fyles. So the Reare could shoot as conveniently as the Front...On each flanke a Serieant, and in the Reare an Officer for Lieutenant, all duly keeping their orders, yet leaping and singing after their accustomed tune, which they onely vse in Warres. Vpon the first flight of arrowes they gaue such horrible shouts and screeches, as so many infernall hell hounds could not haue made them more terrible. When they

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 35.



had spent their arrowes, they joyned together prettily, charging and retyring, every ranke seconding other. As they got advantage they caught their enemies by the hayre of the head, and downe he came that was taken...The Monacans decreasing, the Powhatans charged them in the forme of a halfe Moone.

The description of the skirmish between two tribes of Native warriors is presented in terms often used to describe European conflicts: the armies are led by Captains, Sergeants, and Lieutenants who take their positions along the geometrical formations of the Native armies. Smith employs descriptions found in contemporary military literature to make these Native armies legible to an English military audience. His use of words such as "rank," "fyle," and "halfe Moone" imposes a geometric order on the Native warriors that reminds the reader more of European armies than of Native ones.

Lastly, Smith's descriptions of Virginia's geography and of its products once more correspond to the information requested in a military observation account. Garrard writes:

[The perfect soldier] must discerie the condition of the hilles, of the vallies, the qualitie of the confines, of the waters, of the fennes, of the myres and lakes and other thinges worthie to bée noted, and in what part of the province the ground is fertile or barraine, if abundantly it bringes foorth graine, grapes, fruites, oyles, séedes, flaxe or hempe: what store of cattell and beastes there bée, and of what sorts: If that there bée woodes, and towards what part: If therein grow wood for building or for fire.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Garrard, 128.

Smith's description of Virginia's geography provides the kind of information Garrard requested:

The mountaines are of divers natures: for at the head of the Bay the rockes are of a composition like Mill stones. Some of Marble, &c. And many peeces like Christall we found, as throwne downe by water from those mountaines.... The vesture of the earth in most places doth manifestly proue the nature of the soyle to be lusty and very rich. The colour of the earth we found in diverse places, resembleth bole Armoniac, terra sigillata, and Lemnia, Fullers earth, Marle, and divers other such appearances. But generally for the most part it is a blacke sandy mould, in some places a fat slimy clay, in other places a very barren gravell. But the best ground is knowne by the vesture it beareth, as by the greatnesse of trees, or abundance of weeds, &c.<sup>63</sup>

In a manner similar to the account of the number of Native warriors, the descriptions of the land provide a geographical analysis of Virginia that will serve those in England who are considering appropriate locations for further military outposts.

The use of both the past and present tenses in Smith's account of Virginia is also significant in his attempt to provide a military observation account. Smith often interrupts descriptions of Virginia written in the ethnographic present with references to his time in Virginia. He describes the location of various Virginian landmarks: "From the North side is the river of Chickahamania, the backe river of James Towne; another by the Cedar Isle, where we lived ten weekes vpon Oysters, then a convenient harbour for Fisher boats at

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<sup>63</sup> Smith, *The Generall Historie*, 45.

Kecoughtan...it makes that place very pleasant to inhabit."<sup>64</sup> While the description of the land is in the ethnographic present and appears to describe an unchanged chronological moment, Smith's "we lived" interrupts this rhetorical mode by introducing the past tense. When later in the text Smith provides a short description of the inhabitants of Virginia, he writes that "Where this river is divided the Country is called Pamaunkee, and nourisheth neare 300 able men. About 25 myles lower on the North side of this river is Werawocomoco, where their great King inhabited when I was delivered him prisoner."<sup>65</sup> His brief uses of the past tense indicate to his reader that the account he is providing is of Virginia *after* the arrival of the English. Thus, Smith sets the details he is providing at a specific moment in time. For military observation to be of any value, the information provided by the writer needs to be specific and current. Otherwise, the value of this information for the planning of any military expedition would be questioned.

Smith provides an account of military observation in Virginia partly to construct his rhetorical authority as a soldier whose presence and actions in a foreign land have provided him with the knowledge he has recorded in his text. Smith writes in his dedicatory letter to the Duchess of Richmond that "I am no Compiler by hearsay, but have beene a reall Actor...[that] have deeply hazarded my selfe in doing and suffering."<sup>66</sup> He sets himself apart from other contemporary writers by emphasizing the difference between recording knowledge collected through the writer's physical presence and

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 103.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, *Generall Historie*, iii.

knowledge collected through hearsay.<sup>67</sup> Thus, he constructs a temporal relation between his actions and the act of writing that situates the writer in Virginia at the specific temporal moment he has chosen to describe. The experiential information that Smith describes is the result of his physical presence in Virginia; thus, that physical presence both precedes and authorizes his act of writing.

Returning to Harriot, the frontispiece of *The Briefe and True Report* portrays only Native bodies and depicts a land devoid of English bodies. Harriot's frontispiece (figure 1) consists of five Native figures — ranging from a Native woman to a Native male warrior — which frame the title of Harriot's text. English bodies, soldiers or otherwise, are absent. The presence solely of Native bodies indicates a conscious effort by the engraver Theodor de Bry to provide an image of a virgin land unspoiled by English bodies. Unlike Harriot's frontispiece, the *Generall Historie's* frontispiece emphasizes the presence of English bodies in Virginia. Smith's frontispiece (figure 2) includes both English and Native bodies and presents Virginia as a space already occupied by English bodies. The three images of past and present monarchs - Queen Elizabeth I, King James I, and Prince Charles - dominate the top part of the frontispiece. Below them, English ships are approaching the coast of Virginia. The coast is dotted with English structures that signal the already-established presence of the English on the continent. Framing the title of the text are two coats of arms: the Company of Virginia, and the Council of New England. The supporters on each side of the shield on the Virginia coat of arms are two fully clad and armed English knights. The presence of armed knights at the center of the

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<sup>67</sup> Samuel Purchas in his dedicatory poem to *The Generall Historie* distinguishes between the different types of knowledge recorded in a manner similar to Smith when he writes that Smith "can teach Sword-Grammer, Can Pens of Pikes, Armes t' Arts," 7.

engraving indicate to the reader the important role of military men in the conquest of Virginia.

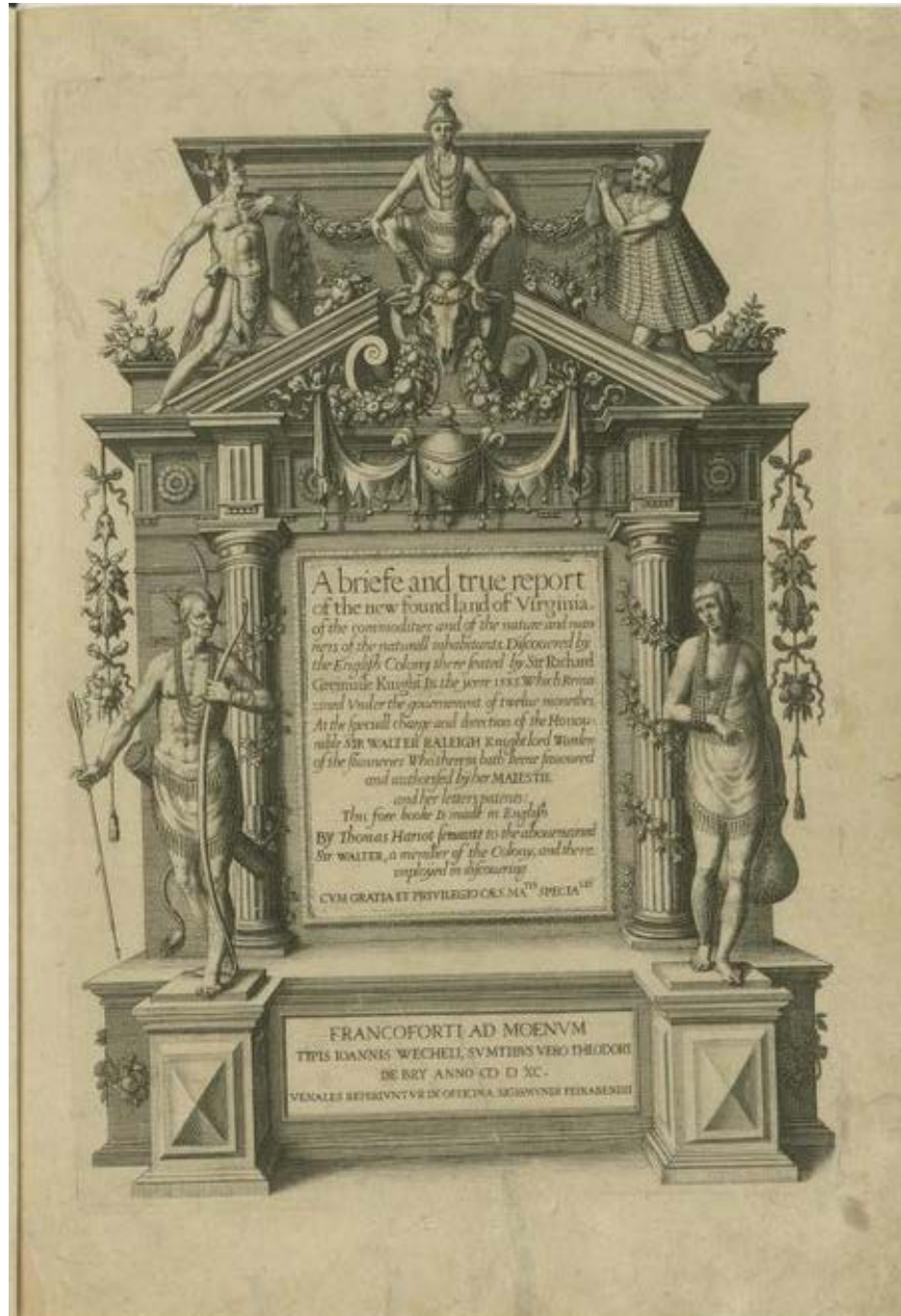


Figure 1



Figure 2

Smith's emphasis on the author's physical presence becomes even more apparent when we compare two well-known engravings from Smith's and Harriot's texts. One engraving in *The Generall Historie* depicts the moment of Smith's capture by Native warriors. It portrays the English Captain surrounded by Native warriors armed with bows and clubs (figure 3). This engraving is an altered version of an engraving in Harriot's text. Unlike John Bard's engraving, De Bry's engraving includes only Native men and women. The differences between the two engravings illustrate the different authorial rhetoric that Smith and Harriot employ. While Smith's body occupies the center of the engraving, Harriot's body is absent from the engraving.



Figure 3





Figure 4

The differing authorial rhetorics of Smith and Harriot are apparent in the rest of the engravings of *The Generall Historie* and *The Briefe and True Report*. The rest of Bard's engravings are similar to the engraving of Smith's capture and depict both English soldiers and Native warriors. In them Bard depicts Smith either fighting a Native chief in

single combat or fighting in the foreground while a pitched battle between Natives and English occurs in the background. Unlike Bard's engravings, however, De Bry's engravings are solely of Natives existing in a world that appears to be devoid of any English bodies.<sup>68</sup> Both the foregrounds and backgrounds of the numerous engravings in Harriot's text are occupied solely by Native bodies.

The differing authorial rhetoric extend to the textual descriptions as well. Smith describes numerous specific instances of military clashes between the English and the Natives. In one instance he describes a skirmish:

[the English faced] sixtie of saventie of [the natives], some blacke, some red, some white, some party-coloured, came in a square order, with their Okee (which was an Idoll made of skinnes...) borne before them: and in this manner being well armed, with Clubs, Targets, Bowes and Arrowes, they charged the English, that so kindly received them with their muskets loaden with Pistoll shot, that downe fell their God, and divers lay sprauling on the ground; the rest fled againe to the woods.<sup>69</sup>

Smith provides details about the Native warriors — their number, formation, and weaponry — as well as details about the English reaction to the attack. By doing so, Smith places the body of the English soldier firmly in the center of his account. Unlike Smith, Harriot provides only faint traces of the bodies of the English traveler-explorers in his text. There is no corporeality in the descriptions of the English. Instead, he represents

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<sup>68</sup> The only two moments of English presence in Harriot's text are the first engraving, in which English boats are approaching Virginia but not having landed yet, and the "A chieff Ladye of Pomeiooc" engraving, in which a child holds English toys.

<sup>69</sup> Smith, *Generall Historie*, 45.

the English as invisible and god-like. Harriot describes the fear the Natives had of the English:

some people could not tell whether to think vs gods or men, and the rather because that all the space of their sicknesse, there was no man of ours knowne to die, or that was specially sicke...Some therefore were of opinion that wee were not borne of women, and therefore not mortall, but that wee were men of an old generation many yeers past then risen againe to immortalitie.<sup>70</sup>

The emphasis on immortality and on the English "not borne of women" shows the disappearance of the body of the traveler-explorer from the text. Immortality and god-like nature are both states that signify the absence of a human body that can feel or die. Invisibility is once more central to the description of the English at a later moment in the text: "[the English] that were immediatly to come after vs [the Natives] imagined to be in the aire, yet inuisible & without bodies."<sup>71</sup> Finally, Harriot writes that the Natives accused the English of killing the Natives by " shooting inuisible bullets into them."<sup>72</sup>

The differences between the figure of the soldier and the traveler-explorer reveal the need for a reconsideration of the earliest texts of colonial American literature. When read in the context of military literature and in relation to the rhetorical models often employed in representations of soldiers, Smith's text reads as very different from Harriot. Thus, these differences force a reconsideration of the classification of colonial literature so as scholars do not read as identical such different figures as the soldier and the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 27

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 27

traveler-explorer. Additionally, reading the figure of the soldier in the context of military literature enables scholars to avoid exceptionalist readings of colonial literature and complicates the view of a peaceful colonization of North America. In the next chapter I will shift focus from Virginia to New England and the representations of Puritan warriors during King Philip's War. The debates around the figure of the temporal warrior in Puritan sermons bear many similarities to the debates around the figure of the perfect soldier. However, Puritan writers did not debate the relationship of theoretical and bodily knowledge; rather, they debated the relationship and role of the spiritual warrior and the temporal warrior.

*Hence it is no ways unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier,*  
not only a Spiritual Souldier but in the true proper sense of the letter.

Samuel Nowell, *Abraham in Arms* (1678)

## **Chapter Two: The Temporal Soldier in Samuel Nowell's *Abraham in Arms* (1678)**

When the Puritan preacher Samuel Nowell stood before the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts on June 3rd, 1678, to deliver his Election Day sermon *Abraham in Arms*, the Bay colony had just emerged from the devastations of King Philip's War (1675-1678).<sup>1</sup> The Election Day sermon was an annual tradition that had begun in 1659 and took place at the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts in

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Nowell, *Abraham in Arms; or the First Religious General with his Army Engaging in a War*, (Boston: John Foster, 1678). After the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675, numerous English towns were devastated: in July, Middleborough, Dartmouth, Plymouth, and Mendon were attacked, in August Brookfield was attacked, in October, Springfield, Hatfield, and Northampton, and many more during the winter and summer. By the time King Philip was shot to death in August 1676, the event that marked the end of major combat in the war, twenty-five English towns, which made up more than half of all the colonial settlements in New England, had been destroyed. The Algonquians who fought the English had an even worse fate: thousands of men, women, and children were killed while many others died of starvation, disease, or were sold into slavery. The Natives who fought against the colonists were a network of local tribes, which banded together under the leadership of King Philip. This was an American war that not only proved to be the most deadly one up to that date and threatened the very existence of the colonies but also marked the decline of English attempts to convert and educate the Indians; thus, in a way, King Philip's War, as Jill Lepore argues, was as an important moment in colonial history when English and Native identities became more rigid and more distinct than earlier. The impact of this conflict on both Native and colonial cultures cannot be overstated; this short war resulted in greater casualties in proportion to the population than any other war in American history with one in ten adults perishing. By the end of the conflict, the colonists occupied the least amount of land since the first years of the colonies' founding but also eradicated any substantial military resistance in the American Northeast. On the history of King Philip's War, see Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*, (New York: Random House, 1999), Introduction, ix-xxiv.

front of the officers and the members of the militia.<sup>2</sup> In his sermon, Nowell celebrates the victory of the colonial troops over King Philip's Native warriors and emphasizes the importance of the temporal warrior, the literal soldier who was trained in worldly combat and fought on the battlefield against Native warriors. While Nowell discusses both the spiritual soldier, the metaphorical soldier who was a providential instrument and whose armor was his faith, and the temporal soldier, he notes that the temporal soldier's individual military skills and expertise in the art of war led to Puritan victory.

In this chapter I turn my attention to the figure of the temporal soldier as it was described primarily in Samuel Nowell's sermon *Abraham in Arms* and also in other seventeenth-century English and colonial sermons by William Gouge and John Richardson. I argue that the presence of the figure of the temporal warrior in seventeenth-century Puritan literature challenges the familiar narratives of secularization and the rise of modernity that describe the Puritans as transitioning from being religious to being secular and modern. Scholars such as Perry Miller, and, more recently, Marie Ahearn and Harry Stout constructed a historical arc of Puritan cultural ideas and writings that, as Michael Kauffman argues, progressed from "befuddled" theological views of the world to the "sharp-eyed clarity of secular humanism's ability to [read] the world through rational human thought."<sup>3</sup> They saw in Puritan literature and culture a gradual declining of religiosity, which has been often called declension. The traditional narrative of New

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<sup>2</sup> Although election day sermons were preached from the inception of the Artillery Company, they were not preached regularly until 1659. On the origins, context, and delivery of militia sermons, see Babette May Levy *Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History*, (Madison: Russell & Russell, 1967), 87; Arthur Buffington "The Puritan View of War," *Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Publications*, 28 (1930-33), 67-86; Harold D. Mixon, "Boston's Artillery Election Sermons and the American Revolution," *Speech Monographs* 34 (2009): 43-50.

<sup>3</sup> Wilson Brissett, "Jonathan Edwards, Continuity and Secularism," *Early American Literature* 47 (2012): 171-182.

England's declension depicts a growing religious apathy, which is marked by the gradual decline of church membership, and an eventual transition to capitalism and modernity.<sup>4</sup>

The presence of the temporal soldier in Puritan writings also indicates the different hermeneutical frameworks employed by the members of the Artillery Company and by the Puritan magistrates and, more generally, the tensions within Puritanism. Perry Miller reminds us that Puritanism was not just a religious creed but also a program for society. It sought to establish a form of civil and ecclesiastical government under the rule of law and scripture.<sup>5</sup> Deborah Madsen similarly argues that the typological rhetoric of New England ministers was used for "hegemonic purposes in order to claim, if not preserve, a share of political power in evolving colonial government."<sup>6</sup> Puritan authorities, Madsen continues, saw in typological rhetoric a linkage of the personal to the cultural or collective. This linkage led to a kind of "hermeneutical assimilation" where the individual interests were subsumed by the collective interests.<sup>7</sup> I argue that Nowell's emphasis on the figure of the temporal soldier is an attempt to shift interpretive authority away from the colonial authorities and towards the mercantile and military groups through an emphasis on the literal rather than providential nature of the conflict.<sup>8</sup> Despite

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<sup>4</sup>On the idea of declension, see Perry Miller, *From Colony to Province*; Robert G. Pope "New England versus the New England Mind: The Myth of Declension," *Journal of Social History* 3 (1969): 95-108; and Michelle Burnham, *Folded Selves: Colonial New England Writing in the World System*, (Dartmouth: Dartmouth College Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Perry Miller, "Jonathan Edwards to Emerson," *The New England Quarterly* 13 (1940):589-617, 598.

<sup>6</sup>Deborah Madsen, "The Sword and the Scroll: The Power of Rhetoric in Colonial England," *American Studies* 33 (1992):45- 61,45.

<sup>7</sup> Bryce Traister, "Mary Rowlandson and the Invention of the Secular," *Early American Literature* 2 (2007): 323-354, 350.

<sup>8</sup>Jim Egan describes that as the seventeenth century wore on, the consensus over how to interpret God's providence in New England slowly deteriorated. This period saw the increasing popularity of interpretations that were less about God's providential plans and more about the individual's plans. Jim Egan, *Authorizing Experience: Refigurations of the Body Politic in Seventeenth-century New England Writing*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999), 97.

giving thanks to God in his sermon, Nowell primarily emphasizes that the war was not a providential event, but rather a military event that had secular causes and was won through secular means. For Nowell, the conflict's end depended on the actions of soldiers rather than on the collective repentance and humiliation of the colonists. While Increase Mather describes that the fighting took place in a metaphorical manner in the town centers and in churches with prayers and humiliation as weapons, Nowell describes that the fighting took place in a literal manner at the colonial periphery with swords and guns as weapons.

Scholars who have read Nowell's sermon through the critical lens of secularization see his emphasis on the temporal soldier as evidence of the Puritan turn towards a more secular discourse.<sup>9</sup> Marie Ahearn argues that the violence of King Philip's War caused ministers to concentrate upon "worldly strife."<sup>10</sup> Harry Stout notes that the genre of the sermon was especially transformed by King Philip's War. Until this war, martial terminology was only employed metaphorically in sermons as an illustration of "the church militant," for whom the soul was the battlefield and Satan was the enemy. However, after 1675 the battleground expanded to include worldly enemies, and the colonists learned from experience that they should be armed not only spiritually but also

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 94. Jim Egan describes these scholars' approaches as ranging from reading the war as an "irresistible force" that helped launch the process of Americanization in the latter half of the seventeenth century (Perry Miller); reading the war as a significant moment in the production of the myths at the core of American experience (Richard Slotkin); or reading the war as a moment when the colonists dealt with the "hard facts" of experience which, subsequently, greatly affected literary forms such as the jeremiad (Sacvan Bercovitch). Egan, 6-8.

<sup>10</sup> Marie Ahearn, *The Rhetoric of War: Training Day, the Militia, and the Military Sermon*, (Westport: Praeger, 1989), 56. Ahearn goes on to note that the transformation of the spelling of the word "soldier" – from "souldier" before 1710 to "soldier" – is a sign of the removal of the religious connotations from the word and, thus, its secularization.



literally. This transformation in the use of martial terminology, Stout continues, was dramatically reflected in colonial sermons of the period.<sup>11</sup>

Reading the figure of the temporal soldier in the context of trans-Atlantic military literature and sermons about the military shows that the figure of the temporal soldier was an important one in English sermons decades prior to King Philip's War and influenced contemporaneous colonial sermons because of the bonds between the military on both sides of the Atlantic. Specifically, the emphasis on the figure of the temporal warrior seen in Nowell's sermon was a common rhetorical feature of earlier military sermons delivered at The Honorable Artillery Company of London.<sup>12</sup> Ministers who delivered sermons at the Honorable Artillery Company of London more than half a century before King Philip's War, such as William Gouge, as well as many military writers of the period, distinguished between the figures of the temporal and the spiritual soldier. They also emphasized the importance of secular soldier's individual military experience and training in the welfare and protection of the nation.<sup>13</sup> My reading, thus, challenges the argument that the emergence of the temporal soldier in American Puritan writing was a result of the violence of King Philip's War and evidence of the secularization of Puritan

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<sup>11</sup> Harry Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 82. Jill Lepore similarly argues that because the violence of King Philip's War was un-imaginable to colonists, the accounts of eye- and ear-witnesses assumed new importance. Words alone, Lepore continues, no longer qualified as evidence and only physical damage and maimed bodies could be believed. Although Lepore emphasizes the importance that physical bodies assumed in the period of the conflict – through their presence during the events or as evidence of the events – she argues that this emphasis was the result of violent warfare.

<sup>12</sup> The Artillery Company of London and the Artillery Company of Massachusetts had strong ties and shared many members. On the relationship between the two Companies, see T. H. Bren, "The Case of the Covenanted Militia in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts," *Past and Present* 57 (1972):74-96.

<sup>13</sup> The figure of the temporal warrior is directly tied to early modern and colonial military discourse and the discourse's emphasis on the body of the soldier and the knowledge a soldier could gain through the practice of war and military training. On the emphasis on experience in the military literature of this period, see the Introduction and Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

discourse.<sup>14</sup> Rather, the existence of the figure of the temporal soldier in Puritan writings prior to the war shows that a secular military discourse was already a part of Puritan literature.

My reading of the figure of the temporal soldier follows the work of scholars such as Michael Kauffman and Talal Asad who have challenged the notion of a “supersessionary narrative”<sup>15</sup> of secularization as delineated by sociologist Max Weber and political philosopher Charles Taylor; instead, Kauffman and Asad have argued that the notions of the secular and the religious were neither continuous with each other nor defined by a break from one another.<sup>16</sup> The two discourses co-existed, and their relation cannot be adequately described as one gradually replacing the other.<sup>17</sup> My focus on the secular aspects of Puritan culture also builds on the work of scholars such as Michelle Burnham who have expanded the examination of literary influences on Puritan writings beyond Calvinist hermeneutics. Burnham argues that the lack of scholarly attention on secular issues in Puritan literature is mainly due to the difficulty most scholars and students of seventeenth-century New England literature have in imagining the Puritan occupying any space other than a church.<sup>18</sup> This chapter looks at Puritan literature when

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<sup>14</sup> Though trans-Atlantic readings of Puritan literature and culture are not new in colonial American scholarship, there has been little attention paid to the trans-Atlantic influences on the military discourses and culture of North America in general and of Massachusetts Bay specifically.

<sup>15</sup> Michael W. Kaufmann, "Post-Secular Puritans: Recent Retrials of Anne Hutchinson," *Early American Literature* 35,(2010):31-59, 33. By supersessionary narrative Kauffman describes that, in simple terms, “things were once more religious but now are more secular, or that ideas that were originally religious have found secular forms.” (33).

<sup>16</sup>Kauffman, 33; Talal Asad *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

<sup>17</sup>On Post-secularism, see Ingolf Dalferth "Post Secular Society: Christianity and the Dialectics of the Secular" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78 (2010): 317-345, and Bryce Traister, "Mary Rowlandson and the Invention of the Secular," *Early American Literature* 42 (2007): 323-354.

<sup>18</sup> Burnham, 8. Burnham argues that the conventional image of Puritans as engaged mostly with religious and intellectual issues is the result of which archives we read and how we read them. See also Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century*, (Cambridge: Harvard College, 1955).

it dealt with warfare, which took place at the space of the colonial periphery rather than the space of the church. Studying the role of the figure of the temporal soldier, then, enables a deeper examination of the tensions within Puritan doctrines and Puritan culture and opens up gateways for a more expansive examination of Puritanism in colonial America.

### **The Colonial Militia and the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts**

The Massachusetts militia, which consisted of trainbands that included most males over sixteen, was an important institution during the formative years of the Massachusetts Bay colony.<sup>19</sup> To better understand the institution's roots, one has to look across the Atlantic to the English militia as it was organized during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The lack of a standing army, in combination with the constant threat from the Spanish Crown, forced Queen Elizabeth to reorganize the existing militia into a more organized military body. The military force consisted of citizen-soldiers and, thus, had a great impact on the lives of males from the middling sort and, to a lesser degree, from the poor.<sup>20</sup> During the reign of James I, Elizabeth's successor, the militia fell into relative disarray. When Charles I came to the throne in 1625, he reformed the militia system and turned it into a more capable fighting force. Charles I ordered the modernization of the militia weaponry,

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<sup>19</sup> On the trained bands, see the Introduction to Kyle Zelner's *A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militia during King Philip's War*, (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1-15.

<sup>20</sup> The English Militia were organized in 1558 to counter Spanish aggression and continued to play an important part in English culture for more than a century. On the militia, see Lindsay Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia, 1558-1683*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967).

and in his attempts to increase the discipline of its members, he increased their unpopularity when, for instance, he forced the militia's Puritan members to train on the Sabbath.<sup>21</sup>

When the Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic in 1620, they brought along the military traditions of the English militia. Edward Winslow, in his account of the first Thanksgiving Day in 1621, notes that military drills were a big part of the celebrations of harvest and the giving of thanks to God. "Amongst other recreations," Winslow writes, "we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us."<sup>22</sup> The martial show mainly consisted of Captain Miles Standish commanding a small band of Pilgrim militia, who assembled in various formations and fired their matchlock rifles. For the Pilgrims, Marie Ahearn notes, the martial show during that Thanksgiving Day was a crucial moment in colonial life because it provided a link with their old English home by invoking a heritage of training days in England. The sight of neighbors and family members training in the military arts was emblematic of every Englishman's willingness to defend England from its many enemies. Demonstrations such as this, Ahearn continues, were not only a reminder of England but also proof of the Puritans' determination to build a "new England in the wilderness" through the force of arms if necessary.<sup>23</sup>

Even though most male colonists participated in the colonial militia, their numbers were too low and their training insufficient to deter and defeat the Natives threatening the colonies; thus, the colonial authorities decided they needed a better

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<sup>21</sup>Louise Breen, "The Case of the Covenanted Militia in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts," *Past and Present* 57 (1972): 74-96, 79.

<sup>22</sup> Ahearn, 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 1.

organized military. As most Puritan colonists were inexperienced in the military arts, they were forced to seek the aid of professional soldiers. Thus, the colonial authorities hired, at a considerable cost, professional soldiers such as Captain John Underhill, Captain Daniel Patrick, and Captain Miles Standish to train the Puritan militia in the arts of war.

The need for better military organization and training finally led in February 1638 to the founding of the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, which was modeled after the Artillery Company of London. The Massachusetts Company was founded in response to a petition by the colony's military officers. The officers petitioned the General Court for permission to constitute a private military company that would better prepare the colonies against attacks from either Native or European forces. Many of the officers who petitioned had previously been affiliated with England's Artillery Company.<sup>24</sup> The Massachusetts Artillery Company's members came mostly from the mercantile classes and combined their military activities with trans-Atlantic economic activities. They would often trade with the various Native tribes neighboring the colony as well as with merchants of other nationalities. Most of the professional soldiers of the

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<sup>24</sup>Anthony Highmore, *The History of the Honourable Artillery Company of the City of London*, (London: 1804), 51. The Artillery Company of London was founded in 1537 by King Henry VIII with the purpose of maintaining archery and artillery within the realm of England. The historical account of the founding of the Massachusetts Artillery Company published in 1914 by the Military Museum and Library Committee begins with: "In the year 1537 King Henry the VIII granted a charter to the Honourable Artillery Company of London; a century later some members of that Company, who had settled in Boston and vicinity, wishing to organize a military company here, similar to the one in England, presented a petition to Governor Winthrop asking for a charter...The Company was organized on the first Monday in June, 1638, by the election of Robert Keayne, Captain, Daniel Howe, Lieutenant, and Joseph Weld, Ensign." Military Museum and Library Committee, *Historical Sketch of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts*, (Boston: AHAC, 1914), 3. On the relationship between the members of the two artillery companies, see Lindsay Oliver and John Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia, 1558-1638*, (New York: Routledge & K. Paul, 1967), 215-16, 263-69.

Company, such as Underhill and Standish, had previously fought in the Low Countries and had extensive practice in the military arts.<sup>25</sup>

The General Court, which was the governing body of the Massachusetts Bay colony, accepted the soldiers' petition and proceeded to provide a relative degree of independence to the company that shows the importance of the Company to the colony as a whole. The charter states:

Whereas divers Gentlemen and others, out of their care of the publick weal and safety, by the advancement of the military art, and exercise of arms, have desired to have license of the Court to join themselves in one Company, and to have the liberty to exercise themselves... The first Monday in every month is appointed for their meeting and exercise; and to the end that they may not be hindered from coming together, we do hereby order, that no other training in the particular towns, nor other ordinary town meetings, shall be appointed on that day...They have liberty and power to make orders amongst themselves, for the better managing their military affairs...[they] have liberty ... to assemble themselves for their military exercises, in any town within this jurisdiction, at their own pleasure.<sup>26</sup>

The charter indicates the privileged position of the Company and of the Company's members in the hierarchy of the colony; the Company's training took precedent over all

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<sup>25</sup> On early modern professional soldiers, see the Introduction to this dissertation.

<sup>26</sup> Highmore, 2

other town meetings, and the entire space of the colony was designated as the Company's training ground. More importantly, the charter focuses on secular matters and lacks references to the spirituality of the Company's members as it states that the Company's sole responsibility was to advance the military arts in the colonies through "training" and "exercise."<sup>27</sup> However, despite the privileged position of the Company, the heterodox beliefs of many of the Company's members greatly worried the colonial authorities.

### **Heterodoxy and the Artillery Company**

Even though the colonial authorities needed the professional soldiers for the defense of the colony, Winthrop and the other magistrates were alarmed by the relationship between the Company's members and heterodox groups, primarily the Antinomians.<sup>28</sup> The members of the Artillery Company, much like most of the Antinomians, came from the mercantile class and often clashed with the magistrates, most of whom were members of the gentry.<sup>29</sup> The Antinomians were a group whose religious beliefs and economic ideologies clashed with the orthodoxy of the Puritan magistrates. The main difference in ideologies was that the Antinomians supported a covenant of grace that emphasized an

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<sup>27</sup> The statement that they have "liberty and power to make orders amongst themselves" also indicates a degree of autonomy that challenges the oft-told narrative of the colony as a rigid theocracy.

<sup>28</sup> Louise Breen notes that the Company's members sided overwhelmingly with Anne Hutchinson, the woman who became the face of the Antinomian movement in New England, during the Antinomian Crisis of 1636-38. Louise Breen, "Religious Radicalism in the Puritan Officer Corps: Heterodoxy, the Artillery Company, and Cultural Integration in Seventeenth-Century Boston," *The New England Quarterly* 68 (1995): 3-43, 7.

<sup>29</sup> An example of the Company's close relations with the Antinomians was the decision of its members to meet for the first time on the one-year anniversary of Anne Hutchinson's exile from the Bay Colony. Breen, 6. As a result of the close contacts between the two groups, the magistrates decided to disarm and banish one quarter of the individuals who had signed the petition for the Company's founding because they were judged guilty of sedition.

internal and invisible experience. Anne Hutchinson, the most famous of the Antinomians, challenged the Puritan orthodoxy's doctrine that there was a single relationship between the visible and the invisible world; she dismissed visible markers of salvation and located religious authority in an invisible experience. Thus, she supported the notion that the realm of words was divorced from the realm of grace.<sup>30</sup> Winthrop, during Hutchinson's trial, described the public unruliness that the Antinomian beliefs engendered: "the ground work of her revelations is the immediate revelation of the spirit and not by the ministry of the word, and that is the means by which she hath very much abused the country that they shall look for revelations and are not bound to the ministry of the word."<sup>31</sup> If the members of the colony sought individual revelations, then the colony's ministry would become irrelevant as a ruling authority.

The Puritan authorities were alarmed by the ministers and writers who in their writings emphasized the temporal soldier because it indicated that, like the Antinomians, those writers supported the notion of a visible world divorced from the invisible world. If the temporal soldier was not the visible manifestation of the spiritual soldier, then the "ministry of the word" did not bind the actions of the soldiers of the colony; instead, the soldiers would seek individual revelations. This fear was partly why the magistrates were concerned about erecting a "standing authority of military men [who] ... might easily, in time, overthrow the civil power."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Burnham, 98, 102. On the Antinomian Crisis, see David D. Hall, ed., *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-38: A Documentary History*, (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1990).

<sup>31</sup> Hall, 341-342.

<sup>32</sup> John Winthrop, *Winthrop's Journal*, "History of New England, 1630-1649, *Original Narratives of Early American History*, ed. James K. Hosmer, (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1908), 1:260.



Additionally, the colonial authorities saw the members of the Artillery Company, as well as the Antinomians, as self-aggrandizing and self-centered promoters of individual fulfillment rather than communal values.<sup>33</sup> The notions of military honor and of the soldiers' desire for material rewards, as expressed by authors such as Francis Markham, emphasize individual over collective interest and, thus, threatened the colonial authorities. Breen notes that the concept of honor, as it had evolved in England since medieval times, privileged the individual over the collective and was often anti-authoritarian because it centered around the promotion of the self over the promotion of the community.<sup>34</sup> Markham, in *Five Decades of Epistles of Warre* (1622), writes:

if any Raunge of persons in the world deserue true honour, it must needs be the Souldier; for as his disposition holdeth the neerest alliance to it, so doth his merrits by an infallible interest, iustly and truely claime it...Honor is the Souldiers Mistris, and her commandements are so sacred that it were high Treason to God, to nature and good manners to violate her least Statute.<sup>35</sup>

For Markham, a soldier's honor is sacred and violating it is tantamount to violating God's will. That honor partly stems from the crucial role soldiers have had in biblical and secular history. Markham describes that "[Moses] being ordered himself by God, ordered all his martiall affaires according to Gods appoyntment ... God vouchsafed to speak with him face to face, to direct him in all his designes, to give blessinges to all his

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<sup>33</sup> Breen, 10

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 34-35.

<sup>35</sup> Francis Markham, *Five Decades of Epistles of Warre*, (London: Augustine Matthewes, 1622), 14.

proceedings."<sup>36</sup> He emphasizes the direct communication that a soldier could have with God and, thus, creates a biblical precedent for the soldiers' anti-authoritarian views. He goes on to say that "the last but not least Reward of a Souldier is *Wealth* or temporall Goods; which howsoever in some measure they may be dispised, yet are they so necessary for our frailtie; & such a defence against the tempests of War, that without them a Souldier can neither performe nor continue the duties of his Calling."<sup>37</sup> Markham links the direct communication of a soldier with God with "temporal" rewards, and, thus, situates warfare within the temporal rather than the spiritual realm.

The notion of the soldier as an individual seeking personal, secular gain through his martial acts was in stark contrast to the notion of a soldier as a providential tool in God's plan for the community. Thus, it was a source of great anxiety for the colonial authorities. John Wheelwright, the Puritan clergyman who had the support of many members of the Company and many Antinomians, and who was eventually banished from the colony in 1637 for contesting the authority of the magistrates, showed in his writings the heterodox beliefs that so worried Winthrop and the colonial authorities. In his *Fast-Day Sermon* (1637), Wheelwright writes that Christ does not hesitate to challenge "those that did oppose the wayes of grace;" thus, inspired individuals should not hesitate to cause even "combustions in church and commonwealth."<sup>38</sup> "It is

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 22. The anonymous author of *A Myrroure for English Souldiers* states in a manner similar to Markham that "the want of money makes Souldiers loose theyr courage." Anon, *A Myrroure for English Souldiers*, (London: 1595), 3.

<sup>38</sup> John Wheelwright, "Fast Day Sermon," *John Wheelwright: His Writings, Including his Fast-Day Sermon*, (Boston, 1876), 153-180, 169, 166-167.

impossible," Wheelwright continues, "to hold out the truth of God with external peace and quietnes."<sup>39</sup>

The Artillery Company, in time, became the gateway through which officers, after an often insincere recantation of what the authorities considered as heterodox beliefs, rejoined the colony.<sup>40</sup> Afraid of the heterodoxy of the Company, the colonial authorities decided to remove the professional soldiers from positions of military leadership and replace them with colonists who would be elected by the members of the church. The professional soldiers resisted this move by the colonial authorities. Underwood's reaction to this move reveals the tensions between the colonial authorities and the professional soldiers of the Company; Underwood complained that the appointment of "a Captaine, Lieutenant, and Ensigne...after such a manner never was heard of in any Schoole of warre; nor in no Kingedome under heaven."<sup>41</sup>

### **William Gouge's Spiritual and Temporal Soldiers**

William Gouge was born in Middlesex, England, in 1575 and became a minister whose strictness and rigid self-discipline earned him the name of "Arch-Puritan."<sup>42</sup> His pulpit became the most celebrated in London, and in 1615 he published the very popular *The Whole-armor of God*, which reached a sixth edition by 1636. In *The Whole-armor of God* Gouge describes his attempts to furnish Christ's soldiers with a "complete armour" in

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 166.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>41</sup> *Winthrop Papers*, iii, 503-4.

<sup>42</sup> "William Gouge," Oxford National Biography Database. <[www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com)>. Aug. 15, 2012.

order to provide them with "sufficient defence" against their spiritual enemies.<sup>43</sup> The figure of "Christ's soldier" originated in the works of Sulpicius Severus, the Christian writer of the fourth century A.D., who is considered the first writer to link the image of the soldier and the image of the saint in the person of St. Martin, Bishop of Tours (316-397). This figure of the Soldier-Saint led to the figure of the holy warrior. The monk Felix, in the eighth century A.D., first described the idea of a saint as the soldier of Christ and employed martial metaphors to describe his hero in the *Life of Saint Guthlac* (730-740).<sup>44</sup>

A comparison between William Gouge's *The Whole-armor of God* (1615) and his sermon *The Dignitie of Chivalrie* (1626) shows the existence in early seventeenth-century texts by the same writer of both the figures of the spiritual and the temporal soldier well before King Philip's War. Gouge places either the literal act of war at the core of his sermon, which privileges the physical actions of the soldiers and the interpretive authority of the military leaders, or the metaphorical art of war, which privileges the fight for the salvation of the soul and the interpretive authority of the colonial leaders. When Gouge addressed a non-military audience — the Lord Mayor of the City of London and the parishioners of his precinct — in his treatise *The Whole-armor of God: or a Christians spiritual furniture, to keepe him safe from all the assaults of Satan first preached*, he focused on the spiritual soldier. The references in the title to "spiritual furniture" as well as the "assaults of Satan" indicate that Gouge focuses on the figure of

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<sup>43</sup> William Gouge, *The Whole-armor of God: or a Christians spiritual furniture, to keepe him safe from all the assaults of Satan first preached*, (London:1615), 2. On the spiritual warrior and the use of martial metaphors, see John Edward Damon's *Soldier Saints and Holy Warriors: Warfare and Sanctity in the Literature of New England*, (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), especially Chapter 3, 25-56.

<sup>44</sup> Damon, 20.

the spiritual soldier, who is described in terms of martial metaphors. Gouge employs martial metaphors in his justification for the writing of his treatise:

For the time of our life being a time of warre, a time wherein our spirituall enemies (who are many, mighty, malicious, sedulous, and subtile) put forth their strength, and bestir themselues to the vttermost that possibly they can, *Seeking whom to devoure*, what can bee more behoueful, then to discover their cunning stratagemes and wyles, to declare wherein their strength lieth, to furnish Christs Souldiers with compleat armour and sufficient defence, and to shew how our enemies may bee disappointed of their hopes, and we stand fast against all their assaults? This is the *scope* of this Treatise.<sup>45</sup>

His description of the enemies as "spirituall" reveals the metaphoric nature of the soldier he discusses. Gouge describes a time of constant warfare but not warfare over land or wealth; rather, this is a war over the souls of true Christians who are threatened by the enemies of the faith. The spiritual warfare is not a localized temporal event but rather a constant struggle of all Christians, not only those with military expertise, against their spiritual enemies. Gouge's "Christs Souldiers" are metaphorical soldiers who need a metaphorical Christian armor.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Gouge, *The Whole-armor of God*, 8.

<sup>46</sup> The notion of warfare as a metaphor of resisting spiritual threats is also found in another popular text of the period, John Downame's *The Christian Warfare against the Devil*, (London: 1633), where a Christian's life is compared to a warfare and the ministers are described as "captains of the Lord's Armies," Downame, 2. Similarly, William Jemmat writes about waging war with "the edge of the sword of the spirit" and the "armour of God." William Jemmat, *A Spirituall trumpet excisting and preparing to the Christian Warfare*, (London: 1624), 65. On the development of the metaphor of Christian soldiery and warfare from its appearance in English Puritan writings to its flourishing in New England, see also Marie Ahearn's *The Rhetoric of War*, especially the Introduction and Chapter 3.

Gouge employs metaphorical language to describe the spiritual soldier, who wears a figurative "complete armour." The treatise consists of chapters on the "Girdle of Truth," the "breast-plate of righteousness," the "shield of Faith," the "Helmet of Hope," and the "Sword of the Spirit." John Edward Damon argues that this metaphoric armor is a significant epic topos that combines classical literature with St. Paul's description of the armor of God from Ephesians 6, 10-17.<sup>47</sup> Gouge's "complete Soldier" wears all the pieces of the Christian armor that will protect him against spiritual rather than temporal threats.

When Gouge was invited in 1626 to deliver a sermon titled *The Dignitie of Chivalrie* to the Artillery Company of London, he focused on the figure of the temporal soldier and, in the process, showed his awareness of the differences between the temporal and the spiritual soldier.<sup>48</sup> His audience was a military one: the "right Worshipfull, Hugh Hammersly Esquire,... President of the Maryiall Company...AND To all the Captaines and Gentlemen of the said Company."<sup>49</sup> He described the temporal soldier's skills and expertise in the military arts rather than simply his faith and devotion to God. Gouge opens his sermon by saying:

I confesse, that as the *matter* therof, so the *manner* of handling it, is somewhat differing from my ordinary course. For I had respect to the kinde of Auditory before which I spake. Among Souldiers I endeavoured to speake souldier-like. If *offence* bee taken at *matter* or *manner*, I shroud my selfe vnder your shields

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<sup>47</sup> Damon, 75.

<sup>48</sup> Charles Mason, similarly distinguishes between the two type of soldier: "the one natural, as a souldier" and "the other spiritual as a saint." Charles Mason, in *Miles Christianus, a Sermon Preached to the Artillery Company*, (London: Benjamin Tooke, 1672), 4.

<sup>49</sup> Gouge, *The Dignitie of Chivalrie*, (London: 1626), 2.

for *defence* Now that you haue brought me forth into the open field, & fet me vp to be gazed on, & baited at by the differing censures of diuers censors, leave me not to shift for my selfe. Be not backward to patronize what you have beene forward to produce.<sup>50</sup>

Aware of his military audience, Gouge employs a different discourse than the one he employed in his earlier treatise. His decision to speak "souldier-like" out of respect of his audience reveals his awareness of and familiarity with the differences between the spiritual discourse, which is his "ordinary course, and the military discourse in relation to the figure of the soldier.

Decades later William Durham, in *A Sermon Preached Before the Artillery Company in London*, (1670), also showed an awareness of the different discourses employed by ministers to describe soldiers during the seventeenth century. Durham preached that:

The terms of the text are military all, and so, suitable enough to the occasion, however they prove in the handling. You must not expect that I should deal with you at your own Weapons, having (as David said to Sauls Armour) never proved them. Not that I should read a *Military Lecture*, being utterly unacquainted with the Learning of the *Tactics*, and never having (that I Know of) so much as seen that Book of Fasher, which teaches the use of the Bow. If I can onely make the Offices and Duties of a Soldier conduce to the illustration of our *Christian*

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<sup>50</sup> Gouge, *The Dignitie of Chivarlie*, 3.

*Warfare, 'tis as much as I aim at, or can be reasonably expected from my Profession.*<sup>51</sup>

Durham is aware that military terms are used both metaphorically, in most sermons, and literally, in military lectures; thus, he acknowledges that all he can do is talk in metaphorical terms about the Christian soldier by drawing an analogy between the temporal soldier and the spiritual soldier.

Gouge's decision to focus on the temporal soldier shows that the space of the Artillery Company of London, much like the space of the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, was a space where the figure of the temporal soldier took precedence over spiritual notions. Gouge, thus, focuses on the importance of literal warfare and of training and expertise. From as early as the first phrase of the sermon, Gouge emphasizes the temporal soldier. "THEY [the Children of Israel] were MEN OF WARRE," Gouge writes, literal soldiers whose military training helped them prevail over their enemies.<sup>52</sup> Gouge repeats this phrase throughout the sermon, placing the act of war, and not the metaphoric fight for the salvation of the soul, at the core of his sermon. He describes that "those Warre-like sports and pastimes [make] men the more diligent and constant in the exercises, and bringeth them to the greater experience and perfection therein. Not onely expert souldiers, but experienced Captaines also are made by Military recreations used in *Artillery Gardens*."<sup>53</sup> "Strength and skill in shooting," Gouge goes on to remind his audience, are a soldier's contribution to making England a great nation.

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<sup>51</sup> William Durham, *A Sermon Preached Before the Artillery Company in London*, (London: T.R., 1670).

<sup>52</sup> Gouge, *The Dignitie of Chivalrie*, 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 21.



Gouge similarly sees military skill as essential for all governing positions and honorable titles:

Most of our *Dignities* and *Titles of honour* haue risen from Artillery exercises, and Military imployments. *Imperatores, Emperors* were at first *Generalls* of armies: *Duces Dukes*, were *Captaines* of bands: *Comites Earles*, were *Lieftenants*, or *Prouosts-Marshalls*: *Milites, Knights* were *choice Souldiers*: *Equites, Esquires* were *horsemen* in Warre. These and other like honourable titles were at first giuen to men, because THEY were *Men of Warre*.<sup>54</sup>

Gouge focuses on the physical training and skills of individual soldiers rather than their faith in God. "To be trained up hereto, and well exercised herein, is an honourable function," writes Gouge, linking honor with military skill rather than with the soldier's faith in God. Gouge continues to emphasize the temporal soldiers' military skills in the third part of his instructions to his military audience. The expert soldiers, Gouge writes, need continuous training if they are to maintain martial discipline and military expertise. In his defense of the honor of the Artillery profession Gouge writes:

Many honourable parts and endowments are requisite to make a man expert in the *Artillery profession*, as *Soundnesse of iudgement*, *Sharpenesse of wit*, *Quicknesse of conceit*, *Stoutnesse and courage of minde*, *Vndantednesse in danger*, *Discretion mixed with passion*, *Prudence*, *Patience*, *Ability and Agility of body*, and of the *seuerall parts thereof*, with the like: all which doe

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 13.

demonstrate that the function whereunto they are required, is an *honourable function*.<sup>55</sup>

The metaphors Gouge employed in his descriptions of the spiritual soldier give way to the descriptions of the specific skills necessary for each individual temporal soldier; Gouge's "expert" soldier, thus, is an individual of very particular physical and mental skills. Gouge at the end of his sermon reminds his audience of the importance of training in imparting military skills. He writes that those who are experienced will act as "presidents and patternes" while those who lack experience can gain it through constant practise."<sup>56</sup> Thus, his focus throughout the sermon remains firmly on the figure of the temporal soldier.

John Richardson, in *The Necessity of a well experienced souldiery, or, A Christian common weathl ough to be well instructed & experienced in the military art* (1675), extols the graces of the temporal warrior similar to the way Gouge does, and emphasizes that only well-trained literal soldiers can save the colonies from their enemies. Richardson says that it is "the great Duty and Prudence of those in Supream Power and Authority, to Order that their People be Trained up and Experienced in the Military Art, or in the right and skilfull Managing of Martial Weapons." He proceeds to explain in detail the importance of the skill of "handling of Martial Weapons," and that martial skill is what people "ought to be taught and experienced in."<sup>57</sup> More importantly, Richardson emphasizes that in contemporary times people have no promise of divine

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>57</sup> John Richardson, *The Necessity of a Well Experienced Souldiery, or, A Christian Common Wealth Ought to be Well Instructed & Experienced in the Military Art*, (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1675), 4-5.

assistance; the "man of sin" will be overcome "with the sword of men as well as the sword of the spirit." God, Richardson continues, now works by "men and means, not by miracles."<sup>58</sup> Unlike in biblical times, people now needed to defend themselves rather than rely on divine deliverance. Samuel Nowell in his sermon delivered around the same time as Richardson's similarly emphasizes the importance of the temporal soldier and of literal warfare in the survival of the colonies, in the process shifting interpretive authority from providential hermeneutics to secular hermeneutics.

### **Samuel Nowell, the Temporal Soldier, and the role of Providence**

At the end of King Philip's War Samuel Nowell was invited to deliver the Election Day sermon to the Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts. Nowell was the perfect candidate to give the Election day sermon of 1678 because his duties during the war spanned the civil, religious, and military domains: he had served as a chaplain to Major Josiah Winslow's armies during King Philip's War; he had served as a member of the chief magistrates of the colony; and he had been elected the treasurer of Massachusetts Bay Colony.<sup>59</sup> Cotton Mather emphasized Nowell's active role during the war in *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702):

I wish I could particularly give an immortal memory to all  
the brave men who sign'alized themselves in this action

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>59</sup> Richard Slotkin, "Samuel Nowell: Prophet of Preparedness," in *So Dreadful a Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War, 1676-1677*, (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press), 259.

[the Swamp Fight]. But among them all, O *quam te memorem*, thou excellent SAMUEL NOWEL, never to be forgotten! This now *reverend*, and afterwards *worshipful* person, a chaplain to the army, was author to a good sermon preached unto the *artillery-company* of the *Massachusetts*, which he entitled *Abraham in Arms*; and at this fight there was no person more like a true son of *Abraham in arms*, or that with more courage and hazardly fought in the midst of a shower of bullets from the surrounding Salvages.<sup>60</sup>

Mather praises Nowell's dual role and dual authority; Nowell could preach his sermon both because of his biblical knowledge and education as a preacher but also because he traversed the colonial battlefields during the war. Nowell was in bodily danger during these events and, thus, could claim the authority of the temporal soldier that other ministers could not. He could claim to have occupied both the center of the colony, the church, and the periphery, the battlefields.

Nowell places the responsibility for the victory of the colonists on the individual bodies of the colonial soldiers fighting King Philip's warriors. His emphasis on the temporal soldier rather than the spiritual one shifts the interpretive authority over the significance of the war from the colonial authorities who prayed in the colonial centers to the soldiers who fought the battles. Nowell de-centers interpretive authority away from

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<sup>60</sup> Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana: or, The Ecclesiastical History of New-England, from its First Planting in the Year 1620. unto the Year of our Lord, 1698*, (London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1702), 50.

the colonial towns and churches and towards the battlefields in the colonial periphery. A comparison of the title pages of Nowell, Hubbard, and Mather illuminates the differences in how each author portrays military events and the role of providence. Nowell emphasizes the role of the temporal soldiers in his descriptions of the military events, while Hubbard and Mather diminish the role of the temporal soldiers through their emphases on the providential context of the war. Nowell's title page reads:

Abraham in Arms;  
or The First Religious GENERAL with his ARMY Engaging in A WAR  
For which he had wisely prepared, and by which,  
not only an eminent victry was obtained, but A blessing gained also.<sup>61</sup>

William Hubbard's title page reads:

A NARRATIVE OF THE TROUBLES WITH THE INDIANS In *NEW-ENGLAND*, from the first planting thereof in the year 1607. to this present year 1677. But chiefly of the late Troubles in the two last years, 1675. and 1676. To which is added a Discourse about the *Warre* with the PEQUODS In the year 1637.

By *W. Hubbard*, Minister of *Ipswich*.

And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for a Memoriall in a Book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the Remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

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<sup>61</sup> Samuel Nowell, "Abraham in Arms; or the First Religious General with his Army Engaging in a War," in, *So Dreadful a Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War, 1676-1677*, ed, Richard Slotkin, (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press), 259.

Exod. 17 14.

Wherefore it is said in the book of the Warrs of the Lord, what he did in the red sea, and in the Brooks of Arnon.

Numb: 21 14

As cold waters to a thirst, soul, so is good news from a far Country.

Prov. 25.25.<sup>62</sup>

And, finally, Increase Mather's title page reads:

HISTORY OF THE WARR With the *INDIANS*

in NEW-ENGL AND.

(From *June* 24, 1675. when the first English-man was murdered

by the Indians, to *August* 12. 1676. when *Philip*, aliis

*Metacomet*, the principal Author and Beginner

of the Warr, was slain.)

Wherein the Grounds, Beginning, and Progress of the Warr,

is summarily expressed.

TOGETHER WITH A SERIOUS

EXHORTATION

to the Inhabitants of that Land,

By *INCREASE MATHER*, Teacher of a Church of

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<sup>62</sup> William Hubbard, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England*, (Worcester: Daniel Greenleaf, 1677), 1.

Christ, in *Boston in New-England*.

Lev. 26. 25. *I will bring a Sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of the Covenant.*

Psal. 107. 43. *Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the Loving-kindness of the Lord.*

Jer. 22. 15. *Did not thy Father doe Judgment and Justice, and it was well with him?*<sup>63</sup>

Hubbard's and Mather's title pages both describe events that unfold according to God's providential plan and without, or despite, the involvement of individuals. Hubbard underneath the title of his text refers to the biblical events of the Israelites' war with the Amalekites and of the destruction of the Amorites by the Ark of the Covenant in the Brooks of Arnon. Hubbard references God's providential salvation of the Israelites just before the "Troubles with the Indians" to construct a direct relationship between the two events. This direct relationship allows Hubbard to situate King Philip's War within God's providential plan. He describes the two events as parallel in order to link the events of the war to the collective behavior of the colonists; their defeats came as a result of the colony distancing itself from God, and their victories came as a result of their prayers and humiliation.

Mather's title page offers a similar narrative to Hubbard's and situates the events of the war within God's providential plan for the colonies. The war's causes, beginning,

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<sup>63</sup>Increase Mather, "A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England," in *So Dreadful a Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War, 1676-1677*, ed. Richard Slotkin, (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press), 79.

and progress, are "summarily expressed" and then followed by a "serious exhortation." The events of the war are simply summarized to allow space for the exhortation to his fellow colonists. Thus, Mather constructs a relationship between those two statements that shows the worldly events of the war as less important than their spiritual meaning and their connection to God's Providence. In addition, Mather provides three biblical quotations at the end of the title page that offer a typological reading of the war and, making the providential framework of his history even more apparent. In this reading, the colonists become the Israelites of the Old Testament, who have broken their covenant with God and were punished until they repented. Thus, both Hubbard and Mather situate the war within a providential framework and leave no doubt in their readers about the role of God in the beginning and victorious end of the conflict. Consequently, the emphasis on God minimizes the importance of the soldiers and their actions during the war.

Nowell's title page, unlike the title pages of Mather and Hubbard, indicates a shift from God's agency to the General's agency. Nowell might refer to the General as "religious," but he quickly adds that the General's success was partly due to the fact that "he had wisely prepared" for the war. This shift from the war as a providential event to the war as a secular event situates the soldiers at the center of the conflict; God's providence assumes a role secondary to the worldly preparation of the General and his army. This sermon is not a description of the war as an entirely secular event; after all, the title of the sermon invokes the biblical character of Abraham. However, the hermeneutical framework that Nowell employs in his sermon situates King Philip's War



as an event where — as in the case of the biblical Abraham — military preparation and military skills played a crucial role in the final outcome of the conflict.<sup>64</sup>

In the first biblical quotation that Nowell includes in his sermon, he describes temporal soldiers through martial language and focuses on the soldiers' military skills and expertise:

Gen. 14. 14. *And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained Servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them to Dan.*<sup>65</sup>

Nowell emphasizes Abram's armed servants to describe the need for a trained military body as the key path to victory rather than to construct a typological relationship between biblical and contemporary military conflicts. Abraham, Nowell says, was highly commended in Scripture for his military preparations and training:

[he instructed his family] in *Military Discipline*, appearing in these words, *he armed his trained Servants*, such as he had *Trained* up to be fit for such a piece of Service as God his providence called him to: His *Trained* or instructed Servants for such a service, prepared for it by instruction or by *Training*, which is our usual word for such an end.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> In Genesis Abraham gathered 318 trained servants and marched against the Elamite army that was responsible for the imprisonment of Abraham's kin. The battle that followed ended in a victory for Abraham and his men. On Biblical precedents for Christian soldiers, see Ann Little's *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

<sup>65</sup> Nowell, 273.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 274.

Nowell repeats the word "trained" to emphasize the importance of secular preparation of soldiers through the training in the military arts. He, thus, places bodily training in the military arts at the center of his sermon. Nowell preaches that "Abraham undertakes War, successfully, and gets a Blessing by it;" thus, he describes military training as a physical labor that operates outside God's providence and results in, rather than from, God's blessing.<sup>67</sup> He constructs a chronology that situates God's blessing as a result of the victory. This chronology counters the sequence of events described by both Mather and Hubbard, who describe the victory as a result of the blessing.

Nowell describes God's expectations as worldly and military, as well as moral and religious, as seen in his frequent use of the word "expert" to transform the metaphorical spiritual soldier into a literal soldier:

to learn of those God sets over them, the use of their weapons, and the order of War, that they may be expert for War. It is a commendation of a people or of souldiers to be expert at war, that which the Scripture frequently mentioneth, I shall look but to two places, 1 *Chron.* 12.33,35,36. in many verses of that Chapter, *of Zebulun such as went forth to battle, expert for War...Here was Training up men to be expert and fit for War. And so in the following verse, of the Danites, expert for War, twenty eight thousand, of Asher such as went forth to battle, expert in War, forty thousand...It is a duty and praiseworthy piece of skill, to be expert for war.*<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 274.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 277.

By repeating the word "expert," which points to knowledge that comes from practice and experience, Nowell shows his audience that the soldiers he is describing are those whose military knowledge comes from their bodily experience in the training fields and who possess those skills necessary for the period's warfare. These are not soldiers whose only strength on the battlefield is their faith in God and his providential plan. By using the word "duty," Nowell links expertise in warfare with the colonists' Christian duty; their duty is not just to pray in the churches for God's salvation, but primarily to be trained and be ready to take arms against the colony's secular enemies. Unlike Nowell, Mather includes the word "expert" only once in his text, when he notes that the small colonial army sent from Boston was under the conduct of "that expert Souldier and Commander Major *Savage*." Despite the reference to the commander's expertise, Mather still characterizes the army as incompetent in their pursuits of the Indians. For Mather, expertise has no effect on the outcome of the war, as only God can grant victory to the colonial armies; thus, the army is saved only by "the singular providence of God."<sup>69</sup>

Nowell makes his emphasis on the temporal soldier even more apparent when he constructs a relationship between military skills -- not strength of faith -- and a colonist's worth to the colony as a whole. Nowell preaches:

*Hence it is no wayes unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier, not only a Spiritual Souldier but in the true proper sense of the letter...There is such agreement between the Spiritual and temporal Warfare, that everything*

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<sup>69</sup> Mather, 39.

belonging to a Souldier, is made use of to resemble some Grace or Duty of a Christian, something belonging to a Christian.<sup>70</sup>

Nowell distinguishes between the spiritual soldier and the literal soldier and, thus, introduces the soldiers' agency as a factor in the unfolding historical events. If a soldier is a temporal warrior, a soldier in the "true proper sense of the letter," his identity is defined through worldly military knowledge, rather than spiritual knowledge. Nowell marks the notion of the secular soldier as the proper sense of the word soldier and, thus, privileges the soldier's role in secular warfare over the citizen's role as a metaphorical soldier.

Since they are secular soldiers, Nowell continues, their weaknesses stem from bad leadership and bad training. Specifically, their weaknesses stem from a lack of captains to train them and guide them on the battlefield. Nowell sees the civil authorities as having limited, if any, responsibility to improve the soldiers of the colonies, which points to the separation that he sees between the role of the civil authorities and the role of the military authorities. Nowell tells his audience that soldiers

require of all the exercise of *Trainings*, or attendeance upon them...that they may have Souldiers ready for any expedition... [That they should] keep up martial Discipline...Captains are greatly to blame that are softly men, and no not hold their authority in the field...Look with a favourable aspect upon, and afford your presence as much as may be, at such Meetings as are the work of this day. Encourage *Artillery-Trainings*.<sup>1</sup> It is a way and means to give encouragement to dilligent and expert Men, by giving them titles answerable to their activity

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<sup>70</sup> Nowell, 285.

and skill...2. It is a Nursery for Officers beyond our common Trainings or a better means to accomplish those that are Officers, *Artillery Meetings* consisting in a great measure of such.<sup>71</sup>

These instructions lack any mention of God or religious faith as an essential characteristic for the soldiers that Nowell considers necessary for the colony's survival. Instead, the very specific instructions that he provides are completely linked to worldly physical training, consisting of specific instructions for the different ranks and for specific military skills, such as the use of cannons. The weakness that Nowell sees in the soldiers are of secular nature — for instance their "soft" nature — rather than of spiritual nature unlike Mather who sees the soldiers' and colonists' weakness as the lack of a strong faith or of strong morals. Furthermore, Nowell links soldiers' titles with military achievements rather than with religiosity and morality.

Nowell, unlike Mather, places the responsibility for a successful end to the war on the shoulders of expert soldiers fighting on the battlefield rather than those praying at the colonial center for divine intervention. He tells his audience that "God can work miracles, but when ordinary means may be had, he will not work miracles."<sup>72</sup> The temporal soldier is the "ordinary means" through which the colony could defeat the Natives and win the war. Mather, on the other hand, wrote that the days of humiliation that took place in the town centers decided the war.<sup>73</sup> This was a rhetorical move that made the collective

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 291.

<sup>72</sup> Nowell, 284. Slotkin writes that Nowell echoes the basic tenet of Puritan scientific thought, which, in a similar manner to the doctrine of free grace and the "calling," urged the pious to act within "the normal processes of nature, never expecting to be aided by miraculous intervention," 264.

<sup>73</sup> Nowell, 284; Mather, 12.

colonial body the main actor in the course of the war; their prayers and humiliation could persuade God to stop their punishment, and their lack of repentance could lead to their demise.

Mather's providentialist explanation extends to the origin and conclusion of the war. In his description of the reasons behind the calm relations between Natives and colonists before the outbreak of the war, he writes:

And whereas they have been quiet untill the last year, that must be ascribed to the wonderfull Providence of God, who did (as with Jacob of old, and after that with the Children of Israel) lay the fear of the *English*, and the dread of them upon all the *Indians*. The terror of God was upon them round about. Nor indeed had they such advantages in former years as now they have, in respect of Arms and Ammunition, their bows and arrows not being comparably such weapons of death and destruction, as our guns and swords are, with which they have been unhappily furnished. Nor were our sins ripe for so dreadfull a judgment, untill *the Body of the first Generation* was removed, and another Generation risen up which hath not so pursued, as ought to have been, the blessed design of their Fathers, in following the Lord into this Wilderness, whilst it was a land not sown.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Mather, 10.

While Mather mentions the technological superiority of the colonists as a reason that kept the Natives at bay until the outbreak of the war, he does not present that superiority as the primary reason behind the colonial success against the Natives. He places the lack of an advantage "in respect of Arms and Ammunition" between the "wonderfull Providence of God" and "so dreadfull a judgment" to make God's will the reason for the Natives' restraint. The colony was at peace because God made the Indians fear the English. The English had been led into the wilderness by God and, thus, were protected by him in order to spread his word to the Natives. However, Mather describes that after the loss of the first generation of Puritans, the younger generations of Puritans moved away from the church and God. The Natives then, as God's instruments, attacked the Puritans to punish the sinning colonists. Thus, Mather constructs a sequence of events that ignores individual actions of the colonists and focuses, instead, on the colonists' collective lack of devotion to God's word and will. The individual colonists and their actions are inconsequential because they are simply pawns in a providential design.

Nowell shifts away from providentialist explanations of the war's origins to locate the causes of the war in the deterioration of the military arts in the colonies. Nowell seeks his answers for the Natives' behavior within the walls of the Artillery Company when he describes that the waning " Spirit of Souldier[s]" led to the Native attacks.<sup>75</sup> Nowell writes:

Souldiers have been the Wall, the Strength, the Glory of this little  
Commonwealth... What made the Indians live quietly by us so long? they had  
hatred to us many years before it broke out. What was the reason it did not break

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<sup>75</sup> Nowell, 273.

out? they saw we had skill, that Skill in Military Discipline which they understood not: that was an awe and dread to them, and is at this day, that they dare not meet us on equal terms.<sup>76</sup>

Nowell makes the soldiers' bodies into a metaphorical wall that surrounded and protected the colony during the years of peace. As their skill deteriorated, that wall gradually crumbled and, consequently, allowed for the normally-weaker Native warriors to rise up against the colony. The soldiers, with their military skills, are the ones responsible for keeping the Natives peaceful during the decades before King Philip's War. The soldiers' training in the military arts, which was independent of their faith and moral stature, frightened the Natives into keeping the peace. Nowell, thus, gives agency to the Natives of North America rather than simply turn them into instruments of God's will. For Nowell, the Natives always desired to fight the English, yet they were afraid because of the soldiers' skills; God did not engender that desire just before the war as a means to punish the colonists.

When Nowell placed the figure of the temporal soldier at the center of his sermon, he challenged the providentialist interpretations of the events of King Philip's War and, thus, the interpretive authority of the colonial magistrates. The importance of the military in the survival of the colonies, made all the clearer at the end of the catastrophic King Philip's War, enabled those with heterodox beliefs, like Nowell, to challenge the colonial authorities. The authorities, in turn, were forced to reluctantly tolerate people like Nowell. That reluctance by the colonial authorities makes the writings of soldiers and

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 284.



about soldiers the perfect body of literature to examine the influence of "heterodox" beliefs on seventeenth-century Puritan literature and culture. The next chapter focuses on the colony of Surinam and the writings of Captain John Stedman to explore the ways in which the soldier's body challenges the figure of the "enlightened traveler." The chapter opens up questions on race and knowledge through an exploration of Stedman's challenge of the division between black and white bodies in the Enlightenment project of knowledge-gathering.

Now, reader, it remains with you to acknowledge, that I have not led you  
*about the bush, but through it...*

John Gabriel Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition* (1796)

**Chapter 3: Producing History "On the Spot:" Colonial Geography and  
Representations of Soldiers in John Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition  
Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796)**

Lieutenant John Stedman, in *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796), provides a vivid account of the ill-fated military expedition of eight-hundred professional English and Dutch soldiers into the forests of Surinam. Their mission was to fight against a group of rebellious African slaves who threatened Surinam's colonial order. Stedman in his *Narrative* describes in great, and often graphic, detail the innumerable dangers and hardships he faced as he waded through tropical forests and swamps. Exposed to the climate of Surinam, he suffered from diseases like "the prickly heat, ring-worm, dry gripes, putrid fevers."<sup>1</sup> In the *Narrative* he combined the extensive descriptions of the bodily suffering he experienced in Surinam with information about Surinam's "Quadrepedes-Birds-Fishes-Reptiles, trees, Shrubs-Fruits &

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<sup>1</sup> John Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam in Guiana on the Wild Coast of South America*, (1790), 1. Stedman details for his readers the extent of that suffering in what he calls a "black catalogue," a list of the diseases and hardships he had to endure in order to deliver the *Narrative* to his English audience.

Roots."<sup>2</sup> Stedman notes on the first page of the text that readers of the *Narrative* would find the information in his text valuable because Surinam was a "very singular part of the Globe, on which few Englishmen have been thrown, either by accident or curiosity."<sup>3</sup> Stedman writes that his "real history" is "the production of an Officer, whose pen and pencil have alone been employed —and ON THE SPOT [emphasis in original], a circumstance but very seldom met with."<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter I read Stedman's *Narrative* in the context of the eighteenth-century poetics of natural history, especially the emergence of the "enlightened," or "scientific," traveler and the "military" traveler.<sup>5</sup> During the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lettered Europeans began to question the veracity of earlier accounts about the New World, which were primarily written by soldiers and priests. At the same time, they began to define the identity of the European enlightened traveler, the traveler whose education and social standing allowed him to avoid the perceptual distortions that hindered untrained witnesses. Stedman's authorial model in the *Narrative* builds on the notion that soldier-writers were part of a very small number of colonists who could claim "on the spot" observation of the nature of the continental interior. Texts by soldiers like Stedman, who had spent a considerable time on the colonial periphery, were often

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 1: 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 1: 1

<sup>4</sup> Stedman, iv.

<sup>5</sup> I use the terms "enlightened" and "scientific" traveler rather than the term "philosophical traveler" used more often in recent scholarship because those are the terms used in the primary sources I examine in this chapter. In the second half of the eighteenth century, natural historians began traveling the world in order to collect new knowledge that they would then incorporate into the Linnaean classification system. Carolus Linnaeus was a 28-year old Swedish naturalist who wrote *The System of Nature* (1735), a seminal text that attempted to classify plants according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts. Gradually, Linnaeus' system became the point of origin of an unprecedented knowledge-building enterprise. On this project, see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (New York: Routledge, 1992), Introduction, 1-14 and Chapter 1, 15-37.

marginalized by European intellectuals because of the discourse of Creole<sup>6</sup> degeneration popularized by lettered Europeans during this period.<sup>7</sup> European philosophers such as Count de Buffon, and the Abbé Raynal, argued that the climate of the Americas produced only physically and spiritually impotent individuals.<sup>8</sup> Human nature in the Americas, Raynal argued, was reduced to a mere animal state.<sup>9</sup> Soldiers like Stedman were the primary workers in the expansion of European empires in the Americas during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and, thus, were the Europeans most likely to inhabit the far reaches of the colonial periphery, what Alan Bewell calls "the epidemiological contact zone."<sup>10</sup> Contemporary European philosophers, then, described soldier-writers

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<sup>6</sup> By "Creoles" I refer to individuals who had spent considerable time in the colonial periphery and had been subjected to the influences of the climate and food. On creoles and creolization, see Ralph Bauer and Jose Antonio Mazotti, eds, *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities*, (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2009), Introduction, 1-60; Verene Shepherd, "Unity and Disunity, Creolization and Marronage in the Atlantic World," *Atlantic Studies* 1 (2004): 49-65. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Iannini argues that colonial authors had to "negotiate complex imperial assumptions about the proper function and form of colonial reportage" because of metropolitan theories regarding the "degenerate mental, physical, and moral constitutions of creole settlers." Christopher Iannini, *Fatal Revolutions: Natural History, West Indian Slavery, and the Routes of American Literature*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>8</sup> Abbé de Raynal, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, (London: 1783); George Luis Le Clerc (Count de Buffon), *System of Natural History*, (London: Russell & Allen, 1811); Georg Hegel, "Geographical Basis of World History," *Race and the Enlightenment*, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed, (New York: Blackwell, 1997), 110-149.

<sup>9</sup> Raynal, 302, 312, 313. The European belief that America's climate caused Europeans to degenerate physically and mentally was very prevalent during this period. European philosophers considered the process of creolization — the process of adapting to the climate and the food of the Americas — as a degeneration. They argued that only the temperate climate of mainland Europe could produce civilized men while "the blazing fires" of tropical summers, as writer John Pinkerton declared in 1808, "seem to have caused a degeneration of the human race." John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World*, (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1811), 286. Similarly, Hegel argued that the "torrid zones" do not allow man to "move freely and participate in higher spiritual interests" and that such zones produce physically and spiritually impotent humans and a degenerate nature. He describes the New World as a space that "has always shown itself to be physically and spiritually impotent," where the fauna is similar to the fauna of the Old World but is "in every respect smaller, weaker, and less powerful" (111,112).

<sup>10</sup> Soldiers participating in colonial expeditions, Bewell notes, had an annual mortality rate twice that of civilian colonists, and they primarily died from tropical diseases rather than enemy actions. Alan Bewell, *Romanticism and Colonial Disease*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 69, 11, 13.

such as Stedman as "mostly ignorant, credulous, partially informed" narrators, whose accuracy of representations "was little to be depended on."<sup>11</sup>

I argue that in his *Narrative* Stedman emphasizes the authority of soldier-writers by subverting the metropolitan notion that bodily degeneration was detrimental to the production of natural histories. He fashions an authorial model that is unlike that of enlightened travelers such as Doctor John Bancroft. Stedman links his access to the continental interior with the quality of the information he provides; unlike in the case of European philosophers, his pen was employed "on the spot" in the dangerous continental interior. Thus, he privileges his authorial model over that of the enlightened traveler by emphasizing the physicality and immediacy of his experiences in a part of the colonial world where only soldiers and Africans dare venture and by arguing that his physical experience in that space produces information that is more truthful than the information recorded by European philosophers.

Most lettered civilian Europeans traveling around the colonial periphery during this period downplayed the effects of the colonial climate on their mental and physical constitution. They did so partly by focusing their descriptions on the colonial coasts, which were considered more Europeanized and, thus, less a source of degeneration than the continental interior.<sup>12</sup> Stedman repeatedly emphasizes in his *Narrative* that enlightened travelers would rarely venture into the continental interior, which in turn led

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<sup>11</sup> Frederick Horneman, *The Journal of Frederick Horneman's Travels From Cairo to Mourzouk*, (London: 1802), i, ii. Ralph Bauer, in his discussion of the writings of William Byrd II, notes that European philosophers argued that nature's secret laws were hidden from the eyes of the empiricists and were only discernible to rationalists like themselves. Ralph Bauer, *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Louise Pratt notes that during the late eighteenth century European powers turned their attention to exploring and documenting the continental interior. The famous La Condamine exploration, Pratt continues, is an early instance of the new orientation toward exploring the continental interiors in contrast with the maritime paradigm that dominated up to that point. Pratt, 23.

to many mistakes and inaccuracies in their texts. Additionally, enlightened travelers downplayed the effects of the colonial climate by erasing from their writings the presence of the European body in the colonial space. Their accounts were primarily accounts of disembodied experiences. As Emily Jane Cohen argues, "it was self denial and suppression of the body that characterized any would-be philosopher and gentleman;" there was a progressive attempt by European philosophers to "efface the presence of...the body."<sup>13</sup>

Unlike the enlightened travelers, Stedman constructs an account of embodied experiences; his narrative voice interweaves the descriptions of the nature of Surinam with details about bodily injuries suffered while gathering the information he describes to his audience. Stedman constantly alludes to the linguistic connection between the word "body" and the figure of the soldier as seen by his use of the word "corps" to describe a group of soldiers. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a "corps" as "a body of troops regularly organized," and defines "embody" as "to form into a body for military purposes." The link that Stedman creates between soldiers and the body is also apparent early in the *Narrative* when he describes that in response to the call by the governor of Surinam for volunteers, a "corps of Marines was immediately embodied."<sup>14</sup> Michel de Certeau, in his book *Heterologies* (1986), argues that the violent history of the Natives' resistance and repression during the conquest of the Americas was inscribed on their bodies in the form of wounds and scars. The bodily marks recorded that violent history just as much as, if not more than, transmitted accounts did. In this sense, de Certeau

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<sup>13</sup> Emily Jane Cohen, "Enlightenment and the Dirty Philosopher," *Configurations*, 5 (1997): 369-424, 372.

<sup>14</sup> "Corps, n" *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. "Embody, n" *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press.

posits, the "body is memory."<sup>15</sup> I argue that in the *Narrative* Stedman describes the soldier's body as a text inscribed with the violence and suffering that resulted because of the Europeans' presence in the continental interior. The highly detailed descriptions of Stedman's scars and injuries act as an additional discourse that privileges Stedman's authorial model over that of the enlightened traveler whose account of disembodied experiences betrays his geographical distance from, and thus his lack of accurate knowledge about, the continental interior.

To further strengthen his rhetorical authority, Stedman describes himself and the rest of the soldiers in terms that evoke Africans and African slavery in order to once more emphasize the physicality of his experience in the interior of Surinam and to claim access to the kind of knowledge that Europeans considered the purview of Africans. Stedman emphasizes that both the European soldiers and the Africans suffer bodily harm in the name of the imperial European projects and both venture into the colonial spaces that other Europeans dare not venture. He also describes himself in many instances as imitating the actions of Africans and even describes instances when he was mistaken for an African. Thus, he is able to claim more intimate knowledge of Surinam's nature because he can observe the plants and animals of its forests "on the spot" unlike enlightened travelers who had to rely on African informants to provide them with specimens.

My reading builds on the work of scholars such as Susan Scott Parrish and James Delbourgo, who have been expanding scholarly understanding of the poetics of natural

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<sup>15</sup> Michel De Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, (Chicago City: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 112, 277.

history in the eighteenth century. These scholars have been exploring the roles of European colonists, Africans, and Natives in the eighteenth-century systematization of Nature. I continue the focus on non-elite European figures of the period by introducing a nuanced examination of the authorial model of the soldier that has so far received limited scholarly attention within the context of the poetics of natural history. My reading builds on Mary Louise Pratt's study of the peaceful "enlightened traveler" figure in her seminal text *Imperial Eyes* (1992). I argue that in his *Narrative*, Stedman is in conversation with peaceful "enlightened travelers" such as Edward Bancroft and the Count de Buffon. Rather than focus on the "Imperial Eyes," the European eyes that according to Pratt "passively look out and possess," I focus on the "Imperial Bodies," the bodies that violently possess and, in the process, are violently transformed.<sup>16</sup>

My reading also builds on the work of scholars such as Christopher Iannini who have examined the literary attempts by colonial subjects to subvert metropolitan theories about colonial degeneration. The authorial model of the soldier presents scholars with the opportunity to expand the understanding of the constant negotiations between metropolitan writers and colonial writers that were so crucial to the natural history poetics of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. While scholars have been examining these negotiations in the work of writers such as William Byrd and others, they have paid less attention to the attempts at subversion by soldier-writers who were very often represented through the discourse of colonial degeneration. My reading, then, places representations of the body at the center of the study of the poetics of natural history and continues the scholarly work of rethinking the discourses of European

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<sup>16</sup> Pratt, 6.



imperialism in the eighteenth century. The accounts of disembodied experiences by enlightened travelers often create the illusion that colonial expansion took place in a "vacuum domicilium, a land belonging to no one and, thus, a land that can be possessed by Europeans without any resistance. On the contrary, accounts of embodied experiences by soldier-writers reveal how literature constructs and recreates lived experiences in a manner that forces readers and scholars to consider the historical trauma that European military practices in the Americas imposed on a multitude of groups.<sup>17</sup>

### **Enlightened Travelers and Colonial Geography**

Before discussing Stedman's work, it is important to situate this soldier-writer in the context of natural history writers from the latter half of the eighteenth century. European philosophers argued that up to the middle of the eighteenth century, the history of the world had generally been written by the "ignorant" rather than the "enlightened." Raynal

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<sup>17</sup> For this chapter I primarily read the unabridged edition of the *Narrative* as it was published in 1796, which mostly focuses on Stedman's military experiences and his challenge to the authority of European natural historians. I use to a lesser degree the abridged critical edition of Richard and Sally Price, which is the edition most scholars have used in scholarship about Stedman. The textual history of the *Narrative* is long and complicated. Stedman in 1790 delivered his manuscript to his publisher; however, when the *Narrative* was published in 1796, it was edited for language and content by William Thompson. The 1992 abridged edition of *The Narrative* is an attempt by the editors to salvage the original 1790 text. However, the editors focus on Stedman's "life in an eighteenth-century slave society" and have edited the 1790 text with that theme in mind. Price and Price note that they include only about half of the original 1790 text and have omitted large portions of Stedman's botanical and zoological descriptions.<sup>17</sup> Thus, their edition lacks most of the textual moments when Stedman emphasizes his position as a soldier writing a natural history - which make up most of the text - and focuses disproportionately on Stedman's relatively short commentaries on Surinam's slavery. Additionally, the abridged version is missing the passages where Stedman attacks the veracity of enlightened travelers by describing what he calls the errors and contradictions of the writings of European philosophers and scientists such as Bancroft, Count de Buffon, and other famous eighteenth-century figures. I hope that my work on Stedman will help return our attention to the 1796 edition and open up new avenues of scholarly conversation as the *Narrative* is a long and complex work worth further investigation within the context of the poetics of natural history.

laments that previous world history had been written by the unenlightened, the soldiers and the priests, and promotes the idea of the enlightened traveler: "we should have other testimonies besides those of the fierce soldier, who had neither the necessary talents nor the will to examine anything; we should have other vouchers beside those fanatic priests, who were intent upon nothing else but erecting their own form of worship...they tell us, they tell us, but what degree of credit?"<sup>18</sup> He goes on to say that the "annals of the nations" will in the eighteenth century be written by "commercial philosophers, as they were formerly by historical orators." Writers such as William Winterbotham point to the new kind of writings that philosophers were promoting; in his text about the "commercial and philosophical view of the American United States," he writes that the "shores of Columbia" should be visited and described by the "man of science, as well as the contemplative and experimental philosopher."<sup>19</sup>

The enlightened travelers writing natural histories during this period congregated around the figure of Carl Linnaeus. Linnaeus was a Swedish naturalist whose classification system became the starting point for educated Europeans to attempt an incorporation of all the plants of the earth into a single system. These enlightened travelers fashioned themselves as daring individuals who boldly traveled the globe for the

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<sup>18</sup> Raynal, 312. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, in his seminal *How to Write the History of the New World*, argues that lettered European males in the eighteenth century considered that their reason allowed them to surpass the perceptual distortions that plagued accounts written by the uneducated. Cañizares-Esguerra argues that the figure of the European philosophical traveler was the result of attempts by eighteenth-century European philosophers to remedy what they saw as the distortions and unreliability of earlier New World accounts by sailors, soldiers, and missionaries. Jorge Canizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). On the notion of distorted evidence in scientific accounts of the eighteenth century, see Emily Jane Cohen, "Enlightenment and the Dirty Philosopher," *Configurations*, 5 (1997), 369-424.

<sup>19</sup> William Winterbotham, *Historical, Geographical, and Commercial, and Philosophical View of the American U.S.*, (London: Ridgeway, 1795), v.

benefit of humanity. Linnaeus describes in his memoirs that as soon as other European scientists were properly trained in natural history and medicine, they began voluntarily undertaking the "most tedious and perilous voyages, supported by the munificence of particular patrons or societies, to investigate the productions of distant countries...[T]hey furnished materials for the great oracle of science, and proved essentially serviceable towards enlarging and improving the later editions of the *Systema Natura*."<sup>20</sup>

In their writings, Linnaeus' followers described their travels around the colonial world. However, they continuously acknowledged their hesitation to explore continental interior unless it was first "civilized" because of the dangers the interior posed to their mental and physical constitution. Hegel famously argued that the main distinction in geography was between the interior and the coast because civilization could be brought much easier to the coast rather than the interior. While, according to Europeans, the relatively civilized coasts were hospitable, the interior of the colonial world was "pestilential" and "poisonous."<sup>21</sup> Frederick Horneman, in *The Journal of Frederick Horneman's Travels From Cairo to Mourzouk* (1802), acknowledges that enlightened travelers refrained from exploring areas of the colonial world that had yet to be "pacified" by European soldiers. Horneman describes the need for pacification when he emphasizes that "the naturalist and the philosopher" follow the "thorny" tracks of horsemen into the continental interior only when those tracks have become "the beaten road of the merchant." Horneman shows that enlightened travelers are never the first Europeans to travel into the continental interior by emphasizing that the road inland first had to become

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<sup>20</sup> Richard Pulteney, *A General View of the Writings of Linnaeus*, (London: Taylor, 1805), 120. The memoir continues with an extensive list of the many pupils of Linnaeus accompanied by accounts of where each student traveled to and the scientific information he brought back for Linnaeus..

<sup>21</sup> Hegel, 114, 115.

“beaten.” In another instance, Horneman acknowledges the dangers of the continental interior when he writes that he was "indebted to the liberal and enlightened spirit, which directs the genius of truly great men to foster useful arts and sciences amidst the horrors of war; and give orders to the armies under the command, to forbear all molestation of the emissary from even an hostile country."<sup>22</sup> Finally, he advises the travelers of the Philosophical Society, of which he was a member, to avoid entering the continental interior "with zealous but unadvised curiosity" but rather to be disciplined with spirit "corrected and confirmed by knowledge and precaution."<sup>23</sup>

Stedman had to construct an authorial model in his *Narrative* that acknowledged the notion that as a creole traversing the continental interior, his account was unreliable. He had to counter the dominant image of soldiers as despondent, ravaged individuals. Representations of soldiers who degenerated physically and mentally were common in late eighteenth-century literature. Alan Bewell describes the importance of the figure of the colonial soldier who had returned to Europe from the colonial periphery ravaged from tropical diseases. The figure of the ravaged soldier was very popular in the period's literature and was often seen by the public as representing the effects of colonial expansion on the British body and on British identity.<sup>24</sup> Stedman depicts his stay in the forests of Surinam as the cause of his diseases and injuries; however, at the same time he emphasizes that his stay provided him with more truthful and accurate information for his European audience than that provided by enlightened travelers. He describes texts written by enlightened travelers in the colonial towns as mediated works that rely on

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<sup>22</sup> Horneman, vi.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, xiv.

<sup>24</sup> Bewell, 13.

information by Africans or Natives; on the contrary, he describes texts written in the colonial forests as the result of direct observations of the plants and animals in Surinam's forests that could only be obtained by men who would bear the scars of that experience for the rest of their lives.

### **Colonial Towns and the Continental Interior**

In his description of Surinam, Stedman divides the colony into two distinct spaces, the colonial town and the colonial forests. He depicts the colonial towns as owing their peaceful existence to military might. This division allows Stedman to emphasize his unique authority as a writer who is able to venture into the colonial forests. Early in his text, Stedman describes that colonial fortifications separate the colonial town of Paramaribo from the forests that surround it. The town is protected by the citadel Zeelandia, fortified with a battery of twenty-one cannons and walls six feet thick, which separates the relatively peaceful Paramaribo from the threatening colonial forest.<sup>25</sup>

Stedman once more divides the colony into the town and the forests that surround it when he designates the "Orange Path" as the Western limit of the colonial town. The "Orange Path" was a border in the forests that was "projected to be fortified by military posts" in order to offer a line of defense against Maroon attacks.<sup>26</sup> The Orange Path inscribes the limits of European presence in the space of Surinam. Stedman, therefore, divides the colonial space according to two landmarks of martial nature — the Fort and the Orange

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<sup>25</sup> Stedman, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 24

Path — to emphasize how the colonial towns are habitable for Europeans only due to prior military actions. The space outside the boundaries set by military might is inaccessible to European colonists and is a space that only European soldiers and Africans can inhabit.

In an attempt to distinguish himself from "enlightened travelers" such as Bancroft, Stedman characterizes his text as that of a military man who is able to traverse the interior of the colony. His text, Stedman writes, is "the production of an Officer, whose pen and pencil alone been employed - and ON THE SPOT [emphasis in the original], a circumstance but very seldom met with." Similarly, the title page of the *Narrative* describes the text as "ornamented with 80 Engravings design'd from nature by himself on the Spot." He positions himself alongside members of the military who have been exploring foreign countries since the discoveries of Captain James Cook - the famous military explorer who traveled the Pacific Ocean. Travelers such as Cook, Stedman continues, have been providing "the histories of their labours and pursuits;" thus, Stedman feels entitled to "offer such observations in a very singular part of the Globe, on which few Englishmen have been thrown, either by accident or curiosity."<sup>27</sup>

Even though Stedman appears to imply that Englishmen haven't produced writings about Surinam because they haven't yet traveled to Surinam, he immediately proceeds to differentiate between prior writings, which only describe the coast, and his writings, which describe the forests of the continental interior:

[The colony of Surinam] so far as it is inhabited and cultivated by Europeans near the sea-coast, had indeed been known for many years past. But the deep

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 1.

inundations, with the impenetrable thickness of the woods, have been such constant discouragements and obstructions to discovery, that but very little *true* (emphasis in original) information concerning that country hath as yet been obtained...This publication, therefore, is chiefly intended to particularize such circumstances and events as the necessity of penetrating into the interior parts of the country have enabled me to make, and forced on my observation.<sup>28</sup>

Stedman distinguishes here between the two parts of the colonial periphery — the "sea-coast" and the impenetrable "woods" — and emphasizes his ability to move beyond the space inhabited by most Europeans. He links his role as a soldier with his ability to traverse spaces that other Europeans do not and, when in those spaces, to obtain "*true* information" about Surinam. Thus, he implies that those writers who failed to venture inland also failed to collect any true knowledge about Surinam.

Bancroft's text on Surinam is an example of the kind of writings that Stedman challenges because it only contains information about the coast rather than the continental interior. Whatever information about the interior it does contain, it is mediated through African and Native informants. Bancroft describes Surinam as "a country, which, except its sea coast, and the lands adjacent to its rivers, remains hitherto unexplored, by the subjects of any *European* State and unknown to all, but its aboriginal Natives." Bancroft's Surinam is a land where the "civilized" inhabitants live in plantations and few enter the forests. All we know of this country, Bancroft continues, is the animals and vegetable productions "which have spontaneously presented themselves within the confined limits

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 2.

[of the coast], to which our indolent enquirers have extended their observations."<sup>29</sup>

Bancroft notes that no worthy description of these lands has been published in Europe because "few, who visit these countries, are qualified for the undertaking." Thus, Bancroft laments, "we shall probably continue in our present ignorance a much longer term."<sup>30</sup>

Stedman partly ascribes the failure of the Europeans to remedy the "present ignorance" of Surinam's interior to their indolence. Thus, he distinguishes between the constantly active soldiers and the passive colonists. He describes that the European colonists have allowed their bodies to wither from disuse. They are "generally a set of poor, withered mortals, as dry and sapless as a squeezed lemon, owing to their intemperate way of living."<sup>31</sup> Stedman shows the colonists' indolence in his depiction of a male colonist he encounters:

[he] sits down and holds out one foot after another, like a horse going to be shod, while a Negro boy puts on his stockings and shoes, which he also buckles &c., while another dresses his hair, his wig, or shaves him; and a third is fanning him to keep off the gnats or mosquitoes.... [afterwards] under the shade of an umbrella carried by a black boy, he is conducted to his barge, which is awaiting him with six or eight oars.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Edward Bancroft *An Essay on the Natural History of Guiana in South America*, (London: 1769), 2, 5.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>31</sup> Stedman, 21. Stedman is employing the discourse of humoral degeneration, the idea that Europeans who spent time in the New World degenerated because the climate was not compatible with the humors of their bodies. Thus, American creoles (Europeans born in the Americas) were seen by Europeans as degenerate versions of their European ancestors. On the notion of humoral degeneration, see Ralph Bauer and Jose Antonio Mazotti, eds, *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities*, (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2009), Introduction, 1-60.

<sup>32</sup> Stedman, 185.



The colonist puts forth as little physical effort as possible because he replaces his bodily labor with the labor of numerous slaves. Stedman remarks that this colonist is not an exception; for example, almost all of the white men and women of the colony have a female slave who "dresses their victuals with skill, carefully attends them...knits for them, sews for them."<sup>33</sup> Like the rest of the colonists, Stedman is encouraged to relinquish any bodily labor when he is given "the use of a Negro boy" to carry his umbrella during his stay in the colony.<sup>34</sup>

Stedman in his account of Paramaribo associates the geographical space of the colonial town and the indolence of the colonists with mediated, and thus not "true," natural histories. In several instances in his text, Stedman takes direct aim at Bancroft for the mediated nature of the latter's writings. Bancroft depicts the writing of his essay as a mediated venture where African and Native informants provide him with plants and animals from the colonial forests that he cannot access himself. He details the way he employed slaves from all the neighboring plantations to help him procure a sufficient number of snakes for his Natural History. He further employed those slaves to help him discover the names and properties of these snakes.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the actual specimens, he also relies on the African slaves and the Natives of Surinam for much of the information that he relays to his readers. For example, when he gives an account of the American Nutmeg tree, he admits that since it is found only in the "far inland parts of the country," he has never seen it and, thus, can give no particular description of it. He, thus, has to rely on information provided by "distant Natives." Similarly, when he

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid, 20.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>35</sup> Bancroft, 223.

describes the Balsam tree, he relies on information provided to him by Natives. He admits that "I have never seen [it], as it is found only in the inland country. It is brought to us by the *Indians*, in calabashes."<sup>36</sup>

Stedman mocks the mediated nature of natural histories such as Bancroft's when he describes the way he wrote a natural history while living idly in Paramaribo. Stedman, while in "idle dissipation," writes in a clearly ironic tone: "during all this fine piece of business, having nothing better to do in my retirement, I resolved for my amusement to write a short 'History of the Colony of Surinam' and to take such drawings upon paper as I thought worth my attention." In this project he consults "the best and most modern authors."<sup>37</sup> He, thus, ties mediated histories, such as the ones "enlightened travelers" like Bancroft wrote, with "idle dissipation" and retirement. During the writing of his short history Stedman transforms a European Governor into a colonial informant in order to again emphasize and criticize the mediated nature of histories written in the colonial towns. Stedman describes how the governor of Surinam, Mr. Nepveu, becomes his "Native" informant. Stedman writes that Nepveu "not only himself gave me a great deal of information and showed me several manuscripts, but also sent me regularly every morning such shrubs, animals, &c., as I desired to copy."<sup>38</sup>

At the same time, he emphasizes that his *Narrative* was not mediated because he observed the plants and animals in their natural habitat by traversing the interior of the colony. Thus, he fashions himself as a traveler who does not require informants but,

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<sup>36</sup> Bancroft, 87, 88. When Bancroft describes the ducolla apple, he again remarks how the samples he describes were brought to him from the interior by Indians.

<sup>37</sup> Stedman, 22.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

rather, can call upon "local and ocular observation."<sup>39</sup> In order to emphasize the importance of "local and ocular observation" in the continental interior, Stedman describes the forests of inland Surinam as radically different from the colonial town.<sup>40</sup> He employs classical imagery of the journey from life to death to indicate how the soldiers move to a space beyond where most Europeans venture and a space as dangerous as the mythical Greek underworld. The soldiers begin their journey at the hospitable plantations of the colonial town and gradually move inland along a river that begins to "grow narrower."<sup>41</sup> Stedman describes the narrowing river in language that evokes the mythological journey from the land of the living to Hades, the land of the dead. He names one of the barges that will transport the soldiers inland *Charon*, which was the name of the boatman in ancient Greek mythology who carried the dead across the river Styx and into the underworld. He names the other barge *Cerberus*, which was the name of the mythical three-headed dog that guarded the underworld. In Greek mythology, Styx began in the land of the living and ended in the land of the dead; in Stedman's *Narrative*, the river on which the soldiers' travel begins in a land inhabited by European colonists who live in luxury and ends in a land so deadly that few soldiers will return from it. The forests of Surinam are a space with "no trace of humanity," and in this space Stedman is

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, Vol. 1, 93.

<sup>40</sup> Stedman's reference to the "inward" enemies signals the commonly-employed distinction during the eighteenth century between the exterior and interior of European colonies. The exterior, being closer to the European centers and the first to be colonized, was often represented as more civilized, and often as brighter, than the dark interior. Georg Hegel also provides a distinction between the exterior and interior of America. He describes the inland areas of the European settlements as immature with "vast rivers which have not yet reached the stage of cutting channels for themselves, but lose themselves instead in marshy plains." Hegel, 113. For Hegel, the main distinction in geography is "that between the interior and the coast." Hegel, 149. Pratt, similarly, notes that interior exploration of the colonial world was the next important step in colonization after the initial explorations; however, it was proving to be a greater challenge than the original colonization. Pratt, 17.

<sup>41</sup> Stedman, 73

"cut off from society [and] surrounded by relentless savages."<sup>42</sup> The soldiers, Stedman remarks, were in "horrid and impenetrable woods, beyond the hearing of a cannon shot from any port or plantation."<sup>43</sup> He even uses a line from Psalms 107:4 — "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in" — in order to stress once more that the space he is traversing is unlike the space of the colonial town.<sup>44</sup>

Stedman, thus, draws attention to the difference between writing about Surinam's forests while in a Surinam town and writing about Surinam's forests while traveling through those forests. He distinguishes between the mediated and direct observations of the nature of Surinam to provide his readers with a clear view of why his writings are different from the those of writers such as Bancroft. Once he enters the forests of Surinam, Stedman emphasizes the somatic experience of that space to demonstrate to his readers the immediate nature of his observations and the truth of the information he provides in his text.

### **Accounts of Embodied and Disembodied Experiences**

When Stedman finally enters the forests of "the inland country," he links his presence in the forests with the bodily violence inherent in traversing such dangerous spaces. Most European writers during this period avoided references to the violence — both in terms of climate and Native resistance — inherent in entering a dangerous space such as the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 1: 147, 2: 154.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 1: 91, 158.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 2: 126.

continental interior. Mary Louise Pratt argues that Linnaeus' system created an "innocent vision of European global authority," a kind of "anti-conquest" that hides the violence of conquest and, instead, presents the act of possessing colonial spaces as a peaceful endeavor.<sup>45</sup> For instance, Marquis de Vaillant, in his account of the travels into the interior parts of Africa (1796), devotes only few short sentences to the resistance and dangers that European travelers encountered when traveling into the interior of colonial spaces. Among the many descriptions of the importance of the "genius of discovery" that has "extended its wings into dark places," he fleetingly mentions that "the more dangers have been removed, the more men have passed [these countries'] ancient bounds." His use of the passive voice allows him to erase the actors who removed those dangers, the members of the military. He positions himself as the subject of the previous sentence when he writes that "and I may say that I conquered a small portion of the earth;" thus, he transforms the violent act of conquest into the peaceful act of recording information.<sup>46</sup> He provides no descriptions of the effects on his body of the travels across a space as dangerous as the African continent. Instead, his account contains only descriptions of the landscape and plants. Pratt, who after all calls her book "Imperial Eyes," emphasizes how European enlightened travelers, such as de Vaillant, in a way represented themselves as a "kind of collective moving eye on which the sights/sited registered; as agents their presence is very reduced."<sup>47</sup>

Stedman constructs a different type of rhetorical authority than the "enlightened travelers;" he links the information he provides with descriptions of the suffering that he

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<sup>45</sup> Pratt, 53, 57.

<sup>46</sup> Marquis de Vaillant, *Travels into the Interior Parts of African*, (London: 1796), vi.

<sup>47</sup> Pratt, 59.

had to endure in order to collect that information. While an "enlightened traveler" such as Bancroft fills his text almost exclusively with descriptions of the various specimens brought to him in the colonial town, employing what he calls the "peculiar language" of Natural History,<sup>48</sup> Stedman fills his text with both the language of natural history and with descriptions of the way soldiers' bodies registered the suffering inherent in the move across the continental interior.<sup>49</sup> Bancroft's Surinam is a space of "land breezes" and "refreshing dews," which render the heat "so far from being excessive, that it is seldom disagreeable;"<sup>50</sup> Stedman's Surinam is a space where "all the elements...oppose us: the water, pouring down like a deluge by the heavy rains, air poisoned by myriads of mosquitoes that from sunset to sunrise regularly kept us company and prevented us from getting any sleep."<sup>51</sup> In the space of the continental interior, the soldiers are unable to cope with a climate where "the air is impregnated with myriads of invisible animalcules, [and] the smallest scratch immediately becomes a running sore, and scratching must be a daily occupation, where one is covered over with mosquitoes &c."<sup>52</sup>

Stedman's text is not a "labour of intellect" alone, as writers like Maton describe the writing of Natural history, but a labor of the body as well.<sup>53</sup> Stedman's ocular experience is inherently tied to his traumatic somatic experience. He includes in his text only what he claims to have witnessed himself at specific moments in the expedition. Stedman remarks upon this feature of his narrative: "I should here also describe the

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<sup>48</sup> Bancroft, 119.

<sup>49</sup> Marcelo Aranda notes how the bodies of sailors - and, I argue, of soldiers - registered the effects of traveling through unfamiliar, and often hostile lands. Marcelo Aranda et. al., "History of the Atlantic Science: Collective Reflections from the 2009 Harvard Seminar on Atlantic History," *Atlantic Studies* 7 (2010): 453-509, 496.

<sup>50</sup> Bancroft, 16.

<sup>51</sup> Stedman, 63.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>53</sup> William George Maton, *A General View of the Writings of Linnaeus*, (London: 1805), 22.

coffee, cacao, sugar, and indigo plantations, but must reserve them till another occasion, having made it a rule to speak of things only as they occur."<sup>54</sup> Stedman emphasizes the soldiers' bodily deterioration when he writes that after years in the wilderness, he and the rest of the European soldiers were "ruined both in their body and mind past all recovery...in short, out of a number of near twelve hundred able-bodied men, now not one hundred did return to their friends at home, among whom perhaps not twenty were to be found in perfect health."<sup>55</sup> In a brief period of time "these strong and flourishing young men were metamorphosed into a parcel of smoke-dried scarecrows."<sup>56</sup> Stedman uses the word "scarecrows" to draw attention to the consequences that the prolonged fighting in Surinam had on his and his fellow soldiers' bodies. The word "scarecrows" reinforces the trajectory of the soldiers in Surinam: while they start as "flourishing" men, they conclude the expedition with bodies that are ruined beyond any recovery: "It was, indeed, lamentable to observe the state to which we were already reduced, from a corps of the finest, healthiest young men that ever sailed from Europe, with blooming fresh complexions, now changed to the sallow colour of a drum-head."<sup>57</sup>

The bodily deterioration of the soldiers also becomes apparent in two of the hand-colored engravings that accompany Stedman's text. While the first image of the soldiers (figure 5) depicts a soldier in his prime, the title page of the *Narrative*, which depicts Stedman towards the end of the expedition, shows a vastly different image of a European soldier (figure 6). Stedman is depicted wearing a tattered uniform and barefoot. Instead of holding his musket proudly like the Marine in the first engraving, he is using it to support

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<sup>54</sup> Stedman, 1: 223.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 315.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 297.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 1: 127.

himself; his weapon of war has transformed into a lame man's crutch. Additionally, Stedman is pointing downwards to the corpse of an African Rebel. Thus, he leaves no doubt as to the role he had in the imperial project; his military actions, which forced him to enter the continental interior and led to the death of the African, also led to his bodily ruin.





*A private Marine of Col. Fourgeoud's Corps.*

Figure 5



Figure 6

Stedman provides increasingly detailed descriptions of Surinam's effects on the soldiers' bodies. While fighting against the Rebels in the forests of Surinam, Stedman gets infected with ringworm, a local disease. He promptly provides a very detailed visual description of the symptoms:

it is called in Surinam the ringworm and consists in large, scarlet, irregular spots, particularly on the under parts of the body, which increase in magnitude from day to day, unless prevented by timely application. These spots are surrounded with a kind of hard, scrofulous border that makes look, in my opinion, something like land maps and which are as troublesome by their itching as the itch called prickly heat or the sting of mosquitoes.<sup>58</sup>

Stedman provides more information to his reader than just a visual description of the disease and its symptoms; he describes the way the disease *feels* on his body and the way that sensation compares to other similar sensations. Thus, he makes bodily sensations a central part of his experience in Surinam and of his encounters with Surinam's nature. In another similar instance, Stedman recounts how was attacked by a distemper called the "*prickly heat*. It begins by the skin taking the colour of scarlet, (occasioned by a number of small pimples) and itching inconceivably; under the garters, or any place where the circulation is impeded, the itching is almost insupportable."<sup>59</sup> Stedman tells his readers that in addition to bringing his narrative back from Surinam to England, he also brings the experience of Surinam imprinted forever on his body: "My limb, indeed, was no so

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 1: 102.

swelled, and my wound so black with the mortification, than an amputation was dreaded by Mr. Knollaert, Fourgeoud's surgeon, and I could not even stand without excruciating pain - I shall bear the mark of it as long as I live."<sup>60</sup>

Stedman describes his *Narrative* as the product of his body rather than only his mind. In one instance in the *Narrative*, Stedman suffers from a fever while fighting the Rebels. While lost in feverish dreams, Stedman produces what he calls an elegy:

Under this stone,  
Lies the skin and the bone,  
While the flesh was long gone of *poor Stedman*.  
Who still took up his pen,  
And exhausted his brain,  
In the hopes these last lines might be read, man.<sup>61</sup>

This short poem provides a clear example of the link that Stedman creates in his text between his writing and his bodily presence in Surinam. His "skin and the bone" left under a stone in Surinam are tied to the lines that he wrote in his *Narrative*; the result of his long-gone flesh is the text that his reader has in his hands.<sup>62</sup>

The detailed somatic descriptions of the *Narrative* indicate the way Stedman emphasizes rather than effaces his bodily presence in Surinam. To a degree, Stedman's

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 2: 67.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 192.

<sup>62</sup> Emily Senior argues that Stedman's skin registers the changes his body undergoes in Surinam. Dermatology, Senior continues, was an important field of medical practice during the second half of the eighteenth century and, thus, Stedman's emphasis on the diseases of the skin would resonate with his audience. Emily Senior, "Perfectly Whole: Skin and Text in John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44 (2010): 39-56, 44. On dermatology in the eighteenth century, see Steve Connor, *The Book of Skin*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

text is one long description of the damage Surinam inflicted upon the English soldier's body. Stedman even goes a step further in emphasizing the embodied nature of his experience in Surinam by describing himself and the rest of the soldiers in language that evoked African slaves and African slavery. Thus, he elevates his authority by fashioning himself as a European who can claim the kind of expert knowledge often seen as the purview solely of Africans.

### **Stedman and "Vulgar Knowledge"**

While Bancroft recounts how he employed Africans as informants who provided him with samples from the continental interior, Stedman, once in the forests of Surinam, describes himself and the other European soldiers in language that evokes Africans. As Susan Scott Parrish argues, Europeans argued that Africans had a deeper understanding of colonial nature than white colonists because of their long experience in the "sequestered zones of nature." In the colonial world, Parrish continues, African slaves were often the "origin point in the Enlightenment enterprise of the universal collection and systematization of nature."<sup>63</sup> Stedman emphasizes his position at the origin point and, thus, claims access to the kind of knowledge Europeans often saw as the purview of Africans. Stedman even goes so far as to claim that other Europeans sometimes mistook him for an African rather than a European. Europeans described the Africans' knowledge of colonial nature as necessary to the Enlightenment project but only as raw material out

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<sup>63</sup> Of course, that knowledge was considered raw material that needed to be translated into proper knowledge by educated Europeans. Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 273.

of which the lettered Europeans would fashion new natural knowledge.<sup>64</sup> It was mere "know-how," or, as Kathleen Murphy calls it, "vulgar knowledge," natural knowledge that only African informants, Native informants, and, to a lesser degree, European craftspeople could access because of their expertise with nature.<sup>65</sup> Murphy argues that enlightened Europeans believed that just as vernacular language could only circulate in a local region and needed to be translated before it could cross any borders, so did vulgar knowledge needed to be "translated" by enlightened, educated Europeans in order to become useful.<sup>66</sup> Horneman writes that the members of the Royal Society read the accounts of the various British Consuls in Africa in order to ascertain "the truth of each account, and of estimating its importance...the narrators spoke of what they had heard, as well as of what they had seen - they were mostly ignorant, credulous, partially informed, and that distinctively and in detail, the accuracy of their representations was little to be depended on." For Horneman, science worked on "disjointed materials [that] ignorance has heaped together [in order to derive] new knowledge from them." These are the problems, Horneman continues, that enlightened men like himself and the other members of the society face when dealing with "relations made by unenlightened men."<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ralph Bauer argues that Europeans had to solve the paradox of using Natives to "discover" a place that the Native already knew. Thus, Europeans argued that the Native's knowledge was "pragmatic" and not "conceptual;" he has "practical knowledge but not the conceptual knowledge to see its true significance." Bauer, *The Cultural Geography*, 218.

<sup>65</sup> Kathleen Murphy, "Translating the Vernacular: Indigenous and African Knowledge in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic." *Atlantic Studies* 8 (2011): 29-48, 29.

<sup>66</sup> Eighteenth-century philosophers argued that bodily experiences should be under the tutelage of theoretical models. Barbara Maria Stafford, *Body Criticism: Imagining the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine*, (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991), 5. For instance, William Byrd, referring to Native Americans during the expedition to trace the boundaries of Virginia in North America, wrote that "Tho' we [the commissioners] had not shared with them in Labours of the body, we made it up with the Labour of the Mind." William Byrd, *History of the Dividing Line betwixt Virginia and North Carolina*, (London: Dover Publications, 1988), 65.

<sup>67</sup> Horneman, i, ii, iii.

Similarly, Bancroft details in his account a process of deriving new knowledge from the "disjointed material" his informants provide for him; he takes the specimens from the uneducated and "savage" informants and transforms them into knowledge acceptable to European philosophers and scientists through the writing of his natural history.

Unlike Horneman and Bancroft, Stedman does not attempt to derive new knowledge from the disjointed materials of the unenlightened but, rather, assumes the role of both the informant and the compiler. Thus, he fashions himself as more than just a replacement for the African and Native informants who have access to the kind of knowledge that most Europeans do not; rather, he fashions himself as an important member in the Enlightenment project who is able to both collect and translate "vulgar" knowledge. Stedman provides an example to his readers of his role as one who encounters and also mediates "vulgar" knowledge:

I have even omitted truths which (on account of their strange singularity) must in the eyes of the vulgar and illiterate seem to border on the marvelous, yet while Almighty God knows that in the forest of South America are to be met with the very strangest occurrences, without being obliged to recourse to exaggerations. [The Marines] all imagined they were stepping, one by one, over an enormous tree that obstructed their way (as is very common in Guiana) till finally it began to move and proved to be no other than a full-grown serpent of the *aboma* species, measuring, by Colonel Fourgeoud's computation, between

thirty and forty feet in length, yet such is a truth as sacred as truth of my existence.<sup>68</sup>

Stedman represents himself as a European who has encountered the kind of knowledge that the "vulgar" and "illiterate" would consider a marvel. He describes the encounter with the enormous snake in language reminiscent of fantastical accounts of early travels to the Americas. However, he then proceeds to translate the "marvelous" into Natural knowledge: he notes that the serpent belonged to one of "the *aboma* species" and measured between thirty and forty feet in length. Stedman, thus, classifies the snake according to European taxonomies. He demonstrates to his reader how he, as a European soldier, can observe phenomena that would be considered vulgar and, at the same time, translate it into scientific knowledge according to Enlightenment taxonomies.

In order to claim the ability to access the kind of expert knowledge that African informants can, Stedman often fashions himself as similar to an African. In two important moments in his *Narrative* Stedman describes the plight of European soldiers in language that evokes African slavery.<sup>69</sup> He focuses on the way in which European soldiers, like African slaves, are forced to act against their inclinations and often physically suffer in the service of others.<sup>70</sup> Stedman writes:

From all this I must conclude that this trade, or buying of the Negro slaves, is not so bad a thing as some try to support, while it is the effects that follow from

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<sup>68</sup> Stedman, 310.

<sup>69</sup> Bewell argues that Stedman's focus on the violence upon both slaves and soldiers suggests that slavery and military are almost identical, both being structured by enormous loss of life. Bewell, 93.

<sup>70</sup> Even though Stedman's comparison is certainly exaggerated, it still provides an interesting insight into how eighteenth-century societies see the role and status of European soldiers.



it alone that are the complicated evils, under which lie groaning the too-helpless African Negroes, whose lives, if properly looked after might...be made incomparable more happy than those of either our sailors or soldiers. These latter are obliged to go, and be drowned or shot abroad, to get a pernicious subsistence for their little starving families at home, and to which they are too often dragged, locked short in irons, contrary to their capacity or inclinations.<sup>71</sup>

Stedman associates the image of bodies "dragged, locked short in irons" not with slavery and African slaves but with European soldiers. He describes how both African slaves and European soldiers lack the ability to decide their own fates since they do not own their bodies.

In another instance in the *Narrative*, Stedman once more describes the similarities between African slaves and European soldiers and emphasizes how the European soldiers, like African slaves, are commodified and treated as objects to be used in the colonial enterprise. The Dutch authorities, after hearing about the dismal results of the original military expedition, decide to send three hundred soldiers to reinforce the troops already fighting in Surinam. Stedman describes the journey of these troops to Surinam in language reminiscent of descriptions of the infamous middle passage, the torturous journey of slaves from Africa to the Americas. Stedman writes:

Besides this number, a reinforcement of three hundred more was now sent from the town of Amsterdam, but of these unlucky wretches scarce fifty were landed fit for service, having shared a fate on their passage by the inhumanity of their

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<sup>71</sup> Stedman, 91.

leader, Mr. H---, little better than that which the poor African Negroes later experienced at the hand of the barbarous Captain Coolingward, who in 1781 threw 132 living slaves into the sea to perish. Mr. H--- starved and tortured [his soldiers] to death...and forced his lieutenant...to seek redress in the waves, by leaping out the cabin window and ending his existence.<sup>72</sup>

The image of the lieutenant jumping into the waves to escape his cruel fate is reminiscent of many instances in literature on slavery where slaves kill themselves in desperation.<sup>73</sup> However, instead of the torturers being white and the tortured Africans, in this instance both the torturers and the tortured are Europeans.

Stedman later in his *Narrative* goes into even more specific descriptions of how he acts in similar ways to the Africans of the colony. He writes that he mimicked the manners of an older African slave in order to survive the forests of Surinam. He asks the "old Negro...what methods do you take to preserve your health? - Swim every day twice or thrice, Sir, in the river...[this exercise] keeps my skin clean and cool; and the pores being open, I enjoy a free perspiration. Without this, by imperceptible filth, the pores are shut, the juices stagnate, and disease must inevitable follow." Stedman promptly mimics the habits of the African in that moment and for the rest of his stay in Surinam.<sup>74</sup> He even remarks how he got more used to the African way of living than the European way: he

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>73</sup> Stedman here alludes to the Zong episode in order to show the objectification of both Africans slaves and European soldiers and to emphasize the inability of both to control their lives. On the Zong tragedy, see Marcus Rediker *The Slave Ship: A Human history, Sailors, Slaves, and Violence*, (New York: Penguin, 2007). On the middle passage, see Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), and Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 1: 202.

writes that once he returned to Paramaribo after a long stay in the forest, "long being accustomed to walk bare-foot, I could not bear the confinement of shoes and stockings for some time, they heated and even swelled my feet so much that...I was actually obliged to throw them off at [my friend Kennedy's] house."<sup>75</sup> Later that day he joins a number of "Indians and black people of both sexes" who were swimming, and he even strips like the Natives and Africans before he jumps into the water.<sup>76</sup> Stedman even goes so far as to write that other Europeans mistook him for an African rebel: [they mistook me for Bonny] being almost naked and so much sun-burnt; besides my hair, which was short and curly, I entirely resembled a mulatto."<sup>77</sup>

Stedman even describes a scene where one of the European soldiers commits the ultimate "savage" deed: he consumes human flesh. Stedman recounts how he and some officers came upon some rebels from the tribe Gango, who are supposed to be cannibals, and saw that some pots containing human flesh were on the fire. One of the officers, Stedman continues, "had the curiosity to taste, and declared it was not inferior to some kinds of beef or pork."<sup>78</sup> Stedman's mention of the act that Europeans considered the ultimate sign of savagery is another moment of similarity between European soldiers and Africans; the ingestion of human flesh, thus, acts as a metaphor for the transformation of the bodies of the soldiers into bodies similar to that of the Africans of Paramaribo.

After he establishes for his readers the directness of his observations, the somatic experience of Surinam, and his, in a way, "Africaness," he proceeds to claim that his knowledge is superior to that of previous travelers. He challenges many of the

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 1: 298.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 2: 195.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 2: 9.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 2: 278.

"Enlightened travelers" who had provided information about Surinam in the past and points out their mistakes about Surinam's nature. In doing so, Stedman shows his readers that his account is more valid and accurate than the accounts of European philosophers.

### **Stedman's Challenge of the "Enlightened Travelers"**

Stedman constantly attacks the other European writers who write mediated histories in order to elevate himself and prove to his readers that his information is more accurate and, thus, more valuable than the information provided by travelers who failed to experience Surinam's nature the way that he did.<sup>79</sup> The first instance where Stedman contradicts the knowledge of European scientists is in his description of the electric eel. He writes that Mr. Walsh, F.R.S.<sup>80</sup> has written an account of his demonstration to the Royal Society in London of the way the eel conducts electricity to the human body only when held with both hands. Stedman writes that he

must take the liberty of contradicting, having experienced the contrary effect [of requiring both hands]: it is also alleged, that they have been found in Surinam above twenty feet long, but one of that length never yet came within the scope of my observation; nor have I ever heard of any person being killed by them, according to the account which is given by the same author, Alexander Gardon,

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<sup>79</sup> Ralph Bauer argues that writers in the colonies, such as William Byrd of Virginia, were aware that educated Europeans considered that "men of science" were made in London rather than the colonies. Bauer, 187.

<sup>80</sup> F.R.S. stands for "Fellow of the Royal Society."

M.D. F. R. S. in a letter to John Ellis, Esq. dated Charlestown, South Carolina, August 14th, 1774.<sup>81</sup>

In this short passage Stedman directly attacks two distinguished members of the European scientific community, and the Royal Society no less. Walsh and Gardon, Stedman tells his reader, are wrong about Surinam's eels; thus, he casts doubts over the veracity of any of the information provided by scientists such as Walsh and Gardon. Additionally, in this passage Stedman presents his readers with his erudition by including the specific details of the text to which he is referring. Soon after this passage, Stedman once more doubts the knowledge of "enlightened travelers" when he states that he would describe only two species of macaws, "wishing to say nothing for which I have not competent authority, as I am sorry to observe too many authors have done, among whom are men of genius and learning."<sup>82</sup>

Stedman continues in his attempt to cast doubts on the veracity of "enlightened travelers" when he challenges Bancroft's descriptions about Surinam's geography. He writes that the geography of the path he traversed "contradicts Dr. Bancroft's observations, these mountains not being above twenty miles from the ocean, though he asserts that no hill is to be found at near fifty miles from the sea."<sup>83</sup> Stedman even disagrees with the descriptions of European philosophers as famous as the Count De Buffon and Linnaeus. In his account of the opossum, Stedman provides a verbal description and a drawing "as I designed it from the life. This animal differs widely in

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<sup>81</sup> Stedman, 1: 133.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 1: 207.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 289.

some particulars from the description of the Count de Buffon." Stedman contradicts Linnaeus too; he writes that Linnaeus "is also mistaken when he asserts, that all bats have four cutting teeth in each jaw. - (*See Buffon, Vol. V. page 282*)."<sup>84</sup>

Another one of Stedman's targets was the naturalist and scientific illustrator Maria Sibylla Merian, who wrote *Erucarum Ortus Alimentum et Paradoxa Metamorphosis* (1717), a collection of sketches of animals and plants from Surinam. He describes the drawings and information provided by Merian about plants like the "rowcow" are "very unlike the original that I saw; and to my great surprize [sic] she says it grows on a large tree."<sup>85</sup> Similarly, after he sees a species of butterfly in person, he describes Merian's drawing of it as "coloured very ill." When discussing his sketches of the lime tree, he writes that "yet I flatter myself they will be found more perfect copies of the originals than some of Mad. Merian's, with all their boasted reputation."<sup>86</sup> He proceeds to say that he cannot dismiss "this issue" without "a few remarks on the incorrectness of this lady's drawings," and then he provides a pages-long list of incorrect details — from the shapes of the fruit to the descriptions of the plant as a whole.

Stedman ends his *Narrative* with another description of the effects of the forests of Surinam on the English soldiers. He emphasizes the way in which living in the woods of Surinam affected the physical appearance of the English and made them look less European and more "savage." All the soldiers left Surinam "sun-burnt" to the point that they were "nearly the colour of dried parchment, by heat and fatigue; and so thin that we looked like moving skeletons; to which I may add, that having lived so long in the woods,

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 149.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 2: 21.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 2: 21.

we had perfectly the appearance of wild people: and in particular, very deservedly, obtained the characteristic title of *le Sauvage Anglois*, or the English savage."<sup>87</sup> He once more links bodily deterioration with the information he collected in Surinam: "I say farewell, claiming no other merit whatever throughout these pages, than that of having spoke the *simple truth* (emphasis in the original)," having provided the readers with "this treasure, TRUTH, so rarely to be met with."<sup>88</sup> He leaves no doubt, then, to his readers that he can claim to speak truth about Surinam only because he lived so long in the interior of Surinam, and he has the scars to prove it.

Stedman emphasizes at the end of the *Narrative* the importance of the authorial model of the soldier to the writing of natural histories by reminding his readers that soldiers were among the very few colonial bodies that could venture into the dangerous continental interior and uncover its secrets. "Farewell once more, ye shady woods, pregnant with so many wonders, and so many plagues," Stedman writes, showing to his readers in one sentence that the authorial model of the soldier linked a soldier's ability to enter those woods, discover their many wonders, and suffer their many plagues.<sup>89</sup> Those three elements could only be brought together in a text by a soldier rather than an enlightened traveler. Narratives of embodied experiences such as Stedman's point to a larger body of literature that scholars should assess for a more complete understanding of the competing discourses of natural history during the eighteenth century. In the next chapter I read James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827) in the context of the debates around theoretical and practical knowledge and argue

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 2: 406.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 2: 419.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 2: 353.

that Cooper employs the figures of the militia soldier and the professional soldier to explore the place of the individual and of the republic, respectively, in the United States' expansion westward.



[T]he troops of the U.S. are only sharp-shooters, merely irregular bush-fighters, that have  
no tact, little discipline, and less science.

William Bailey, *Records of Patriotism and Love of Country*, (1826)

Engineers and Officers of Artillery require long and scientific education from military  
schools [in order to] know the general theory of the art of war.

William Tone, "Essay on the Necessity of improving our national force," (1819)

#### **Chapter 4: The Militia Soldier and the Professional Soldier in James Fenimore**

##### **Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie***

In the years between the Revolutionary War of 1776 and the publishing of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827), warfare was a major preoccupation for the people of the young United States. The new Republic was born through conflict and sustained itself through conflict primarily against the British in 1776 and 1812 as well as against the numerous Native tribes of North America. The constant military actions of the new republic fueled the debates in military and political circles over whether the United States should have a militia army, which relied primarily on the skills of individual soldiers and was organized at a state level, or a professional

army, which focused on organized, trained groups of soldiers educated in the military sciences and operated at the federal government level for its military needs.

Those tense debates dovetailed with debates in post-Revolutionary U.S. regarding the political identity of the new nation and the relation between the individual citizen and the federal government. While expansion westward was accepted by the vast majority of Americans as inevitable, there were differences in how and for what reason that expansion should occur. On the one hand, one group of Americans - most often associated with Thomas Jefferson - desired a relatively slow expansion westward because of the fear that the United States' republican political system lacked the administrative apparatus to govern large territories, and also because of the fear that the frontier space, which was considered uncultivated and savage, led to degeneracy.<sup>1</sup> Thus they preferred a gradual expansion that would in the process allow for the cultivation of the western lands. On the other hand, another group of Americans - most often associated with General and then President Andrew Jackson - supported a more rapid expansion westward primarily on the individual, non-elite citizen level to civilize the "savage" wilderness in the name of progress and commercialism.<sup>2</sup>

James Fenimore Cooper, as a primarily Jeffersonian republican who believed in a natural aristocracy that would guide the docile citizens in building an agrarian republic, was ambivalent about the unbridled individualism and the excesses of Jacksonian

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Lawson-Peebles, *Landscape and Written Expression in Revolutionary America: The World Turned Upside Down*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 139, 141.

<sup>2</sup> Leo Marx, "The American Ideology of Space." *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Eds. Stuart Wrede and William Howard Adams, (New York: MOMA, 1991), 65, 68.

democracy.<sup>3</sup> In *The American Democrat: Or Hints on the Social and Civic Relations of the United States of America* (1838), Cooper emphasizes the importance of the natural aristocracy in society when he writes that "if the laborer is indispensable to civilization, so is also the gentleman...if the head is necessary to direct the body, so is the head of society...necessary to direct the body of society."<sup>4</sup> He regarded laborers as indispensable to civilization but only under the guidance of "enlightened men" just as "the head was necessary to direct the body."<sup>5</sup> The hierarchical relation where the individual citizen is subject to the authority of the republic is one that Cooper repeatedly returns to both in his fiction and in his other works.

I focus on *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie* out of the Leatherstocking Tales because these two novels were written in very quick succession in a historical moment of great transition and, thus, allow me to explore Cooper's attempts to come to terms with the transformative period of the emerging Jacksonian democracy. The later novels *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841) are written after the horrors of westward expansion and the displacement and massacre of Native tribes. By the time Cooper writes the last two novels, Andrew Jackson and his successors instituted as federal policy the violent westward expansion at the expense of the Natives of North America. As Thomas Clark notes, by the 1830s the anxiety about Jacksonian democracy

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<sup>3</sup> Sandra Gustafson calls Cooper an "ambivalent democrat" who was concerned with the meaning and implications of Jackson's democracy. Sandra Gustafson, "Natty in the 1820s: Creole Subjects and Democratic Aesthetics in Leatherstocking Tales." *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities*, eds. Ralph Bauer and Jose Antonia Mazzotti, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009): 465-490,490.

<sup>4</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The American Democrat: Or Hints on the Social and Civic Relations of the United States of America* (Coopertown: Phinney, 1838), 190.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 91,

drove Cooper back to classical republicanism.<sup>6</sup> By the 1840s the standing army was a different symbol than in the 1820s because it was responsible for organized Native extermination rather than the defense of the republic.<sup>7</sup> Cooper, then, returns to the romantic past of America where Natty is the heroic figure fighting alongside Native warriors rather than fighting to eradicate them.

Cooper found in the debates regarding the proper military body for the United States a vehicle to explore the place of the individual and of the federal government in westward expansion and in the future of the United States.<sup>8</sup> He fashioned the main figures of the two novels *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827) as either ex-militia soldiers, like Natty Bumppo, or professional soldiers - like Major Duncan Heyworth and Captain Duncan Uncas Middleton. In *The Last of the Mohicans* Cooper privileges the individual warrior over the professional warrior, but only within the context of defending the colonies rather than expanding them. He fashions Natty as a warrior who possesses the military and epistemological ways that Europeans associated with Native warriors and fights as an individual rather than as part of the republic's army. Lindsey Claire Smith argues that Cooper represents Natty as a hybrid figure, a mediator between Native and white cultures who talks often about his white heritage, but does so while constantly demonstrating his "hunting and battle skills" that make him

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Clark, "'The American Democrat' reads 'Democracy in America': Cooper and Tocqueville in the Transatlantic Hall of Mirrors," *American Studies* 52 (2007): 187-208, 205.

<sup>7</sup> Additionally, the legislative branch was actively dispossessing Natives of their land with cases such as *Cherokee Nation v Georgia* (1831). On the Supreme Court's influence in the 1820s in relation to Native tribes, see Priscilla Wald, "Terms of Assimilation: Legislating Subjectivity in the Emerging Nation," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, (Durham: Duke University Press, (1993): 59-84.

<sup>8</sup>Sandra Gustafson argues that Cooper was deeply committed to the creation of a postcolonial identity in the United States. Gustafson, 466.

commensurate with the Native warriors of the novels.<sup>9</sup> Cooper portrays Natty as possessing “sagacity,” a notion often employed by 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europeans and white Americans to refer to the Natives' sharp senses, and as possessing practical military skills while rejecting military theory, or military science. Cooper sets his novel in the mountains of what will become New York State; thus, he fashions the mountains of America as a natural frontier that contains Americans on the Eastern seaboard and precludes westward expansion. Cooper shows the individual warrior as one suitable for the defense of the nation but not suitable for the nation's expansion.

Unlike in *The Last of the Mohicans*, in *The Prairie* Cooper sets the novel in a space and time that evoke the inevitability of westward expansion rather than its containment. He sets the novel in the flat prairies of the Missouri territory right after the Louisiana Purchase, which marked the greatest expansion of territory in American history.<sup>10</sup> Cooper in *The Prairie* attempts to contain the unbridled individualism of Jacksonian democracy by fashioning the professional American soldier rather than the frontier man as the agent of expansion. Cooper makes Captain Duncan Uncas Middleton the figure that successfully survives and flourishes at the end of the novel while having Natty refuse to return to civilization - and eventually meet his end in the prairies of the

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<sup>9</sup>Smith goes on to read Natty's hybridity as a representation of the growing pains of settlement and national expansion and the attempts by the new nation to define itself as different from Europe. In those attempts the figure of the Indian presented both a solution and a problem: while Indians were "chief referents for imagining Americanness" as different from Europeaness, they simultaneously were the chief roadblocks for the nation's attempts to expand its borders to the West. Lindsay Claire Smith, "Cross-Cultural Hybridity in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*," *American Transcendental Quarterly* 9 (2006): 527-552, 547.

<sup>10</sup> The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 was the major factor for the rapid land expansion of the United States. The signing of the purchase added close to a million square miles of land to the Republic and marked the largest expansion of land in the history of the United States. On the Louisiana Purchase, see Peter J. Kastor, *The Nation's Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

west. Thus, Cooper represents the republic, with its professional soldiers educated in the republic's institutions, as the agent of westward expansion rather than the "uncivilized" frontier men who acquired their skills alongside Native warriors in the forests of North America and, thus, outside the republic's institutions.

Philip Deloria argues that in order to find an identity for the new nation, white Americans had to displace either the "interior Indian other" – the Native elements that white Americans such as Natty attempted to adopt to describe themselves as distinct from the European counterparts- or the "exterior Indian other" – the actual Native people of the American continent.<sup>11</sup> The two novels depict both "interior Indian others," the one type where Indian culture dominates the white European, as in the case of Natty, and the other type where the Indian is dominated by the white American, as in the case of Middleton. Therefore, the removal of figures such as Natty from the republic enabled the United States to begin constructing a more coherent American identity.

When read in the context of discussions about the proper type of military for the new Republic, Natty's trajectory in the two novels reflects an important, and relatively unexplored, perspective of the new Republic's search for an identity. Scholars who have studied the two novels and the figure of Natty, such as Joshua Masters, John McWilliams, and Dana Nelson, have emphasized Natty's "native ways," the manner in which Cooper appears to situate Natty in the space between white Americans and Native Americans in order to represent the tensions of a society struggling to find its identity

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<sup>11</sup>Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian*, (New Haven: Yale Historical Publications, 1998), 37.

after a violent birth and an increasingly violent present.<sup>12</sup> These scholars focus mostly on the mythical space of the American frontier and read Natty primarily in relation to Native warriors. When they do read Natty in the context of European characters, they read him alongside European characters in general, rather than European professional soldiers specifically. McWilliams reads Natty as the traditional hero of the historical romance genre who wavers between opposing forces of “savagery” and “civilization;” he is the “amalgam of the best of both worlds,” but also a man who refuses to live within white civilization and is, thus, destined to disappear.<sup>13</sup> Nelson reads Natty as embodying the cultural aspects of interracialism as an Indianized frontiersman.<sup>14</sup> Richard Slotkin, in his influential *Regeneration Through Violence*, argues that Cooper's ultimate concern as expressed in the figure of Natty is the “problematic nature of the frontiersman, the troubling blend of European, American, and Indian Elements.”<sup>15</sup> Other scholars, such as Sandra Gustafson, have read Natty as the result of Cooper's ambivalence about the meaning and implications of Jacksonian democracy.<sup>16</sup>

I expand these considerations of the figure of Natty by widening the context within which we read Cooper's protagonist. By reading the two novels in relation to the debates around the figures of the militia soldier and the professional soldier, I introduce into the study of Cooper's two novels an important framework that Cooper employed in

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<sup>12</sup>Joshua J. Masters, “Smothered in Bookish Knowledge’: Literacy and Epistemology in the Leatherstocking Tales,” *The Arizona Quarterly* 61 (2005), 1-34; John McWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans’: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, (New York: Twayne, 1995).

<sup>13</sup>McWilliams, 40.

<sup>14</sup> Dana Nelson, “Cooper's Leatherstocking Conversations: Identity, Friendship, Democracy in the New Nation,” in *A Historical Guide to James Fenimore Cooper*, ed. Leland S. Person, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 129.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-186*, (Oklahoma City: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 394.

<sup>16</sup>Gustafson, 490.

order to work through the social issues of the 1820s. Many scholars of the early Republic, such as Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, have argued that past scholarship overlooked the role of imperialism in American culture, an absence that has only more recently begun to be addressed.<sup>17</sup> I agree with the view that the imperial aspects of the American culture have often gone unexamined and argue that the absence of acknowledgement of that imperial past has hindered the use of the military culture and writings of the period in the reading of Cooper's texts. My focus on the figures of Natty, the Native warriors, Major Duncan Heyworth, and Captain Duncan Uncas Middleton enables me to link the debates over the role of the individual with the debates over the U.S. military. Thus, my argument offers an additional perspective to Cooper's literary history and to the ways in which he attempts to deal with westward expansion in his literature. Gordon S. Wood has argued that the early Republic saw a transformation of how people related to each other as the Revolution "assaulted the sinews of family and dependency," which resulted in the early Republic society becoming "atomized with every man."<sup>18</sup> This narrative has long centered on the figure of the rugged individual, who embodies the historical forces at play in the early Republic - the conflict between the traditional hunting and warrior culture of the Natives and the literate property-owning whites.<sup>19</sup> Cooper challenged the increasing individualism of the United States in *The Prairie* by, instead, focusing on the professional soldier who was defined as a direct product, and the strongest symbol, of a centralized Republic.

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<sup>17</sup>Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America:': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, (Durham: Duke University Press, (1993); Donald E. Pease, "New Perspectives on U.S. Culture and Imperialism," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease," (Durham: Duke University Press, (1993).

<sup>18</sup>Gordon S. Wood, "Significance of the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 8 (1988), 1-20, 18.

<sup>19</sup> McWilliams, 38, 39.



## Cooper, Republicanism, and Democracy

The debates on the value of a militia army or a professional army came out of the clash of ideologies during the first decades of the United States' existence. During the first few decades of the nineteenth century three ideologies clashed for dominance and influenced the culture and literature of the period.<sup>20</sup> The members of one group were proponents of the domination of civilization over nature. Proponents of this ideology, often a characteristic of the Jacksonian era, saw the presence of white Americans in North America as a triumph of civilization over nature, a gradual transformation of the wilderness of North America into a civilized society which would dominate over nature through its cities, and social order. This ideology foretold the inevitable conquest of the west, an idea that came to be known a few years later as "manifest destiny."<sup>21</sup> A second group supported a primitivist version of the myth of American origins; they considered civilization as a destructive force corrupting American nature. They considered the western edge of North America as the most valuable space because it was as far away from European civilization as possible. The third group, a small but quite vocal group often associated with Thomas Jefferson, saw in America a great opportunity to realize the "ancient dream of harmony between humankind and nature." They dreamed of the United States as a pastoral space, a middle space between civilization and nature.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> On these three ideologies, see Leo Marx "American Ideology of Space."

<sup>21</sup> On Manifest Destiny, see Anders Stephansons, "Destinies and Destinations, 1820-1865," in *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Marx, 66.

These different ideologies influenced the ideas of how expansion westward should occur. Those who believed in a pastoral future for the United States were hesitant to promote a rapid expansion westward because they felt that the republican system of government lacked the administrative apparatus needed to govern a large territory. Senator Josiah Quincy in 1811 told Congress that the constitution could not "be strained to leap over all the wilderness of the West."<sup>23</sup> Jefferson felt that the nation would be better served by a gradual and relatively dense settlement of the continent because he believed that the more distant a settlement would be from the east, the harder it would be for that settlement to keep its attachment to the Republic.<sup>24</sup> Add to this the commonly-held belief during this period by many republicans that the frontier appeared to turn people into a degenerate mob, and it is apparent why Jeffersonians, like Cooper, were ambivalent about westward expansion.<sup>25</sup> The supporters of the "individualizing ideology" of Jacksonianism considered the inability by the republican system to control a rapidly-expanding population as important; they, instead, believed in opportunity for expansion for everyone with no or minimal governmental regulations. As Anders Stephanson writes, the Jacksonian era was an era which emphasized "the individual right to do whatever, and move wherever, one might please."<sup>26</sup>

Cooper, in *The American Democrat*, expresses his fear of unbridled individualism, which threatened the republican belief in a natural aristocracy that he espoused. He argues that "they who do not see and feel the importance of possessing a

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<sup>23</sup> Josiah Quincy, *Debates and Proceedings of the Congress of the United States*, (11 Cong., 3 Sess, Cols. 524-542).

<sup>24</sup> Bernard W. Sheehan, "Jefferson's 'Empire of Liberty,'" *Indiana Magazine of History* 4 (2004): 346-363, 353, 354.

<sup>25</sup> Lawson-Peebles, 141, 143.

<sup>26</sup> Stephanson, 31.

class of [enlightened men] in a community, to give it tone, a high and far sighted policy, and lofty views in general, can know little of history." In the chapter "An Aristocrat and a Democrat" Cooper continues his attack on the leveling ideas of democracy. He accuses those who believe that democracy should exclude all aristocrats of being enemies of democracy. The intention of liberty, "whose aim is to leave every man to be the master of his own acts" is not to deny hereditary honors because that is both "unjust and unnecessary."<sup>27</sup>

### **The Militia Soldier and the Professional Soldier in Post-Revolutionary United States**

The debates around democracy and republicanism, and around the proper way for the U.S. to expand, dovetailed with the fervent debates in Congress and in literary circles on the type of military the Republic should pursue as each different type represented a different identity and a different vision for the new nation. Many supported a well-organized militia consisting of lightly trained civilians that harkened back to the colonial times and, thus, to the New rather than the Old world.<sup>28</sup> This kind of military marked a nation of loose bonds as there would be no central organizing authority for the military and no army, at least not a powerful one, that would exist outside of state authority. Simeon Howard, in his sermon at the Massachusetts Artillery Company shortly before the Revolutionary War, described the choice to have a "well-regulated and well-disciplined" militia as "the wisest and best, by impartial men." Placing the sword in the

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<sup>27</sup> Cooper, *American Democrat*, 94, 95.

<sup>28</sup> On the organization of the early colonial militia, see Kyle Zelner, *A Rabble in Arms: Massachusetts Towns and Militia during King Philip's War*, (New York: New York University Press, 2010).

hands of the citizens, Howard continued, ensures that the weapon is placed in "hands that will not be likely to betray their trust, and who will have the strongest motives to act their part well, in defense of their country, whenever they shall be called for."<sup>29</sup> A few decades later, in 1823, William Sumner writes "An Inquiry into the Importance of the Militia to a free Commonwealth" to remind the U.S. Congress of the militia's value and of the need for the Republic to continue to depend on its citizen-soldiers rather than professional soldiers. At a time when the militia system was under attack by proponents of the standing army, Sumner reminds his audience of the need to protect the militia and, in doing so, protect the original character of the Republic.<sup>30</sup> Sumner sees the militia and the standing army as representing fundamentally different nations because the militia is for defense while the standing army is both for aggression and defense.<sup>31</sup> Even president Thomas Jefferson voiced his opposition to the excess of military discipline that a standing army requires; instead, he argued for the establishment of a "well-disciplined militia" to defend the country in the event of a foreign invasion.<sup>32</sup>

Others imagined a Republic whose military force would be a professional standing army modeled after the European armies across the Atlantic. Such a military force would enable the Republic to fulfill its expansionist ambitions of bringing the rest of the continent under its control and also help distinguish it from the Native warriors it was fighting. Robert Bell, in *Art of War* (1776), emphasizes the antagonism the U.S.

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<sup>29</sup> Simeon Howard, *A Sermon preached to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in Boston*, (Boston: 1773), 5.

<sup>30</sup> William Sumner, *An Inquiry into the Importance of the Militia to a Free Commonwealth*, (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1823), 4, 7.

<sup>31</sup> Sumner, 7. In 1821, Pierce Darrow also emphasized that the militia was "the bulwark of the Republic" and needed to be expanded and defended against those who threatened its existence. Pierce Darrow, *Scott's Militia Tactics*, (Philadelphia: 1822), iii.

<sup>32</sup> Arthur A. Ekirch, *The Civilian and the Military: A History of the American Anti-Militarist Tradition*, (New York: Independent Institute, 2010), 46.

faces from European professional armies that have flooded the Old World because "war that has been kindled and flamed throughout all Europe for several years, is by that means become so general a profession."<sup>33</sup> The former officer of the U.S. cavalry William Tone, in his "Essay on the Necessity of improving our national force" (1819), reminds his compatriots of how England with its standing army is increasingly becoming a formidable military power that threatens the new Republic.<sup>34</sup> Even Sumner, who primarily argues for the need for a militia over a professional army, acknowledges the objections of many citizens to a militia system because the need for militia training takes servants and field hands away from their employment and, thus, affects local economies.<sup>35</sup>

Cooper, in *Notions of the Americans*, argues for the importance of warfare and professional soldiers in defining the United States' identity and future. In this text he describes how the landscape he travels through while accompanying the Revolutionary hero Marquis de Lafayette to the military academy at West Point is littered with "artificial accessories of military ruins," sights which are "common to America."<sup>36</sup> It is a moment when Cooper is surrounded by the Revolutionary past, the belligerent present, and the imperialistic future of the Republic. Cooper goes on to argue that the future he sees for the U.S. is one of warfare rather than peace. He writes that "another quarter of a century may be necessary to raise the United States to the importance of a first rate power, in the European sense...I think, before that period arrives, the republic will be felt

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Bell, *Art of War*, (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1776), 13.

<sup>34</sup> William Tone, "Essay on the Necessity of Improving our National Force," (New York: Kirk and Mercein, 1819), 15.

<sup>35</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, (Edinburgh: 1776), 77.

<sup>36</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *Notions of the Americans: Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor*, (London: Stringer and Townsend, 1828), 36.

as a military...power, in the affairs of Christendom." The current army of the U.S. might only be six thousand men, Cooper continues, but

he who estimated the power of this people to injure, or to resist, by the number of its regular troops, makes a miserable blunder. The habit of discipline and the knowledge of military details are kept alive by the practice of this small force...[because] the vast improvement of the country is in the progress, and in the gradual diffusion of professional knowledge. All the subordinate ranks in this little army are filled by young men, who have received rigid military educations.<sup>37</sup>

Cooper links the improvement of the U.S. army with the notion of rigidity in the education of the professional soldiers. Thus, he excludes militia warriors, who lacked a rigid military education, from the army that he considers the future of the United States. The idea of a "rigid" military education alludes to a stratified republic because without a structured and highly organized republic, military institutions cannot provide a rigid education to professional soldiers.

Many nineteenth-century Americans preferred a professional army over a militia because they considered the militia system to be archaic and medieval. Adam Smith, in his famous *Wealth of Nations* (1776), associates the various military systems with the different stages of civilization. Smith describes how the expense of preparing a military force in time of peace and employing it in time of war is different in the various states of civilization. A militia force, where almost every male is a warrior, is associated with earlier stages of society because every warrior has to maintain himself through his own

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<sup>37</sup> Cooper, *Notions*, 313.

labor in time of peace; thus, when he has to train or fight, he cannot sustain himself economically. On the other hand, a professional force is a marker of an "advanced state" of society because the soldier's profession becomes his "particular trade, separate and distinct from all others" and, thus, he is able to learn the art of war, the "noblest of all arts."<sup>38</sup> Smith notes that because the military art becomes more complicated as society progresses, no part-time warrior can achieve the perfection required if he cannot devote himself completely to his military training.<sup>39</sup>

The debates over a militia or a standing army reflected larger debates about the preferred type of knowledge in America, practical knowledge or scientific knowledge. Each type of knowledge was associated with a different type of nation; practical knowledge was considered the characteristic of a nation with loose governmental authority and an emphasis on the individual citizen, while scientific knowledge was considered the characteristic of a highly-organized government because such knowledge demanded the establishment of specialized academies which were founded by the state. American and British writers, such as William Sumner and William Bailey, described militia soldiers as resembling Native warriors - who were seen as relying on individual military skills and lacking any knowledge of military science - rather than trained and

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<sup>38</sup> During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European writers used stadial theory to divide civilizations into four distinct stages - hunting, pastoral, agricultural, and commercial. On stadial theory, see Roxann Wheeler *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth Century British Culture*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), especially the introduction 1-37. Historians such as Gordon S. Wood describe that while the Republic was still mostly an agrarian society as it was before the Revolution, in the first few decades of the nineteenth century it was gradually becoming the most commercialized nation in the world; there was a shift, Wood continues, from the old aristocratic pre-revolutionary society to a new popular commercial society. Wood, 13. On the ideas of progressive and liberal readings of early Republic history, see Jack P. Greene, "The Social Origins of the American Revolution: An Evaluation and an Interpretation," *Political Science Quarterly* 88 (1973): 1-22; Gordon S. Wood, "Ideology and the Origins of Liberal America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (1987): 628-640; Joyce Appleby, "Republicanism and Ideology," *American Quarterly* 37 (1985): 461-473.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, 69, 77.

educated European soldiers.<sup>40</sup> For instance, British soldiers during the Revolutionary War describe Native warriors and colonial militia soldiers in similar terms. A British soldier condemns the "savage" colonists because "[t]hey did not fight us like a regular army, only like savages, behind trees and stone walls," while a second one writes that "[the colonial soldiers] ran to the woods like devils." Another British soldier denounces colonial attacks that take place "under the cover of the woods" for these are savage rather than civilized ways of fighting.<sup>41</sup> The politician William Bailey writes in 1826 that many condemn and vilify Americans and tell John Bull, the national personification of England similar to his American counterpart Uncle Sam, that "the troops of the U.S. are only sharp-shooters, merely irregular bush-fighters, that have no tact, little discipline, and less science."<sup>42</sup> Similarly, William Henry Scott reminds his readers that purely practical skills, such as shooting and hunting, are often seen as occupations for "savage and not for rational beings...the natural inclination which is like beasts of the chase."<sup>43</sup>

Cooper emphasizes that the militia soldier relies only on practical skills and is, thus, inferior to his professional counterpart. He writes that "the military qualities which the Americans hitherto exhibited, are more resembling those which distinguish the

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<sup>40</sup> Terence Martin argues that Europeans saw warfare in the Americas as a hybridized version of European Warfare, a type of warfare that was "subversive of civilized values." Terence Martin, "From Atrocity to Requiem: History in *The Last of the Mohicans*," in *New Essays on Last of the Mohicans*, ed. Daniel Peck, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 47-67, 49.

<sup>41</sup> Lawson-Peebles, 25. Lawson-Peebles describes how the ability of colonial warriors to utilize skills appropriate to the American landscape came to be known as "coonskinism" from the raccoon-skin caps colonists would often wear. Cultural critic Harold Rosenberg coined the term "redcoatism" to describe the inability of European soldiers to adjust to colonial warfare. Rosenberg wrote that "the difficulties of the Redcoats was that they were in the wrong place. The dream-world of style always moves ahead of the actual world and overlays it; unless one is of the unblinking wilderness like those Coonskinners behind the trees [sic]. In honor of the dream-defeated Braddock (General Edward Braddock of the British forces during the French and Indian War), I call the hallucination of the displaced terrain, originating in style, Redcoatism. In America it is an experience of the first importance." (qtd in Lawson-Peebles, 23).

<sup>42</sup> William Bailey, *Records of Patriotism and Love of Country*, (Stanford: Drakard and Wilson, 1826), 85.

<sup>43</sup> William Henry Scott, *British field Sports Embracing Practical Instructions*, (London: Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1820), 1, 2.



individual character of the soldier than those higher attainments which mark an advanced knowledge of the art of war." The difference, then, between a member of the militia and a professional soldier is "advanced knowledge." Cooper associates the individual soldier with a lack of scientific knowledge and represents him as a less advanced form of the professional soldier. Cooper goes on to say that though American militia soldiers lack the discipline of their European counterparts, yet "when placed in situations to rely in their personal efforts and on their manual dexterity in the use of arms," they have often prevailed.<sup>44</sup> Sumner describes militia soldiers in a manner similar to Cooper but also emphasizes the similar skills a militia soldier and a Native warrior shared. He describes how "every individual [militia soldier] displays his own ingenuity and Indian-like sagacity...they should be left to act as individuals, to exercise their own sagacity and depend upon their own exertions."<sup>45</sup> The militia, Sumner continues, is a system of practice rather than of theory.

The emphasis on the practical skills of Native warriors and militia soldiers in many of the writings of the period, thus, indicates how in the period leading up to the second decade of the nineteenth century American militia soldiers were represented in language that evoked Native rather than professional soldiers. At the same time, the debates on whether to institute a professional army show that many Americans believed that in regards to their military, a change was in order.

## **Military Science**

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<sup>44</sup> Cooper, *Notions of the Americans*, 301.

<sup>45</sup> Sumner, 24.

In respect to military science, Cooper and many other contemporary writers described the United States as comparing poorly with European nations. Many writers of the period emphasized the need for American soldiers to be educated in the military sciences, which was an aspect of military education that was considered lacking in the U.S. They argued for the need for an organized, scientific army that would elevate the United States to the level of European nations. Cooper writes that from the Revolution until 1812, the U.S. army was "miserably defective in military preparation and in scientific knowledge."<sup>46</sup> William Tone similarly emphasizes the lack of scientific knowledge in American soldiers when he describes the United States militia in bleak colors because it is the military force of a country that has had the "peculiar happiness" of having "little occasion for military knowledge and institutions." Tone describes the American militia soldiers as being "destitute of military knowledge" and lacking "consummate skill and knowledge" in military matters, which renders them incapable of leading the Republic's military institutions. He writes that the U.S. should follow the example of France, which when threatened was "forced to become a military power" by "studying [the] science of war."<sup>47</sup> Even as late as 1828, the issue of the U.S.'s lack of military science was still hotly debated. One congressman declared that George Washington explained to the members of Congress the necessity for the employment of military engineers and artilleryists from European countries because the United States lacked military schools of the level of the

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<sup>46</sup> Cooper, *Notions*, 310.

<sup>47</sup> Tone, x, 65. The criticism of the militia as a viable means of defense was not only an American phenomenon but was also ongoing across the Atlantic in the English military and political circles. Captain T.H. Hooper wrote in 1809 that militia men were "idle and profligate peasants." T. H. Hooper, *The Military Cabinet*, (London: 1809), 258.

French and British ones. Thus, "military science was then, as it has since been, imported."<sup>48</sup> For a nation seeking to construct an identity independent of its European roots and to assert its place among other modern nations, the notion of having to import military science, the most important element for the nation's defense and self-assertion, was unsettling.

In order to remedy what they saw as the lack of scientific knowledge in the U.S. forces, members of the government pushed for the teaching of military sciences to American soldiers in order to produce more engineers and artillerymen.<sup>49</sup> Benjamin Rush argues in his plan for "the establishment of schools and the diffusion of knowledge in Pennsylvania" that in a state where "every citizen is liable to be a soldier," regular instruction in the art of war is necessary. Rush emphasizes the need to establish mathematical learning in U.S. colleges to educate soldiers in "gunnery and fortification," as well as to let "philosophy be applied to the history of those compositions which have been made use of for the terrible purposes of destroying human life."<sup>50</sup> Epaphras Hoyt notes that the new Republic needs to establish military schools because it is "now certain that no nation can long support its liberty without [a military academy]."<sup>51</sup> The writers of

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<sup>48</sup> *Register of Debates in Congress*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1828), 1236. William Muller's *The Elements of the Science of War* (1811) exemplifies the attention Britain placed on the promotion of military knowledge in its military schools. Muller, writing in London, describes how artillery and engineer officers need "erudition and deeper insight of the sciences" to acquire "perfect knowledge" and "knowledge of natural philosophy." Therefore, Muller continues, the study of war has to include knowledge of "experienced rules and axioms respecting the subject." The study of the military sciences, Muller concludes, increases knowledge through the acquaintance of soldiers with "modern and established principles of the science of war." William Muller, *The Elements of the Science of War; Containing the Modern, Established, and Approved Principles of the Theory and Practice of the Military Sciences*, (London: Sherwood, 1811), vii, xiv.

<sup>49</sup> Engineers and artillerymen were the strongest symbols of a scientifically-trained professional soldier because those military positions required advanced knowledge of mathematics, geometry, and chemistry.

<sup>50</sup> Benjamin Rush, *A Plan for the Establishment of Schools and the Diffusion of Knowledge in Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: 1806), 25.

<sup>51</sup> Epaphras Hoyt, *Practical Instructions for Military Officers*, (Massachusetts: 1811), 30.

the "General Regulations for the Army" make a more specific plea for the government to hire professors of natural philosophy, engineering, tactics, and artillery for the U.S. military schools.<sup>52</sup>

The desire to introduce military science in the education and training of professional soldiers led to the founding of the military academy of West Point. Established under the Military Peace Establishment Act of 1802, the academy was initially led by Colonel Jonathan Williams, a "principal engineer [and] a gentleman of science" as Hoyt calls him in 1811, and was founded to teach soldiers the "different branches of military science" so as to "diffuse *real* [emphasis in original] military knowledge so much wanted in the United States."<sup>53</sup> Modeled after military schools in England and France, the academy taught "arithmetic, military science, algebra, mechanics" among other subjects.<sup>54</sup> Tone, in the "Essay on the necessity of improving our national force" (1819), similarly dictates the need to "make the profession of officer permanent and let him study and practice military duties...[especially] acquaintance with theory of war should be common." He also advocates that artillery officers should receive "long and scientific education from military schools [in order to] know the general theory of the art of war."<sup>55</sup>

Cooper, describing the changes in the U.S. military from 1812 to 1828, makes an argument for the influence of West Point in the education of professional soldiers. He describes that Americans were considered by Europeans as "deficient on many points of civilization" and as lacking "learning." He reminds his readers that knowledge is what has

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<sup>52</sup> United States Army, *General Regulations for the Army*, (Philadelphia: Carey and Son, 1821), 327.

<sup>53</sup> Hoyt, 25.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>55</sup> Tone, x, 68, 70.

allowed Americans to become more civilized. To the amazement of many Europeans, Cooper continues, the people of North America "are [no longer] barbarous, ignorant, and disorganized as fifty years ago."<sup>56</sup> He writes that "instead of few indifferently educated graduates of an infant military school, [the nation] has hundreds who have enjoyed advantages of far higher instruction."<sup>57</sup> By placing West Point academy at the center of arguments regarding the professional army, Cooper made the propagation of scientific military knowledge the mission of the state and, thus, firmly situated the figure of the professional soldier within the structure of the republic. Furthermore, by representing the professional soldier as "strictly the support, and not the master of the community," Cooper constructs the image of a modern, scientific republic with professional soldiers as its pillars.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the hierarchy that he delineates places the political structure of the republic above the men in arms; he removes the individuality of soldiers and transforms them into a collective instrument of the state. Even though he emphasizes the importance of military science in *Notions of the Americans*, in *The Last of the Mohicans* Cooper privileges the practical militia warrior rather than the scientific, professional soldier because in the contained space of the forests of North America, the individual warrior is no threat to the Republic.

### **Natty Bumppo, Sagacity, and Practical Skills**

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<sup>56</sup> Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 91; Cooper, *Notions*, xii

<sup>57</sup> Cooper, *Notions*, 314, 319.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 314.

*The Last of the Mohicans* is set in 1757 during the French and Indian War and centers on the figure of Natty Bumppo, a frontiersman and a scout for the American militia. Natty, accompanied by two Native warriors - Chingachgook and Uncas - come to the aid of an English party -consisting of Major Duncan Heyward, Cora and Alice Munro, and David Gamut - that got lost in the forest while being led by Magua, a Huron chief. The rest of the novel describes Natty's relatively successful attempts to lead the Europeans to safety and defeat the cunning Magua. Natty saves the professional European soldier who is incapable of saving himself in the warfare of the North American forests.

Cooper privileges Natty, with his practical skills and sagacity, over the professional soldier Heyward because by setting his novel within the forests of America, he contains any ideas of individual expansion and, thus, removes any danger from the individual warrior to the hierarchy of Republic. Natty cannot by his own decisions influence the politics of expansion. He does not pose a threat to colonial authority; rather, he is the means through which the professional soldier survives the forests of North America. Cooper describes the novel's setting as "a wide and apparently an impervious boundary of forests" surrounded by mountains and streams.<sup>59</sup> The "forest of the west," Cooper writes, was "interminable." The armies clashing in *The Last of the Mohicans* would "bury themselves in these forests, whence they rarely returned but in skeleton bands." The setting of the novel, then, is one of natural obstruction to human movement, as mountains and forests divide the eastern seaboard from the lands to the west. Cooper even personifies the forest and turns it into a monstrous being that "appeared to swallow up the living mass which had slowly entered its bosom," a being whose appetite kept the

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<sup>59</sup> Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, (New York: Penguin Classics, 1986), 9.

Europeans from venturing westward.<sup>60</sup> Thus, he contains the actions of the individual warrior to the defense of the Republic rather than its expansion and, removes the threat of rampant individualism. He turns the individual warrior from a threat to the Republic to one in service of the Republic.

In *The Last of the Mohicans* Natty is represented as a colonial soldier who occupies a military role and has the practical military skills commonly associated with Native rather than European soldiers. In the first pages of the novel Cooper describes that a colonial warrior like Natty would gradually acquire the skills that Native warriors possess: "the hardy colonist...frequently expended months in struggling against the rapids of the streams...or the rugged passes of the mountains" and learned to overcome all obstacles by "emulating the patience and self-denial of the practiced native warriors."<sup>61</sup> Cooper emphasizes that the skills that Natty possesses are specifically that of a "practiced native warrior" rather than just any Native. Early in the novel Cooper emphasizes Natty's pride in his military role but also the Native nature of that role. When Natty, accompanied by the two Native warriors Uncas and Chingachgook, first encounters Major Duncan Heyward, the European professional soldier who is one of the central characters of the novel, he tells the European of his own military escapades with the Sixtieth Royal Americans Corps.<sup>62</sup> The Royal Americans was a regiment of light infantry of the British Army that was formed to counter the irregular battle tactics of the Native warriors fighting alongside the French. It was the first regiment that attempted to emulate the Native ways of war. The soldiers of the Royal Americans did not wear the traditional

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 19. Terence Martin discusses how recurrent metaphors of being swallowed by nature in *Last of the Mohicans* show the savage role of the wilderness in battles. Martin, 49.

<sup>61</sup> Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 9.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 65.

redcoat but, instead, mostly wore hunting shirts or green tunics for camouflage. Natty's declaration that "you can tell me little of the Royal Americans that I don't know, though I do wear a hunting-shirt instead of a scarlet jacket" positions him outside organized, professional military bodies. The political and strategic decisions of the British crown, which is represented by the traditional redcoat, matter little to Natty who has denounced such control just as he has disposed of the scarlet jacket.

Cooper repeatedly refers to Natty as "the scout," which is a military role that marks Natty as a warrior who occupies a position that during the early nineteenth century was almost exclusively occupied by Native warriors. Scouting was a military skill that colonists and Europeans often associated with Native warriors because of the pseudo-scientific belief that the latter had sharper senses than the Europeans. The American missionary John Heckewelder provides an example of the Native warriors' association with scouting. He describes the ease with which Native warriors surprise their enemies and attributes it to the astonishing "sharpness and quickness of the Indians' sight" which allows them to easily discover their enemies foot prints even if "the grass or weeds are only bend [sic], and have the least mark of having been walked upon."<sup>63</sup>

Cooper's characterization that Natty and the Natives possessed sharper senses than Europeans such as Major Heyward partly stems from the idea of sagacity, a term used during this period to refer to the intelligence of Native people. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines "sagacity" as "exceptional intelligence; skill in the adaptation of

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<sup>63</sup>John Gottlieb Ernestus Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations*, (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1818), 177.



means to ends" and associates it with animals rather than humans.<sup>64</sup> Sumner links sagacity with both Native warriors and militia soldiers. He notes that militia soldiers who lack the training of European professional soldiers display their own ingenuity and "Indian-like sagacity." The militia, Sumner continues, "should be left to act as individuals, to exercise their own sagacity and depend upon their own exertions."<sup>65</sup>

Natty, in a manner similar to the Native warriors, often exercises his own sagacity and employs his "practiced senses" to scout for any signs of his foes.<sup>66</sup> He has a "quick, roving eye" that seldom rests.<sup>67</sup> He remarks to Cora, one of his female companions, that "I have listened to all the sounds of the woods for thirty years, as a man will listen whose life and death depend on the quickness of his ears."<sup>68</sup> Natty's hearing and eyesight are the dominant features that have made him a great warrior of the forests.

Cooper also uses Natty's sagacity to distinguish the scout from the rest of the Europeans accompanying him:

At the further extremity of a narrow, deep cavern...was seated the scout...the strong glare of the fire fell upon his sturdy, weather-beaten countenance and forest attire...an individual, who, seen, by the sober light of day, would have exhibited the peculiarities of a man remarkable for the strangeness of his dress,

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<sup>64</sup> "Sagacity, *n*" *Oxford English Dictionary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 229. Susan Scott Parrish, in her discussion of sagacity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, describes how authors of the period portrayed Natives as having sharper senses than Europeans. Europeans, Parrish continues, believed that the Natives' sagacity was a result of the way in which Natives stood on the divide between "human and nonhuman." Parrish notes that because of that sagacity, Europeans considered Natives as the most appropriate troops to be employed as scouts.

<sup>65</sup> Sumner, 14.

<sup>66</sup> Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 85.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

the iron-like inflexibility of his frame, and the singular compound of quick, vigilant sagacity.<sup>69</sup>

Words like "strangeness," "peculiarities," "singular," all create an image of Natty as incomprehensible to the Europeans who cannot read him through the lens of the organized society from which they come from.

The practical military skills that Natty possesses are also reflected in his physical appearance; his strong, skilled body is unlike that of any of the European soldiers in the novel.<sup>70</sup> Natty's body is "muscular" and every nerve and muscle of it "appeared strung and indurated by unremitted exposure and toil."<sup>71</sup> Besides Natty, only Native warriors in the novel are described as possessing muscular, trained bodies. For instance, Cooper describes Chingachgook as having an "expanded chest, fully formed limbs."<sup>72</sup> Unlike Natty's and the Native warriors', the European soldiers' bodies are unable to overcome the toils of colonial warfare. When Heyward attempts to evade the Hurons, he reaches his physical limits and tells Natty that "we have journeyed far, and few among us are blessed with forms like that of yours, which seems to know neither fatigue nor weakness."<sup>73</sup>

Major Heyward, on the other hand, lacks the acute senses of Natty and the Native warriors, a rhetorical move that once more emphasizes the different abilities of a European professional soldier and of the Native-like scout; Heyward's senses are more

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>70</sup> Cooper makes a similar observation about Americans in *Notions of the Americans* where he describes how Americans have the "best physique to be soldiers" because they have more "big" than "small" men. Cooper, *Notions*, 300.

<sup>71</sup> Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 46.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 123

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 246.

"civilized" and, thus, not suitable for the forests of North America. Natty mocks Heyward because he has "unpracticed ears" that are unable to detect and properly identify the sounds of the wilderness. In one instance, Natty challenges Heyward to describe a small black object several miles behind their canoe as if the European were "left alone to white experience to find your way through this wilderness." Heyward accepts the challenge but mistakes a bark "paddled by fierce and crafty Mingoes" for a bird. Heyward's "white experience," then, is useless when it comes to fighting in the colonial forests.

Cooper draws attention to the practical rather than theoretical nature of the military knowledge of Natty and the Native warriors through the repetition of the word "skill" in the descriptions of the warriors' military actions. In a fight against the Huron, Chingachgook "lent his strength and skill to the important task," and he was constantly accompanied by the "skillful Uncas." Both Native warriors fought against the "too skillful" Native warrior Magua. Similarly, the Lenape warriors in the novel are described as "active, skillful and resolute."<sup>74</sup> Similarly, the first major clash of the novel, between the Hurons on one side and Chingachgook, Uncas, and Natty on the other, also shows the superior practical skills of Natty and the Native warriors. This skirmish at the falls becomes a protracted engagement because "either party was too well skilled to leave even a limb exposed to the hostile aim."<sup>75</sup>

During the skirmish at the falls Heyward offers little assistance because he lacks the appropriate practical military skills. Instead of fighting against the enemy warriors, he simply admires "what he justly considered a prodigy of rashness and skill" as the Hurons

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 352, 642.

<sup>75</sup> Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 124.

swim against the current to attain a better fighting position.<sup>76</sup> His lack of practical skills appropriate for a battle set in the colonial space indicates how even the most heroic European soldier of the novel has no applicable skills that can match Natty's and the Native warriors'. Heyward's lack of skill is repeated throughout the novel. In a scene when Natty and Heyward pursue the Hurons in a canoe, Natty leaves Heyward responsible for steering the canoe while the scout attempts to shoot at the Native warriors. Cooper describes how Heyward took the paddle and "applied himself with an eagerness that supplied the place of skill."<sup>77</sup> His inability to guide the canoe, which was one of the most popular Native symbols, once more demonstrates that Heyward, as a European soldier, lacks the skills acquired through years of practical experience in the colonial space.<sup>78</sup>

In one telling scene, Heyward puts his skills to the test against Natty in a trial of marksmanship that demonstrates the vast difference between the practical skill of the scout and the more intellectual, scientific knowledge of the professional soldier. After being captured by the Delaware Indians, Natty and Heyward are asked to reveal who amongst them is Natty. In the shooting contest that follows, Heyward and Natty compete but once more Cooper emphasizes the superiority of Natty's practical military skills. Heyward feels that his "skill was far from being contemptible" and fires a shot that "had his life depended on the issue, [his aim] could not have been more deliberate or guarded."<sup>79</sup> Natty mocks Heyward because if his own gun "had turned so much from the true line, many a marten, whose skin is now in a lady's muff, would still be in the woods;

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 129.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 414.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 595.

ay, and many a bloody Mingo, who has departed to his final account, would be acting his deviltries at this very day, between the provinces." Natty's much more successful shot is described in great detail with an emphasis on the role of a trained body in the act of shooting: "[Natty] threw back a foot, and slowly raised the muzzle from the earth: the motion was steady, uniform, and in one direction. When on a perfect level, it remained for a single moment, without tremor or variation, as though both man and rifle were carved in stone."<sup>80</sup> The emphasis on the motions of the body rather than the concentration of the mind draws the reader's attention to Natty's practical skill and, once more, shows that the scout's practical skill is far superior to that of the European professional soldier.

While in *The Last of the Mohicans* the practical aspect of military knowledge is associated with Natty and the Native warriors, the theoretical, or bookish, part of military knowledge is associated with the European professional soldier and is represented as useless. In one instance Natty and the rest of his companions - Duncan, Chingachgook, and Uncas - lose the trail of the Iroquois who have captured Alice and Cora. Uncas soon rediscovers the captives' trail and that discovery prompts Natty to praise the Native warrior by noting how "the lad is quick of sight and keen of wit for his years."<sup>81</sup> Natty takes this opportunity to explain that he values Uncas's knowledge over that of a young white man "who gathers his learning from books and can measure what he knows by the page, [and] may conceit that his knowledge, like his legs, outruns that of his fathers', but, where experience is the master, the scholar is made to know the value of years, and respects them accordingly."<sup>82</sup> Reading a book in a military academy might create the

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 596.

<sup>81</sup> Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 423.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 423.

illusion of knowledge, but it is knowledge that is inferior to the knowledge that comes from years of practice. Natty in another instance shows that he values practical knowledge over theoretical knowledge when he warns Heyward that "if you judge of Indian cunning by the rules you find in books, or by white sagacity, they will lead you astray, if not to your death."<sup>83</sup> And Natty goes even further in showing his distaste for books; when David Gamut, the psalmist who accompanies Heyward for most of the novel, challenges Natty to reveal the chapter and verse the scout is referring, Natty responds with "ill-concealed disdain:"

Do you take me for a whimpering body at the apronstring of one of your old gals; and this good rifle on my knees for the feather of a goose's wing, my ox's horn for a bottle of ink, and my leather pouch for a cross-barred handkercher [sic] to carry my dinner? Book! what have such as I, who am a warrior of the wilderness...to do with books?<sup>84</sup>

Natty deploys a metaphor where the gun and powder-horn become the pen and ink; instead of leaving his mark on paper with ink, he does so on the forests of America with his bullets. Natty dominates in the wilderness of North America because of his practical skills. However, Cooper takes away those skills in *The Prairie* and the famous frontier warrior gradually falls into irrelevance. Natty's loss of skills eventually enables the professional soldier to replace the ex-scout as the spearhead of American expansion.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 405.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 227.

## Natty in *The Prairie*

*The Prairie* finds Natty alone in the Missouri territory helping various characters traveling from the east, such as the Bush family, Paul Hover, and Captain Duncan Uncas Middleton, to negotiate the dangers of the prairies. He helps Hover, Ellen, Inez and Middleton fight against the Bush family and the Tetons. The end of the novel sees most the characters head back east except Natty. Natty refuses to rejoin civilization in the east; rather, he decides to stay in the prairies of the west where he soon dies refusing to offer to his fellow Americans the knowledge he gained through all his years in the wilderness.

Cooper, attempting to negotiate the issues of expansion, sets the novel at a moment when Americans are moving westward. The novel's setting, both geographically and chronologically, changes dramatically from the setting of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Set shortly after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the novel is set in the prairies of the west. Gone are the mountains and forests that contained European presence in *The Last of the Mohicans*. In *The Prairie*, the landscape is "not unlike an ocean, when its restless waters are heaving heavily, after the agitation and fury of the tempest have begun to lessen. There was the same waving and regular surface, the same absence of foreign objects, and the same boundless extent to the view."<sup>85</sup> Representing the prairies of the west as a boundless, calm ocean evokes the annals of discovery from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is an ocean inviting Europeans to explore further as it sets no obstacles, no bounds to hold the explorers back. The image of a surface lacking any foreign objects also diminishes, albeit temporarily, the presence of Native peoples and

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<sup>85</sup> Cooper, 6.

Native warriors in the prairies of the west, further cementing the image of effortless and boundless expansion.

Cooper also emphasizes his attention to American expansion with the first image in the novel: it is a group of "emigrants" - which we soon come to know as the Bush family. The members of the Bush family, and especially the patriarch Ishmael Bush, represent the individual, the figure who seeks to escape the influence of the government of the United States. Cooper describes Ishmael as an "individual" who marches "a little distance in front of the whole," thus separating him even from his own group.

Furthermore, that separation from society becomes even clearer in his description as a man who has turned his back "resolutely on the abodes of civilization, and plunging at each step more deeply, if not irretrievably into the haunts of the barbarous and savage occupants of the country."<sup>86</sup>

Cooper contains the westward move of Natty, and of individuals like Natty, through the metaphor of the loss of Natty's skills. Natty's deteriorating skills are described in numerous instances throughout the novel. In one instance Natty and his companions are running to escape the Sioux. Natty decides to let the others hide in a thick bush while he attempts to lead the Native warriors away from the rest of the group. Mahtoree, the chief of the Indian hunting party, orders Natty to shoot at the bush in order to prove to the Native chief that no one is hiding there. The scene presents Natty's

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<sup>86</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie*, (New York: Penguin Classics, 1987), 6, 7. *The Prairie* finds Natty alone in the west helping various characters, such as the Bush family, Paul Hover, and Captain Duncan Uncas Middleton, who are traveling from the east negotiate the dangers of the prairie. He helps Hover, Ellen, Inez and Middleton fight against the Bush family and the Tetons. The end of the novel sees most the characters head back east and Natty stay in the prairies of the west where he soon dies peacefully.



transformation from the skillful scout in *The Last of the Mohicans* to a warrior whose prior skills have almost deserted him:

As he lowered his rifle, his eye, although greatly dimmed and weakened by age, ran over the confused collection of objects that lay imbedded amid the party-colored foliage of the thicket, until it succeeded in catching a glimpse of the brown covering of the stem of a small tree. With this object in view, he raised the piece to a level and fired. The bullet had no sooner glided from the barrel than a tremor seized the hands of the trapper, which, had it occurred a moment sooner, would have utterly disqualified him for so hazardous an experiment...he caught a view of the fluttering bark, and felt assured that all his former skill was not entirely departed from him.<sup>87</sup>

Natty's senses are diminished and his body language reveals the loss of the skill that defined the scout in *The Last of the Mohicans*. He feels assured that he still has some of his "former skill," but the tremor that seizes him shows that his body has lost its vigor and, along with it, its skills. That deterioration becomes even more apparent when we compare this scene with the shooting contest from *The Last of the Mohicans* where Natty takes his shot "without tremor or variation, as though both man and rifle were carved in stone." The formerly muscular and skillful warrior of *The Last of the Mohicans* is now withered and weak; he is a man whose "limbs grow stiff, and sight is failing."<sup>88</sup> He is no

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 248.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 246.

longer the scout because he physically cannot perform that role. In another similar instance, Natty reacts to a possible danger "with something like the activity and promptitude of his youth" and brings his rifle to his shoulder to shoot. However, Natty's lack of physical strength becomes immediately apparent as he dropped the rifle "into the hollow of his arm again, and resumed his air of melancholy resignation."<sup>89</sup> This resignation is a running theme throughout *The Prairie* and signals the momentous transformation of the former scout from a powerful warrior of the North American wilderness to a shell of his former self resigned to his inability to retake the role he had in *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Through Natty's constant clashes with Dr. Battius, a European natural historian who is exploring the North American continent, Cooper shows that Natty in *The Prairie* still rejects the value of scientific knowledge just as he did in *The Last of the Mohicans*.<sup>90</sup> Dr. Battius' role in the novel has been widely discussed in scholarship on *The Prairie*, especially in relation to Cooper's ideas about science and the Enlightenment.<sup>91</sup> Matthew Wynn Sivils argues that Cooper uses Dr. Battius in order to challenge the naturalist Buffon's ideas about the sickly natural world of North America. Cooper employs Dr. Battius, Sivils continues, as both a critic of Buffon's ideas and as an exemplar of the failings of the "Eurocentric brand of Enlightenment science" of Buffon and his followers.<sup>92</sup> Battius, with his utter devotion to science over practice, clashes constantly

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 91

<sup>90</sup> Dr. Battius is gathering samples of American nature and employing the European taxonomies of famous Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus in order to classify the plants and animals he discovers.

<sup>91</sup> For instance, Joshua Masters argues that Battius provides the perfect vehicle for Cooper to critique "the man of books" who will nevertheless inherit North America. Joshua Masters, 5.

<sup>92</sup> Mathew Wynn Sivils, "Doctor Bat's Ass: Buffon, American Degeneracy, and Cooper's *The Prairie*," *Western American Literature*, 44 (2010): 343-161, 344. Sivils goes on to say that Cooper's opinion on the

with Natty. In one instance, Battius and Natty disagree on the proper name for buffaloes. Upon hearing Natty talk about a herd of buffaloes, Battius attacks Natty's experience and observations and proceeds to explain that the American Bison is actually distinct from the common "bubulus." Natty responds with "the creature is the same, call it by what name you will," but Dr. Battius once more insists that "classification is the very soul of the natural sciences." The discussion would have continued, the narrator notes, if Ishmael Bush did not interrupt the two men, "of whom one was so purely practical and the other so much given to theory."<sup>93</sup> Natty points to Battius' inability to understand the American nature and attributes it to the European scientist being "a little blinded with reading too many books."<sup>94</sup> Considering the emphasis Natty places on sharp eyesight for surviving in the prairies of the west, Natty's remark that Battius is "a little blinded" links the reading of books by men who lack any skills with the inability to survive in the west; civilization blunts the senses according to Natty and makes unskilled men unsuited for the "uncivilized" west.

Cooper fashions the European scientist as a comedic figure in order to challenge the value of European scientists in North America and, instead, elevate the scientific professional soldiers. In one instance in the novel, Dr. Battius boasts to Ellen that he has discovered a new species of animal. His discovery of this animal, he proudly tells her, will allow him to begin his opus *Historia Naturalis Americana* that will "put the sneering imitators of the Frenchman, De Buffon, to shame!"<sup>95</sup> He names this animal *Vespertilio*

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principles and achievements of science, as well as the Enlightenment in general are more nuanced than what Bat's ineptitude as a science might betray.

<sup>93</sup> Cooper, *The Prairie*, 84.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, 110.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, 76.

*Horribilis Americanus* in accordance with the naming practices of the Linnaean taxonomy; however, the animal that he has so proudly discovered is his own donkey that had fled the camp after the Native warriors attacked. Ellen promptly corrects him when she realizes his mistake by saying "It is your own ass," an obvious mocking of Battius' lack of knowledge about North American nature.

Yet while Natty promptly dismisses Battius' theoretical knowledge, he gradually acknowledges that he and the Native warriors of the continent are heading towards extinction. Natty describes how practical skills and practical knowledge are not enough for westward expansion. In an important moment in the novel, Natty acknowledges the value of science when he admits that "it is reason rather than skills that makes a man stronger than the buffalo and swifter than the moose."<sup>96</sup> For the first time in the two novels, Natty privileges theoretical over practical knowledge as the means to tame the west and de-emphasizes the role of individual practical skills in the future of the United States. He slowly slides into irrelevance in the prairie and is eventually replaced by the professional soldier.

### **Duncan Uncas Middleton, the Professional Soldier**

Cooper's eventual marginalization of Natty at the end of *The Prairie* is foreshadowed by the appearance in the novel of Duncan Uncas Middleton, a professional soldier of the United States Army. Middleton is a soldier trained in a military academy rather than the

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 243.

forests of North America and educated in the military sciences. Cooper's description of Middleton is worth quoting in full:

...[the exterior] of the new-comer was distinguished by an air of vigor, and a front and step which it would not have been difficult to have at once pronounced to be military. He wore a forage-cap of fine blue cloth, from which depended a soiled tassel in gold, and which was nearly buried in a mass of exuberant, curling, jet-black hair. Around his throat he had negligently fastened a stock of black silk. His body was enveloped in a hunting-shirt of dark green, trimmed with the yellow fringes and ornaments that were sometimes seen among the border-troops of the confederacy. Beneath this, however, were visible the collar and lapels of a jacket, similar in color and cloth to the cap. His lower limbs were protected by buckskin leggings, and his feet by the ordinary Indian moccasins. A richly ornamented and exceedingly dangerous straight dirk was stuck in a sash of red silk network; another girdle, or rather belt, of uncolored leather contained a pair of the smallest sized pistols, in holsters nicely made to fit, and across his shoulder was thrown a short, heavy, military rifle; its horn and pouch occupying the usual placed beneath his arms. At his back he bore a knapsack, marked by the well-known initials that have since gained for the government of the United States the good-humored and quaint appellation of Uncle Sam.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 122.

Middleton's description is reminiscent of Natty's in *The Last of the Mohicans*, but with some crucial differences. Cooper describes Natty as wearing a "hunting shirt of forest-green...and a summer cap of skins which had been shorn of their fur...His moccasins were ornamented after the gay fashion of the natives, while the only part of his under dress which appeared below the hanging frock was a pair of buckskin leggings, that laced at the sides." The trimmings on Middleton's green hunting shirt transform the shirt from the clothing of a soldier fighting as an individual, who needed to move through the forests unnoticed, to the clothing of a professional soldier whose uniform visibly displayed his military rank and corps in order to aid the organization of an army marching in European-style warfare. Secondly, Middleton bears the "short, heavy, military rifle" of the professional army while Natty bears a "rifle of great length." Unlike Natty's long hunting rifle, which allowed for long-range sniping and, thus, enabled militia soldiers to fight independently or in small groups, the short, military rifle found its most appropriate use by organized groups of soldiers firing en masse in clear terrain. Finally, while Natty lives at the fringes of organized society and away from government influence, Middleton's pronounced military step and the initials of the U.S. government on his knapsack mark him a member of the United States standing army, which is the strongest symbol and tool of a government.

The former scout describes the connection of the professional soldier to the state and marks the transformation of the United States army from a militia to a professional one. He remarks that he remembers the time when the Natives were fighting alongside armed men but not trained military troops; but now, "the country sends out her ships to foreign lands, to wage their battles...and trained soldiers are never wanting, in tens of

thousands, when need calls for their services."<sup>98</sup> He divides the men who participate in warfare into "armed men" and "trained soldiers" and, thus, shows the transformation of the United States military and the importance of organized training in the army that is expanding westward under the command of the state. Unlike "armed men" like Natty, who fight in the forests of North America often by themselves, Duncan and the rest of the "trained soldiers" fight as members of larger military forces. The "trained soldiers" are more than just the tool for westward expansion; they are the tool for global expansion of a nation standing at the precipice of imperial glory. Natty fights for himself and according to his own principles and judgment; Duncan fights as a representative of the will of the American people and to enforce the laws and policies of the American government. When the professional warrior finally releases his future-wife Inez from her captors, he returns to his troops, a group of "sturdy artillerists," who greet him in a "martial shout." Their presence reminds him of his role and duties as a professional soldier, as it "made him master of his movements, gave him dignity and importance in the eyes of his new friends, and would enable him to overcome the difficulties of the wide region."<sup>99</sup> Cooper, then, firmly situates Middleton within the professional army of the United States and represents him as another cog in the military machine of the Republic. By himself, Middleton is unable to overcome the dangers of the prairies; as part of the U.S. military, he is able to overcome the dangers inherent in the U.S. expansion into the regions of the west.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 295.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 436.

Duncan Uncas Middleton's name is also a metaphor for the type of relationship Cooper creates in this novel between the individual, as represented by the figure of the Native, and the United States, as represented by the figure of the professional soldier. Duncan's name is a combination of the names of a European soldier, Duncan Middleton, and of the Native warrior Uncas from *The Last of the Mohicans*. However, the name Uncas is framed by the first and last name of Duncan's European ancestors; the republic frames and controls the "interior Indian other." Duncan's name comes in contrast with Natty's various names in the Leatherstocking Tales, like "Hawkeye" and "La Longue Carabine<sup>100</sup>," which were given to him by Native warriors. The "interior Indian other" in the case of Natty replaces almost completely the white heritage of the individual. Thus, while in the case of Duncan the European names surround and contain the Native name to symbolically surround and contain Native peoples and culture, in the case of Natty the European name is replaced by the Native name, which in part leads to his incompatibility with the new republic.

At the end of *The Prairie* the individualistic hero of *The Last of the Mohicans* fades into the prairies of the west. All the American characters of the novel decide to return East except Natty, who appears reluctant. Battius reminds him that

there are obligations which every man owes to society and to human nature. It is time that you should return to your countrymen, to deliver up some of those stores of experimental knowledge that you have doubtless obtained by so long a sojourn in the wilds, which, however they may be corrupted by preconceived

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<sup>100</sup> La Longue Carabine is French for "The Long Rifle."



opinions, will prove acceptable bequests to those whom, as you say, you must shortly leave forever.<sup>101</sup>

Natty refuses to deliver his "stores of experimental knowledge" because, as he claims, he is "a doer and not a talker." Natty's refusal to acknowledge his debt to society is the final act of an individual who acts outside social bonds and, thus, outside the state. He refuses to acknowledge that he has countrymen and, thus, he literally positions himself as a man who has no country, a man who has no countrymen. His refusal seals the fate of the individual warrior whose presence on the western frontier threatened the Republic's control; Natty will only inhabit the past and not the present of the Republic. Natty advises his companions to "turn your mind on the ways of the inner-country and, thus, shifts the loci of decision-making and of expansion from the frontiers of *The Last of the Mohicans* to the cities of the east."<sup>102</sup> The inner-country, then, becomes the geographical space that assumes the mantle of the republic's decisions and fate.

A few months after the events at the prairie, Middleton and Paul, who have now settled back east, decide to travel to the prairie in search of their old friend. They travel across the same space as earlier in the novel, but it is now a "civilized" space governed by U.S. law rather than a savage space filled with lawless individuals: "the journey was effected, with the privations and hardships that are the accompaniments of all travelling in a wild, but without any of those dangers and alarms that marked their former passage through the same regions."<sup>103</sup> The land is "pacified" now, despite the fact that Natty is no

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 442.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 445.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 449.

longer the actor that aids in that pacification. When they find Natty, they become witnesses to his demise:

[Natty's] approaching end was not to be ascribed to any positive disease, but had been a gradual and mild decay of the physical powers...the old man was reaping the rewards of a life remarkable for temperance and activity...he had hunted with the tribe in the spring, and even throughout the summer; when his limbs suddenly refused to perform their customary offices.<sup>104</sup>

Natty has deteriorated and has lost all traces of the physical strength that had defined him in both novels. Cooper marks Natty's death in terms of the withering of the scout's physical strength. It is his physical powers that have decayed rather than his mind; it is his limbs that refused to act as they used to rather than his mind. Losing his physical strength and his skills, then, makes the former scout literally useless for the United States. Natty's death is the final step in the shift from the frontier warrior to the professional soldier: Natty is "without kith or kin in the wide world," and his death will be the end of his "race." Warriors like Natty, whose Native characteristics dominate their white characteristics, do not have a place in the new republic.

At the end of the novel Cooper marks Natty's death as the containment of rampant expansion westward; instead, Cooper returns the control of the continent to the hands of the professional soldier and, thus, to the centralized authority of the republic. Although the title of the novel is *The Prairie*, by the end almost all the characters of the novel reside in the east, leaving the west empty of individual settlers. *The Prairie*, however, is a

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 453

brief moment in the literary history of Cooper's works. Cooper abandons the figure of the professional soldier in the rest of the novels of the Leatherstocking Tales and returns instead to the romantic version of the American warrior, where the protagonist is the lone heroic figure who fights against the pressures of his historical moment. Cooper's return to the lone frontier hero takes place against the historical backdrop of the expansionist politics of nineteenth-century United States, where the U.S. army became an increasingly-central part of American identity. Following the examples of European nations, the United States developed a scientific, and since the second World War the most technologically advanced, army. Eventually, the debate regarding the militia or the standing army ceases as the standing army becomes the undisputed guardian of the United States and the militia is relegated to a memory of the times when the thirteen colonies were struggling to become a nation.

## Conclusion

Nearly two centuries after the publication of Cooper's works, the figure of the lone warrior and the professional warrior examined in Chapter 4 of "When all the World is but a Martial Stage" are still part of popular culture. The figure of Natty the frontier warrior transformed into the figure of the ex-Special Forces soldier.<sup>1</sup> While Natty's "frontier" was the western edge of U.S. presence in North America, the Special Forces soldier's "frontier" was the jungles of Vietnam. Like Natty, this figure was often represented as a highly skilled individual who fought alone deep behind enemy lines and, thus, far from "civilization" and from conventional ways of war. He had to act not as a "civilized" American but, rather, as the "savage" enemy; he had to use the weapons and tactics of the enemy soldiers to defeat them.

The most predominant example of the trope of the ex-Special Forces soldier is the figure of John Rambo, the traumatized and dejected Vietnam veteran of the movie *Rambo: First Blood* (1982) and its sequels. While Natty is characterized as culturally Native, a white American who had adopted Native ways, Rambo is genetically Native as his father was a Navajo and his mother Italian. In the film adaptation of David Morell's book, Rambo is a veteran of a Special Forces unit who returns to the U.S. after the Vietnam War, and, like Natty, does not have a place in "civilized" society. Rambo attempts to rejoin civilian life, which in the movie is represented by the town of Hope, Washington, but is chased away by Sheriff William Teasel who sees no place in his town

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<sup>1</sup>In addition to the figure of Rambo, Robert de Niro in *Taxi Driver* (1973) is also a Special Forces Vietnam veteran as is almost every character Chuck Norris played during the 1980s.

for a man who had spent so much time in the "wilderness" of Vietnam and was, thus, not completely "American" anymore. Rambo flees into the forests of Washington State and is able to resist all attempts by law enforcement and the National Guard to capture him. Like Natty, he uses the military skills he acquired while fighting on the "frontier" and imitates the tactics of the enemy warriors. Furthermore, the practical military skills he possesses, represented in the movie by the construction of elaborate, albeit "primitive" traps and his preference for his iconic "survival" knife<sup>2</sup>, enable him to defeat the organized army and law enforcement of the U.S. who despite the use of advanced technology, like modern military rifles and helicopters, have no experience in jungle warfare and, thus, cannot defeat a man who is accustomed to the "wilderness." Like Natty, then, Rambo is a figure whose time in the "wilderness" has changed him so dramatically that he can no longer return to civilized society. The "frontier" of Vietnam transformed him into an "uncivilized" warrior who has no place in post-war United States. Thus, in both the case of Natty and Rambo, the warriors whose labor enabled the U.S. empire-building are eventually excluded from the nation. The skills that made them indispensable to the military efforts of the United States also made them unwelcome within it.

While the figure of the lone, ex-Special Forces warrior was a staple of post-Vietnam War America, it gradually lost its foothold in popular culture particularly since the events in New York on September, 11, 2001. The United States has been at war<sup>3</sup> since 2003 and the invasion of Afghanistan. The figure in popular culture of the Rambo-

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<sup>2</sup> Rambo's knife has become such an icon of popular culture that it is sold in numerous brick-and-mortar and online stores.

<sup>3</sup>While the U.S. is engaged in military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the country is not officially at war since the U.S. Congress has not declared war since 1942.

like warrior has been replaced by the figure of the highly-professionalized Special Forces soldier, the corporate soldier, who relies on being part of a team of equally trained soldiers and on his superior technological means to project U.S. military might abroad. In other words, Special Forces soldiers today are represented in a manner similar to how Duncan Uucas Middleton was represented in *The Prairie*. A comparison of the movie *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012), which is based on the true story of the hunt for Osama bin Laden, with *Rambo*, provides an example of the transformation of the figure of the Special Forces warrior. In the place of Rambo single-handedly taking on a technologically advanced army in the "wilderness" of America, there is a group of highly-trained individuals using state-of-the-art equipment, including a stealth helicopter that costs nearly sixty million dollars, who execute the will of the American people as symbolized by the President of the United States. Like Middleton, they have knowledge of the guerilla tactics of their enemies, but they use those tactics only in combination with their superior military technology.

The presence of these two figures centuries after the period covered by this dissertation proves the staying power and the importance of representations of warriors in U.S. literature and popular culture. The military's influence in American culture and entertainment has only been increasing.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the "paradigm of denial" that Kaplan describes has been eroding, and American society is more conscious of the

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<sup>4</sup> The representations of soldiers in the age of the "War against Terror" could have very easily been a chapter in this dissertation because the same discourses that influenced the rhetorical models of the warriors I examined still hold sway. For example, the U.S. army has been actively trying to combat the rhetoric of the war on terror as a crusade by Christian soldiers. A simple search of the terms "Christian Soldier" and "Iraq war" on the internet brings up countless examples of soldiers represented as doing the will of God in Iraq. The notion of the Christian and the secular soldier corresponds to the analysis in the second chapter of this dissertation of the spiritual and secular warrior.

crucial role the military has in American foreign policy. The importance of representations of warriors in popular culture today, then, is a reminder of the importance of warfare and of the figure of the warrior throughout colonial and early national U.S. literary history.

Furthermore, this dissertation shows the importance of studying the figures during the period covered by this dissertation who were making knowledge from the "margins," generating knowledge in places that scholars have overlooked.<sup>5</sup> As this dissertation has shown, the role of soldier-writers, who were often not part of the elite, was crucial in the growth of scientific knowledge. Thus, the study of the literary figure of the warrior and of technical literature of war enables a better understanding of the epistemological negotiations between the ruling elite and those often left unnamed in the annals of history and literature.

Finally, this dissertation shows the important role that representations of the body played in the development of scientific discourses and how those representations influenced the vast majority of American literary genres. As Chris Schilling argues, the body in literature is often present as an item for discussion, but absent as an object of investigation.<sup>6</sup> The emphasis on the body in representations of warriors as well as the role of the warrior's body in knowledge-making practices points to the need for a further examination of the role of action in the development of European and American scientific discourses and in the bridging of the figure of the artisan and the figure of the scientist.

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<sup>5</sup>Pamela Smith and Benjamin Schmidt, eds, *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Texts, 1400-1800*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 8.

<sup>6</sup>Chris Schilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, (London: Sage, 2003), 99.

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