

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: 'AT ALL TIMES, AND IN ALL PLACES, ADORED AND OPPRESSED': GENDER, TEMPORALITY, AND CONJECTURAL HISTORY IN THE TRANSATLANTIC WORLD, 1600-1800.

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This dissertation examines scenes which imagine the collision between primordial time and the time of history to demonstrate that conjectural history is a productive term for understanding how temporality is embedded in constructions of race and gender in transatlantic literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The collision of temporalities in the texts of this dissertation is a product of an Enlightenment project. This project depended upon the temporalization of difference as a mechanism for narrating the progress of human societies. The following readings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts consider the transatlantic encounter as one inextricably involved with the process of the temporalization of difference. While this dissertation examines texts often included in the category of transatlantic literature, it also reads conjectural histories as joint participants in creating fictions about the Americas. Viewed in this way, conjectural history identifies both a mode of creating knowledge and certain kind of narrative which can emerge from a variety of texts irrespective of genre. Indeed, as this dissertation demonstrates, prints and maps, plays and poems, travel narratives and novels can all mobilize conjectural histories of their own. Drawing out the imaginative work

required by conjectural histories, this dissertation shows how they are conceptually linked to more recognizable transatlantic encounter narratives. Because of its immediate and continual association with “early,” “young” or “backwards” humanity, the Americas as setting for encounter, both fictionalized and historical, necessarily activates the temporality of pre-history. Such a textual and visual collision theorizes difference through a temporal architecture. Scenes in which contact, social contract, and sexual contract are collapsed mobilize their own conjectural histories, using temporal frameworks to construct the genres of race and gender. By embedding these scenes in remote times and spaces, texts authorize and naturalize sets of relations between nascent human categories. The texts examined in this dissertation demonstrate how the reenactment of contact works to create narratives of human progress racialized and gendered by/within a temporal architecture made possible by contact’s collision of temporalities.

‘AT ALL TIMES, AND IN ALL PLACES, ADORED AND OPPRESSED’:
GENDER, TEMPORALITY, AND CONJECTURAL HISTORY IN THE
TRANSATLANTIC WORLD, 1600-1800.

by

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Figure i: Engraving by Theodore Galle after a drawing by Jan Van der Straet, “America,” in *Nova Reperta* (New Discoveries), 1600. Caption: “Americus rediscovers America, He called her but once and thenceforth she was always awake.”¹ Trustees of the British Museum, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

¹ Translations of the Latin captions for the engravings from *Nova Reperta* are from Bern Dibner, *New Discoveries; the Sciences, Inventions, and Discoveries of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as Represented in 24 Engravings Issued in the Early 1580's by Stradanus*. 1953.



Figure ii: Engraving by Theodore Galle after a drawing by Jan Van der Straet, “Iron Clocks,” in *Nova Reperta* (New Discoveries), 1600. Caption: “The iron wheel turns evenly, and evenly discloses those times and these.” Trustees of the British Museum, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

Introduction: American Imaginaries and the Temporalization of Difference

Conjectural history narrates humanity's origins and delineates progress over time through an essentially imaginative act: by invoking the earliest moments of human social experience, conjectural history purports to explain the current moment by hypothesizing the relations of the past. From contract theory of the seventeenth century to the stadial theories of the eighteenth, the earliest moment in this process was the most significant, the most contested, and the most obviously constructed, since it aimed to recreate a period lost to history. It is also the moment which reveals the temporal paradox at the heart of such an endeavor, an inconsistency from which gendered and racial meanings radiate. To explain human nature and human society in the present, conjectural histories imagined a time that may have never existed but nevertheless could be seen now in the "savage" societies of the Americas. In narrations of the encounters between Europeans and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas, both real and imagined, these colliding temporalities not only authorize European conceptions of hierarchical difference, but also play a central role in the temporalization of difference over the course of the long eighteenth century. As gender and race emerge and transform as powerful categories of difference during this period,² they are mediated through time. The vertical alignment of hierarchical difference becomes temporal and classificatory.

In this dissertation, I read scenes which imagine the collision between primordial time and the time of history to demonstrate that conjectural history is a productive term

² See Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990), Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*. New Cultural Studies. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

for understanding how temporality is embedded in constructions of race and gender in transatlantic literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I choose the word “scenes” here to refer both to pictorial and dramatic representations, but also to vivid textual representations which evoke visual vocabularies to bring to life their exotic subjects. In opening this dissertation with Jan van der Straet’s iconic image “Vespucci Discovers America,” the first image of *Nova Reperta*, or *New Inventions in Modern Times*, I follow a number of other scholars who identify in it the relationship between gender, colonialism, and history (fig. i).³ I also underscore the visual component of conjectural texts and the conjectural work present in this image in particular, where the sexual and scientific conquest of America as naked woman is conflated with the European conquest of the Americas, and both conquests collapsed into the inauguration of history itself. The engraving vividly shows how primordial time is figured early on through a female body and written on a New World landscape. This America “reveal[s] an otherwise unrecoverable phase in the history of society,” marking the boundary between both savagery and civility, and prehistory and history.⁴ “From her,” Michel de Certeau writes, Vespucci “will make a historied body,” “will write the body of the other and there trace his own history.”⁵ At once allegorical and corporeal, implicitly raced as Indigenous but tied to the land itself, this body and its figurations come to hold a

³ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*. Trans. Tom Conley. (New York: Columbia UP, 1988), Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*. (London: Methuen, 1986), Louis Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery.” *Representations*. 33. Special Issue: The New World, (Winter 1991), 1-41.

⁴ Silvia Sebastiani, *Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress*. Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 9.

⁵ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xxv.

fundamental temporal paradox. This paradox is generative of racial and gendered meaning.

The knot of generative temporal contradictions illustrated in van der Straet's image recurs throughout the Atlantic archive in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in a variety of incarnations, from America as the "youngest" and least "civilized" allegorical sister in cartographic traditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the Indigenous woman as symbol of original maternal dominion in the state of nature in seventeenth-century contract theories, to the "savage" woman as absent indicator of social progress in eighteenth-century stadial theories. As a large body of scholarly work has shown, gender works as an important vocabulary for marking the past from the present and the colonization of the (female) body by scientific (male) discourse.⁶ The discursive association between femininity and primordial time provided a firm yet malleable architecture and more importantly a method of temporalizing difference and codifying it in nascent scientific systems. This is not to say that the gender remained unchanging as emergent race was layered on top. Rather, the project of representing the Americas was, from its earliest moments, a temporal one; to represent the continent meant also to represent, and to answer, the problem of the previously unknown and presently inexplicable people there. Representations of America as allegory offer a vivid display of how difference was temporalized in a new way, while building on

⁶ See Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. (New York: Routledge, 1989), Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), Denise Albanese, *New Science, New World*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

longstanding gendered tropes and mythologies.⁷ The productive early modern association between femininity and pre-civil society/primordial time, and later the eighteenth-century association between femininity and civilization, stretches across the period covered in this dissertation and makes possible the temporalization of emergent racial genres. The implicit race of allegorical America, and the easy collapse between Indigenous woman and natural woman, helps to situate the Americas in a temporal hierarchy, a tiered system in which difference is naturalized by a narrative of progress time.

While inquiries into the origins of society were not unique to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, conjectural history marks a fundamental divergence from earlier theories of human pre-civil society because the set of facts it rests upon are partly drawn from travel histories and early ethnographies of the Americas. The very existence of peoples of the Americas and the continent they occupied disrupted biblical narratives of human history and the temporal frameworks that accompanied them.⁸ In this way, contact initiated a chain of colonial events but also a line of new inquiries into the origin and definition of human culture, civilization, and social change over time, including debates concerning monogenesis and polygenesis.⁹ Alternately described as inhuman beings without souls, as descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, as examples of pre-social “Man,”

⁷ These tropes, including Amazons, cannibals, and mythical islands of women, are explored in chapter one. See also Mario Klarer, “Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America.” *Journal of American Studies*. 27.1 (April 1993) 1-17.

⁸ Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 9-10.

⁹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 10. For how debates on the single or multiple origin of human “races” worked in the seventeenth-century Anglophone tradition, see Cristina Malcolmson, *Studies of Skin Color in the Early Royal Society: Boyle, Cavendish, Swift. Literary and Scientific Cultures of Early Modernity*. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013)

and as prelapsarian children, the Indigenous peoples of the Americas became a focal point not only for discussions of human difference, but also for the jointure between difference and change over time. To explain the Indigenous people of America was essentially a temporal dilemma: what ‘time’ did they occupy? ‘When’ did they come from? It is for this reason that both “states of nature” in early contract theory and later stadial theories used the Americas as a representation of pre-civil society, or as the earliest, most remote stage in social progress. While that time was lost to Europeans, it was paradoxically present in the Americas. Conjectural histories use the Americas as a conceptual tool to create and sustain their conjectures concerning the formation of societies, origins of political power, and human nature. In so doing, they also constructed a modernity which was understood to belong to Europe.

While this dissertation examines texts often included in the category of transatlantic literature, it also reads conjectural histories as joint participants in creating fictions about the Americas. Conjectural history, a central phrase in the discourse of the Enlightenment, sought to classify societies in new systems, aligning the idea of hypothetical history and the idea of progress with the alleged tie between modes of subsistence and manners. Tracking and drawing out the imaginative work required by conjectural histories, I show how they are conceptually linked to more recognizable transatlantic encounter narratives. Because of its immediate and continual association with “early,” “young” or “backwards” humanity, the Americas as setting for encounter, both fictionalized and historical, necessarily activates the temporality of pre-history. Such a textual and visual collision theorizes difference through a temporal architecture. As in van der Straet’s engraving, this collision is imagined as the simultaneous first Euro-

American contact, and as the inauguration of history itself, the imagined moment in which the past is separated from the present. While this association pervades later scenes as well, it gathers increasingly layered and complex entanglements between race, time, and gender as the inauguration of history is transmuted into first social contract, first sexual contract, and later as the first stage in human history, the savage or hunting stage. Scenes in which contact, social contract, and sexual contract are collapsed mobilize their own conjectural histories, using temporal frameworks to construct the genres of race and gender. By embedding these scenes in remote times and spaces, texts authorize and naturalize sets of relations between “Man and his human Others.”¹⁰ The texts examined in this dissertation demonstrate how the reenactment of contact works to create narratives of human progress racialized and gendered by/within a temporal architecture made possible by contact’s collision of temporalities. Viewed in this way, conjectural history identifies both a mode of creating knowledge and certain kind of narrative which can emerge from a variety of texts irrespective of genre. Indeed, as I will show in this dissertation, prints and maps, plays and poems, travel narratives and novels can all mobilize conjectural histories of their own. While conjectural history as a genre is usually distinguished from fictional texts, the imaginative, hypothetical, and narrative work required by the conjectural mode mirrors that of literary texts. Most importantly, however, without identifying the conjectural work that these texts narrate and depend upon, we miss the central function of temporality in the constructions of gender and race.

¹⁰ Following Sylvia Wynter, I approach the categories of gender and race as “genres of humanity.” David Scott and Sylvia Wynter, “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 4, no. 2 (September 2000): 198.

I take up textual and visual representations of the Americas to argue that one of the ways these transatlantic texts have “produced the ‘rest of the world’ for European readerships” was through temporal differentiation.¹¹ As Mary Louise Pratt points out, “travel writing and enlightenment natural history catalyzed each other to produce a Eurocentered form of global or...‘planetary’ consciousness.”¹² But the ‘planet’ and ‘globe’ were increasingly organized around a regime of universal time, not in the sense of time zones or time keeping, but in a sense of universal human progression. The texts in this dissertation describe “contact zones.” Building on Pratt’s term, I consider these zones not only as spaces of violent, alien encounter, but as spaces of temporal collision and denial.¹³ I consider less the new temporal copresence of encounter and more the denial of shared time itself, how texts construct and invoke temporal tools and distancing devices to place colonial spaces in other times. To be clear, I do not argue that colonial texts deny shared time, but deny that they are coeval, or “of equal antiquity, of contemporaneous origin, going back to the same date.”¹⁴ I approach the obsessive literary and visual reenactment of a pristine encounter between Europeans and Indigenous peoples, especially in the native Caribbean, as “moments in a developing [colonial] discourse.”¹⁵ Considering these recurrent scenes in a temporal framework reveals that they operate on

¹¹ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. (New York: Routledge, 1992), 5.

¹² Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 5.

¹³ Pratt uses “contact zone” to describe the usually violent, contested “space of colonial encounters” to “invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect,” *Imperial Eyes*, 6-7.

¹⁴ “coeval, adj. and n.” *OED Online*. March 2020. Oxford University Press.

¹⁵ I elaborate on the temporal associations that Hulme suggests when he identifies these scenes as moments and comments that “In a variety of ways the ‘discovery of America’ has been inscribed as a beginning.” *Colonial Encounters*, xiii, 1.

a palimpsestic temporality, often appearing as anachronisms but also working as ruses which conceal the violence of colonization and the resistance to that violence.

In selecting texts for this project, I have focused on visual, dramatic, and poetic versions of pristine encounter, that is, first encounters between Europeans and Indigenous peoples, and especially what often falls under the term “romantic” encounters. The quotes around this word are to recognize the violence and erasure which are often the product, and the aim, of couching encounters in terms of sex, romance, and marriage. These types of encounters are especially productive of conjectural histories precisely because of their gender and race/culture combination: an Indigenous woman, a figure overtly gendered and raced, and European man, one whose racialization and gendering is always hidden by his status as the “universal human.”¹⁶ In my readings of these texts, I consider representations of knowledge transfers and power struggles. I attend to the way temporality shapes the meaning of these encounters, both in terms of narrative settings and historical echoes or repetitions but also in terms of the temporal associations of identity. Though the details of his representation and associations may change, the European man in these encounters always carries with him, sometimes as a blunt weapon and other times as a temporal echo, the time of modernity. Similarly, the Indigenous woman often marks primordial time, savage time, the time before “the writing of history.”¹⁷ The dual gendering and racializing of her body, always also lashed however faintly to the body of land itself, elides even as it represents the dialectical immobility of femininity and savagery in conjectural thought. In approaching these texts through the

¹⁶ Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 24.

¹⁷ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xxvi.

frame of temporality and the backdrop of the temporalization of difference, I argue that the time of the familiar and reoccurring settings of shoreline, shipwreck, and wilderness activate the temporality of prehistory.

In arranging these chapters, I have followed a mostly chronological organization. However, the various forms of these scenes of colliding temporalities—contact, curiosity, contract, conjecture—often overlap, even while they depend upon one another for meaning. In this sense, these scenes work palimpsestically both formally and temporally. Allegorical figures such as Jan van der Straet’s “America” share narrative and visual elements with objects found in curios or in the textual representations of curiosities, for example, and both figures and objects shape scenes of social and sexual contract and haunt later conjectures with their temporal inconsistencies. To fully understand the importance of visual culture in early temporal constructions, I begin with engraved images, maps, frontispieces, and travel narratives, drawing out the relation between the visual image, the text, and the temporal and gendered work at play in early comparative ethnographies. These tropes appear throughout the texts in later chapters, shaping the figures of female sovereignty in exotic Restoration dramas, for example, lending geographical descriptions temporal meaning in iterations of *Inkle and Yarico*, and helping to reveal the conjectural lens necessary to paint land as an uninhabited wilderness in histories of women in the late eighteenth century.¹⁸

¹⁸ For example, Jean Mocquet’s *Travels and Voyages*, published first in 1617 but not translated into English until 1697, appears in chapter one for its investment in the epistemology of the curiosity cabinet and the abundant tropes of female savagery which appear in its pages. Mocquet appears again in chapter three for the connection between one of his anecdotes about an Indigenous-Euro ‘romance,’ and *Inkle and Yarico*. Similarly, the cannibals who stand beyond Vespucci appear throughout the visual texts in chapter one and linger on the edges of Dryden’s *The Indian Queen* and *Indian Emperor*,

While this dissertation draws from spaces which were decidedly multi-lingual, the texts examined in this project are largely Anglophone. Though I frequently draw from texts which were originally published in French, Spanish, Dutch, and sometimes Latin, all texts were translated into English during the period of this dissertation. In particular, French philosophical movements over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have important connections to the developments traced in this project, including the conjectural tradition of *histoire raisonnée*. While the dialogue between French, English, and Scottish thinkers was decidedly important, an examination of French authors, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Joseph-François Lafitau, and Michel de Montaigne is beyond of the scope of this project.

The transatlantic methodology and framework for this dissertation is anchored by the chronological time of periodization (though perhaps stretching the long eighteenth century to its limits), and in physical space—the transatlantic encounters that are narrated in the texts of the dissertation are either produced by actual or imagined crossings of the Atlantic ocean during a period of profound economic, political, social, cultural, and literary changes. But my approach to the transatlantic is also interested in a messier, palimpsestic and spectral time, and in a sense of space which is just that—a sense—more than a space produced or legible by geographical boundaries. Adam Lifshey’s definition

making another full appearance in poetic adaptations of *Inkle and Yarico* in the 18th century. Guymar’s wonder at first seeing a European ship in *The Indian Queen* is mirrored by Dorinda’s first vision of a man in his version of *The Tempest* (with William Davenant), a scene which is repeated in versions of *Inkle and Yarcio* and in various visual texts throughout the century. The dramatic link between sexual and social contract performed in Dryden’s plays and Hobbes’s contract theory appears in another form in chapter four in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*, where it helps structure the image of America as uninhabited wilderness.

of “America” productively links transatlantic space to a series of narrative acts invested in producing and hiding absence. America is not a geographically bounded space, but rather “a reiterating foundational narrative in which a conqueror arrives at a shore determined to overwrite local versions of humanity.”¹⁹ The material absences that Lifshy associates with the spectral and haunting quality of transatlantic literatures are important to this dissertation.²⁰ But I also tie the spectral lingering to the collision of temporalities at work in these encounters; specters are first and foremost haunting because they erupt into the present from another time. The conqueror’s arrival on an American shore may be read as a foundational narrative of conquest, but I interpret recurrent scenes through the intertwined axes of gender, time, and emergent race. Many, if not most of these shoreline scenes “discover” an implicitly raced woman whose female body is always “a cipher that awaits deciphering,” a conflation of land/corpus whose transformation “into an extension, into an open interiority like a book” marks the emergence of a modern medical and historiographical framework.²¹ The survival, sustenance, and epistemological revolution which the conqueror symbolizes is recurrently tied to an Indigenous woman who translates, or obscures, New World knowledge. This

¹⁹ This “America” was “forged by an ongoing production of absence: the lives that disappeared, the societies and ecologies that vanished, the dynamics of disembodiment,” a disembodiment that is both “haunting and transatlantic.” Adam Lifshy, *Specters of Conquest: Indigenous Absence in Transatlantic Literatures*. (New York: Fordham UP, 2010, 1.

²⁰ I see the persistent trope of Indigenous “disappearance,” where “Native peoples are portrayed as always in the process of vanishing” tied to the temporal associations between the Americas and primordial time, and to what Patrick Wolfe terms “the logic of elimination” which structures settler colonialism. Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017) viii. Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native.” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387.

²¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 2-3.

figure, sometimes, as in Dryden's *The Indian Emperor*, Cortez himself, or, as in the iterations of *Inkle and Yarcio*, an English trader or pilot, reenacts the inauguration of modern history, what Michel de Certeau calls "*writing that conquers*."²² Part of that conquering act, however, is in the organization of the narrative of conquest through a progressive temporal architecture.

The reemergence and collision of temporalities in the texts of this dissertation are a product of an Enlightenment project. This project depended upon the temporalization of difference as a mechanism for narrating the progress of human societies. My readings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts consider the transatlantic encounter as one inextricably involved with the process of the temporalization of difference. However, I do not mean to suggest this process is even, coherent, or indeed even complete. Instead, I argue that these scenes reveal the ragged edges of colliding times and expose the way temporal architectures construct narratives of difference. In the opening pages of *The Writing of History*, which also begins with the image of Vespucci discovering "America" as layered female body/body of land, de Certeau identifies such ragged edges as the products of "Modern Western history," which "essentially begins with differentiation between the present and the past."²³ De Certeau's framework positions modernity as a construction predicated upon that sometimes violent differentiation, an "initial division" between past and present that is everywhere repeated. He suggests that the past/present division is tied to a structure of Western discourse which narrates its own progress by "changing what it makes its 'other'—the Indian, the past, the people, the mad..." since

²² Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xxv.

²³ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 2.

“intelligibility is established through a relation with the other.”²⁴ In this act of division, however, shards of the past remain and return. In a move that presages Lifshy’s spectral reading of the transatlantic, de Certeau argues that “whatever this new understanding of the past holds to be irrelevant—shards created by the selection of materials, remainders left aside by an explication—comes back, despite everything, on the edges of discourse or in its rifts and crannies: ‘resistances,’ ‘survivals,’ or delays discreetly perturb the pretty order of a line of ‘progress’ or a system of interpretation.”²⁵ I read colliding temporalities in the texts of this dissertation as both a product of the project of the temporalization of difference and as the materials of that very project; since “America” is a “reiterating foundational narrative” that is interesting because of its placement in an undocumented, primordial time—indeed, its occupation of this time demands documentation—the conjectural narratives in this dissertation depend upon the same material which creates these temporal shards.²⁶

I. The State of Nature and the Savage State

Seventeenth-century contract theory and eighteenth-century stadial theory have in common two central impulses: the simultaneous placement of the state of nature in an unreachable past and in the present Americas, and the use of travel narratives to supply “empirical” evidence for such a state.²⁷ These two bodies of thought share a number of

²⁴ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 3.

²⁵ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 4.

²⁶ Lifshy, *Specters of Conquest*, 1.

²⁷ Gathering and distinguishing such evidence was an important point for contract theorists’ critique of Patriarchalism. John Locke, for example, criticizes Sir Robert Filmer because Filmer “fails to support his basic theory of government with any empirical

concepts, methods, and assumptions, and diverge from one another in important ways. Both depend upon and create the association between the Americas now and the state of nature in a primordial, undocumentable past. This association is important in considering how both early modern contract theory and eighteenth-century conjectural history narrated and sustained new hierarchies of difference.

The state of nature served a vital function for seventeenth-century contract theorists. It worked as the blank, timeless canvas upon which theories of rights, sovereignty, and obligation could be written. Despite their many differences, both contract theorists Thomas Hobbes and John Locke characterized the Americas as a place which embodied the state of nature. The essential function of the Americas and the temporal paradox at the heart of such a function was tied to an emergent empirical mode which saw the Americas (its land, its animals, its people) as a site from which to mine raw material for political, scientific, and social theories, and contributed to the construction of what Stephanie Martens describes as “American social imaginaries,” a political and theoretical vocabulary and set of associations drawn from the New World.²⁸ In mid-eighteenth-century stadial theories, the move to American travelogues as empirical evidence for primordial human history is so practiced and axiomatic that it is hard to detect the speculative work at play. In pairing contract theory with conjectural history, however, we can see this initial movement as one which covers over not only the temporal paradoxical use of the Americas, but also the imaginative act required for the

examples,” Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 16.

²⁸ Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought: States of Nature and Aboriginality*. (New York: Palgrave, 2016) 7.

application of such “evidence.” The construction of conjectural history as empirical depends upon such an act. As I argue in chapter one, the state of nature and its jointure to the Americas works as an “empirical myth.”²⁹ The empirical myth of the Americas, as the work of Stephanie Martens and Barbara Arneil has shown, was an essential component for seventeenth-century contractual theory, particularly in its authorization of colonial projects and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples which such projects required.³⁰

For many contract theorists, “America” served as a shorthand illustration for the earliest period in human history. In a section on property in the second treatise of 1690 *Two Treatises on Government*, for example, John Locke declares that “in the beginning all the world was *America*.”³¹ In this passage, Locke speaks directly to the apparent lack of currency in “the middle of the inland parts of America,” where people “had not hopes of commerce with other parts of the world” and thus for whom currency is useless.³² While this is but one of Locke’s many references to the Americas in the *Two Treatises*, it encapsulates the conceptual function they played in his and other contractarian texts, and also situates European commerce as a signal of modernity, a key characteristic of later stadial theories. While not explicitly set in a chronology of human progress, Locke’s conception of the state of nature nevertheless implies it has already happened; it occurred at the “beginning” of human society in a long ago, faraway timespace. Nevertheless,

²⁹ Jonathan Elmer, *On Linger and Being Last: Race and Sovereignty in the New World*. (New York: Fordham UP, 2008) 11.

³⁰ Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought: States of Nature and Aboriginality*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

³¹ *Two Treatises on Government*, (Dublin: Printed for J. Sheppard and G. Nugent, 1779), 187.

³² *Two Treatises on Government*, 187.

America now is paradoxically “the beginning of civilization” and thus revelatory of “society’s natural origins.”³³ Locke illustrates the state of nature with early ethnographic examples of Indigenous peoples, drawing from travel narratives, including Richard Hakluyt’s *Principal Navigations* (1589-1600), Sir Walter Raleigh’s *History of the World* (1614), and Samuel Purchas’s *Pilgrims* (1614) along with his own experience in the colonies.³⁴ In Barbara Arneil’s examination of Locke’s work and the Americas, Locke’s characterization of the state of nature recast the notion of property so that occupation of a particular piece of land no longer produced ownership. Rather, a certain type of labor was necessary in order to claim land—cultivation.

While American travelogues relayed abundant reports of Indigenous cultivation of landscapes and crops, and indeed benefited from the harvests of such cultivation, they often argued that what they saw was not agriculture proper; many forms of cultivation which were unknown to Europeans were entirely neglected as technologies of modification.³⁵ This constructed absence of cultivation worked as a key tool for maneuvering Indigenous people into a different time and in reifying the Americas as “virgin land untamed by humanity” rather than “the product of centuries of cultivation.”³⁶ In claiming the absence or invalidity of cultivation, European travelogues erased these centuries and in so doing placed Indigenous people in a pre-contract landscape. These

³³ Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*, 1.

³⁴ Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism*, 22.

³⁵ In North America, for example, when French colonizers and missionaries saw meadows interspersed between woodlands, they assumed that such landscapes were the product of nature alone rather than the product of modification. Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America*. (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993) 17.

³⁶ Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 16-17.

modes of reading and erasing, or rather, of reading and creating blank spaces where Indigenous technologies were, is tied to an earlier visual culture about the Americas which often situated it in a timeless Edenic landscape.³⁷ Indigenous peoples in literary and travel texts often simply pick fruit from trees and drink water from sparkling brooks; the landscape provides all of their needs without labor.³⁸ Locke's identification of the absence of property and agriculture, aside from positioning the European conceptions of these the only valid kinds, codifies these earlier associations.

Thomas Hobbes's infrequent mention of the Americas is one reason why the epistemological status of the state of nature in his work has been contested, with several scholars arguing that Hobbes created his state of nature solely as a theoretical tool rather than a historical description.³⁹ Attention to the temporal dimension of the state of nature is illuminating in this debate. I argue that in its conjectural work, Hobbes's state of nature

³⁷ Theodore de Bry's 1590 edition of Thomas Harriot's *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* opens with an engraving of Adam and Eve, suggesting a visual narrative which begins with Adam and Eve either in the Americas, or being banished from it. In Thomas Trevelyon's 1608 commonplace book, for example, Adam and Eve are expelled into a maize-filled landscape, suggesting that they were first expelled into the New World. (Stallybrass, Peter. "Visible and Invisible Letters: Text versus Image in Renaissance England and Europe." *Visible Writings*. Ed. Mary Shaw. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 2011), 77-98). Chapter one discusses this in greater detail.

³⁸ Often texts combine the idea of Edenic fertility with savagery. For example, the abundant earth, pagan torture, and cannibalism abound in Dryden's *Indian Queen* and *Indian Emperor*, as well as in numerous poetic versions of Inkle and Yarico in the first half of the 18th century.

³⁹ Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 79. "The state of nature for Hobbes, we are repeatedly told," Richard Ashcraft writes, "is nothing more than a 'logical abstract,' a 'hypothetical construct,' or a 'methodological fiction,'" and "has nothing to do with either history or anthropology." "Hobbes's Natural Man: A Study in Ideology Formation." *The Journal of Politics*, (1971): 1086-7.

is both “an anthropology” and “a logical exercise.”⁴⁰ Both those who argue for Hobbes’s state of nature as a concept shaped by early ethnography and those who consider it a “methodological fiction” take for granted that Hobbes identifies the Americas as “the first stage of the world.”⁴¹ The axiomatic association between the Americas and prehistory situates Hobbes’s state of nature in an ethnographically relevant temporal grid. Hobbes’s references to the Americas in *De Cive* (1642) and *Leviathan* (1651), though less frequent than Locke’s, similarly depend upon the identification of the state of nature in the Americas and ethnographic examples from travel narratives as evidence. The state of nature is a fiction we tell ourselves about the past, and yet can still be examined through a prospective glass aimed at the Americas. In reading and writing the Americas, European writers could travel through time:

It may peradventure be thought there *was never* such a time nor condition of war

⁴⁰ In a conversation with Quentin Skinner, Carole Pateman argues that Hobbes’s state of nature is primarily “a logical exercise.” Skinner, drawing from Theodore de Bry’s influence on the frontispiece to *De Cive* as well as Hobbes’s own investment in the Virginia Company, reads “the state of nature” as “an anthropology.” While both Pateman and Skinner agree that Hobbes’s state of nature illustrates the theoretical collapse of society, thus functioning as “a terrible warning” to those who would disobey authority, neither fully consider the theoretical work performed by the axiomatic placement of the Americas in the state of nature, in the first “stage” of human society, and consequently in another time. “Hobbes, History, Politics, and Gender: A Conversation with Carole Pateman and Quentin Skinner,” *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes: Rereading the Canon*. Ed. Hirschmann, Nancy J, and Joanne H Wright. (University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 39-40.

⁴¹ Carole Pateman, “Hobbes, History, Politics, and Gender: A Conversation with Carole Pateman and Quentin Skinner,” *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes*, 40. While Pateman acknowledges Hobbes’s association between the Americas and the state of nature and even that it “shares elements of [an anthropology], especially in the passages of conjectural history,” she maintains that the Hobbesian state of nature is still “largely a theoretical, heuristic, or logical device,” and not “a real historical condition in America.” Instead, Hobbes and other political theorists mentioned the Americas because of a novel fascination. “The early modern theorists,” she explains, “were fascinated by America because here were people running around in the wild woods, living in an example of the first stage of the world.”

as this; and I believe it *was never generally so*, over all the world: but there are many places *where they live so now*. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all, and live *at this day* in that brutish manner, as I said before.⁴²

The state of nature does not describe the general condition of mankind, and yet it somehow describes the condition of two entire continents; the state of nature is mostly in the past, but it is also now. The temporal language of this section highlights the exceptional status Hobbes gives to the Americas but is also revelatory of the interlocking work of temporal and political maneuvers. The absence of political structure found in this primordial landscape (“no government at all”) authorizes the colonization of the land and provides the occasion for a new contract. Hobbes’s state of nature lacked government, but also the other inventions of civil society, like those documented in *Nova Reperta*: “no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society.”⁴³ Thus the Americas become a “blank space,” a vacancy constructed by time.

As Johannes Fabian points out in *Time and the Other*, this temporal movement was a central “root” of anthropology and marks its colonial investments. For both Hobbes and later stadial theorists, “What makes the savage significant to the evolutionist’s Time is that he lives in another Time.”⁴⁴ Hobbes’s state of nature does indeed function as

⁴² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 13. My emphasis

⁴³ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 13.

⁴⁴ Fabian, Johannes, and Matti Bunzl. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. (New York: Columbia UP, 2014), 27.

theoretical tool, but it is one which also functions as a “distancing device” of colonialism and one that produces knowledge in the form of human genres.⁴⁵ More importantly, the significance of the “savage” as an object of study is created through this temporal relocation. As I will show in my first chapter, the impulse to turn to the Americas for the image of the state of nature was already deeply established in visual culture and in travel narratives of the period. So while their theories of government may have been new, Hobbes and Locke built upon the temporal associations which were already established in maps, engravings, and earlier frontispieces. These visual representations were distinctly shaped by gender and an association between female sovereignty and the primordial, sometimes chaotic, sometimes Edenic time of the Americas.

II. From Contract to Conjecture

The early condition of society has been the same among all nations. Man first appears as a hunter....But there is a progress in the course of human affairs...The rude state gives way to the pastoral life, and the roaming savage is succeeded by the roaming shepherd...But no such tribes were to be found in America. Here there is a blank in the species.⁴⁶

With their disavowal of the state of nature and their interest in the natural history of mankind, mid eighteenth-century conjectural histories appear fundamentally different from the more abstract and politically-oriented contract theories of the previous century. However, stadial theorists followed contract theorists in the temporal placement of the Americas in the earliest stage of human society. Stadial theory, articulated in the 1750s and 1760s in Adam Smith’s Glasgow lectures but taken up by Millar, Ferguson,

⁴⁵ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 31.

⁴⁶ Gilbert Stuart, “Review of William Robertson’s *History of America*.” *Monthly Review*. 1777, 454-55.

Robertson, and Kames, proposed four unilineal stages of social evolution through which society advanced: hunting (the “savage” state), herding (the pastoral state), agriculture, and commerce. The novelty of this method, and what distinguished it from *histoire raisonnée*, lay in the framework of the stages themselves and their narration of mostly linear progress from “rude” or “savage” societies to civilized ones.⁴⁷ Through this movement the construct of civil society, which structured contract theory and marked the boundary between history and prehistory, became “civilization,” a stage associated with commerce and exhibited by commercial Europe. Stadal theory became “the modern method” of the Scottish Enlightenment which Dugald Stewart would label as “conjectural history.”⁴⁸ More so than previous conjectural histories, the stages “offered a grid with which to interpret sources and established facts, and in which the histories of peoples could be tied in with the history of the species.”⁴⁹ Its rejection of the state of nature as articulated by Hobbes, for example, was largely temporal: change did not happen suddenly, but slowly over time, in degrees.

Stadal theorists opposed two common elements of the contractarian state of nature by arguing firstly, that man was always a social being, and secondly, that societal change occurred at a slow pace but generally in the direction of ‘progress.’ Eschewing the concept of a natural state in which existence was “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short,” and where “every man was an Enemy to every man,” stadal theorists rejected the

⁴⁷ Phyllis K. Leffler discusses *histoire raisonnée* as “a pre-Enlightenment genre,” “The ‘Histoire Raisonnée,’ 1660-1720: A Pre-Enlightenment Genre.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37, no. 2 (1976): 219-40. Stadal theorists were in conversation with and indebted to French thinkers. A particularly influential text was Montesquieu’s 1748 *De l’esprit des lois*.

⁴⁸ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 6.

⁴⁹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 8.

methodological impulse to seek nature in solitary figures.⁵⁰ “A wild man therefore, caught in the woods, where he had always lived apart from his species, is a singular instance, not a specimen of general character” rather than example of natural man.⁵¹ Instead, as Adam Ferguson argues in his 1767 *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, humans have always “assembled in troops and companies and the individual always joined by affection to one party, while he is possibly opposed to another.”⁵² In the opening section of the *Essay*, entitled “Of the question relating to the State of Nature,” Ferguson resituates the issue of human social evolution in the temporal grid of the stages by articulating gradational change over time; “natural productions,” human or otherwise, “are generally formed by degrees,” but “in the case of man [progress] is continued to a greater extent than in that of any other animal.”⁵³ Here Ferguson critiques “the poet, the historian, and the moralist” who “frequently allude to [the] ancient time” of the state of nature and who assume “the first state of our nature must have borne no resemblance to

⁵⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapter 13.

⁵¹ Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Dublin: 1767), 5. Despite stadial theorists’ views in this regard, the allure of the “the wild man” and its connection to “natural man” persisted throughout the 18th century in the slightly altered form of the feral child. In his 1773 *Of the Origin and Progress of Language*, James Burnett, Lord of Monboddo, used an example of “Peter the wild boy,” a child found by hunters in a forest neighboring Hamelin, Germany, in 1725, as evidence for his theory of the evolution of language. Peter was unable to learn to read and write, and supported Monboddo’s argument concerning linguistic and social abilities. Monboddo also wrote the preface to the 1768 English edition of Charles-Marie de la Condamine’s *An Account of a Savage Girl, Caught Wild in the Woods of Champagne*, originally published in 1755. The *Account* described the life and discovery of Marie-Angélique Memmie Le Blanc, also known as “the wild girl of Champagne,” in 1731. While Monboddo was considered an eccentric outlier in his use of feral children and orangutans, more well-received and central conjectural historians were interested in these cases as well; it was William Robertson who translated the *Account* into English.

⁵² Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 4.

⁵³ Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1.

what men have exhibited in any subsequent period.”⁵⁴ The utterly alien character of the state of nature conceived in this way offers too many temptations for the imagination, and so the turn to “an imaginary state of nature” only produces “wild suppositions” and overlooks “the records of history” itself.⁵⁵ Those records, Ferguson argues, demonstrate that humans have not degenerated from a natural state, but rather slowly improved.

For stadial theorists, such improvement—progress—is tied to and produced by the social impulse. “There is thus, in a human society,” John Millar writes in *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1778), “a natural progress from ignorance to knowledge, and from rude, to civilized manners, the several stages of which are usually accompanied with peculiar laws and customs.”⁵⁶ These laws and customs could be used to place societies in a stage, offering a classificatory system which discloses its self-alignment with natural history. “The natural historian,” Ferguson argues, “thinks himself obliged to collect facts, not to offer conjectures.”⁵⁷ While in their own ways, conjectural theorists privileged “facts” over “conjectures,” they nevertheless depend heavily upon such reasoning in their discussions of “rude” societies. When “facts” about such societies were incorporated into stage theory, they inevitably became conjecture because of the hypothetical reasoning, and temporal manipulation, required to imagine a period lost to

⁵⁴ Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 2.

⁵⁵ Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 3.

⁵⁶ John Millar, *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, 3rd Ed. (London: 1779), 5.

⁵⁷ Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 3. The urge to critique other theorists for “conjecture” is a recurrent theme in stadial histories, as if each theorist needed to assert that their work, unlike the work of others, did not stray into the imaginative. William Robertson, for example, criticized Lord Kames for “reckless theses about the origins of man,” while Kames critiques Buffon for including “mere conjectures” rather than the “careful verification of facts.” Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 8.

history.

Stadial theorists positioned themselves as examiners and collectors of facts, but stadial theory was nevertheless deeply invested in the conjectural mode. “When we cannot trace the process by which an event *has been* produced,” Dugald Stewart explains, “it is often of importance to be able to show how it *may have been* produced by natural causes.”⁵⁸ There was no stage where this was so crucial as the first, the savage or hunting stage, and to exemplify it conjectural historians unanimously turned to the Americas to narrate the earliest stage of human society. While stadial theorists were keen to distinguish the hypothetical method necessary for imagining the undocumented eras in human history from reckless conjecture, the hypothetical reasoning required to describe the earliest stage of human history works as a perpetual thorn in the side, a reminder of the imaginative work at the heart of the conjectural mode. Hypothetical reasoning was necessary “to reconstruct the savage stage” because this stage was an archival absence, “untraceable in the history of Europe because it predated the ways of preserving historical memory.”⁵⁹ Between the savage and pastoral stages, the temporal gap widened to a gaping chasm. While a desire to reconstruct such a state suggests that it is a universal project, such a reconstruction is for the purposes of explaining Europe in particular. The structure created by this investigation always positions Europe as modern, and, since it occupies the most “civilized” stage of human society, if not the most human, the farthest progressed in the stadial project of humanity. In this way, in narrating the first stage of

⁵⁸ Dugald Stewart, Joseph Black, *Essays on philosophical subjects: to which is prefixed an Account of the life and writings of the author*. (London: Printed for T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies, 1795) xlii.

⁵⁹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 8.

human society, conjectural theorists were always constructing a fiction about the Americas, footnoting their sources as they did so.⁶⁰ The turn to the Americas as evidence for Europe's past was thus an embattled node of stadial theory, the knot which threatened to undo itself.

While conjectural historians and stadial theorists in particular aimed to separate their work from seventeenth-century contract theory and from previous conjectures which strayed into the territory of fiction, they nevertheless reproduced and even entrenched the temporal paradox present in the work of Hobbes and Locke. To claim that state of nature is “imaginary” elides the way that conjectural theory continues to associate the Americas with another time. The Americas of stadial theory may not be “the state of nature” proper, but nevertheless represent the first stage in humanity, one that remains a gap in the European archive. The grid of the stages lent credibility and offered a systematic approach to cataloguing human difference, but the mechanism by which this is achieved was temporal and rooted in earlier transatlantic texts. The “savage” was no longer a spatially distant figure, but a temporally distant one, and this could be shown through a comparative discussion of human societies. Conjectural theorists critiqued the state of nature and each other as the producers of conjectures because the reconstruction of the first stage was always an act of narrative and imaginative creation. Furthermore, the

⁶⁰ Ferguson, Millar, Kames, Antoine-Léonard Thomas, and Denis Diderot all follow the practice of footnoting North and South American travel narratives to evidence “rude” and “savage” societies, sometimes distinguishing between the two. Throughout his *Essay*, for example, Ferguson draws from travel narratives including Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix's 1744 *Histoire et Description Generale de la Nouvelle France*, Colden Cadwallader's 1747 *The history of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*, and Joseph-François Lafitau's 1724 *Moeurs des Sauvages Amériquains, Comparées aux Moeurs des Premiers Temps*.

central temporal paradox continued to produce unanswerable questions: if the Americas are in the “savage” state, why haven’t they progressed? How can two societies occupy the same space but different times? Thus while their arguments concerning change over time and the social nature of humans mark a break with earlier conjectures, stadial theorists turned to the Americas for the same reason as Hobbes and Locke: because “in the beginning, everywhere was America.”

III. From Maternal Dominion to Adoration and Oppression

Both contract theories and conjectural histories depend upon theories of historical gender relations for cohesion and coherence. Conjectural work is generative of gendered and racial meanings, and this is most clear when we examine the shifts in these gendered histories and even in their elided centrality to conjectural work itself. Race is linked to and even made invisible by the temporalization of difference in these gendered histories. Contract theory and conjectural history turn to the Americas and Indigenous women in particular as illustrations of the state of nature or as the savage state to support their theories of gender relations. It is important to note here that while each makes use of what might be considered as historical examples, this gendered history is a conjectural and imaginative one dependent on the temporal placement of the Americas in a long ago, far away timespace. A critical shift in how maternity (both as a physiological experience of reproduction and as the production of subjects) was conceived occurred in gendered histories over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The political understanding of maternity is central in this project not only because, as scholars of sexuality and gender have shown, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of a two-sex

gender system, but also because maternity is tied to nascent racial reproduction and to an understanding of naturalized and newly temporalized gender difference. The entangled representations of gendered, sexual contract and conquest and the increasingly racialized representations of European conquest and social contract is, in part, a response to the uncertainty about various forms of originary (re)production, including monogenesis and polygenesis, and patrogenesis and matrogenesis. The origins of peoples and origins of sovereign power were inextricably intertwined in debates concerning authority over bodies and lands. Debates and anxieties concerning gender hierarchy and sexual difference intersect and overlap with similar disputes concerning the origins of and even of humanity of Indigenous peoples. In chapters two and three, I outline the ways maternity is figured differently vis-à-vis sovereignty writ large (as in the sovereignty of a nation) and small (as in self-sovereignty).

For Hobbes, maternity identifies the origin of sovereign authority in the state of nature and outlines original maternal dominion, a power that could only be cast off willingly by a maternal sovereign or usurped by a conqueror: “And thus in the state of nature,” he writes, “every woman who bears children becomes both a mother, and a Lord,” the possessor of “original dominion.”⁶¹ In his outline of gendered power relations in the state of nature, Hobbes supports his argument by critiquing assumptions about gender difference and by questioning male superiority. “Whereas some have attributed the Dominion to the Man onely, as being of the more excellent Sex,” he argues, “they misreckon in it. For there is not alwayes that difference of strength, or prudence between

⁶¹ *Philosophicall Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. (London, Printed by J.G. for R. Royston, at the Angel in Ivie-lane: 1651), 136-137.

the man and woman, as that the right can be determined without War.”⁶² Attention to his theorization of gender relations reveals that the *bellum omnium contra omnes* which characterizes the state of nature has a gendered dimension, and that, indeed, the war of all against all is, to some degree, a war against maternal Lords. Maternity and reproduction for Hobbes is tied to the production of subjects and to sovereign authority.

Hobbes’s account of women in the state of nature is radically different than both his fellow contract theorists and patriarchalists. I focus on Hobbes’s work in this dissertation because his anomalousness in this regard is revelatory of an important product of the critique of patriarchalism and of the consideration of a previously unknown and populated continent. As Carole Pateman has demonstrated, Hobbes was the exception to the contractarian rule which assumed women’s submission in the state of nature, a submission guaranteed by women’s natural physical and mental inferiority.⁶³ His analysis of patriarchalism was also a critique of patrogenesis because he argued that political right did *not* “emerge[e] from Adam’s power in the Garden of Eden.”⁶⁴ His critique of paternal reproduction was not incidental but rather essential to his larger theoretical argument, as it “allowed him to combat the theory that all political power is derived from Adam, and that both fatherly and Kingly rule are natural and God-given.”⁶⁵ For other contract theorists, the sexual contract was the logical keystone for explaining why political power was fraternal, rather than maternal, but Hobbes eschews that theoretical move. As I argue in my second chapter, maternal sovereignty, visually and

⁶² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 139.

⁶³ Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*. (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988).

⁶⁴ Joanne H. Wright, “Going against the Grain: Hobbes’s Case for Original Maternal Dominion.” *Journal of Women’s History* 14, no. 1 (2002): 130.

⁶⁵ Wright, “Going against the Grain,” 131.

dramatically linked to the New World, functioned as a spectral presence, a reminder of the intellectual inconsistency produced by the seventeenth-century contractarian critique of patriarchy and of the ghosts of conquest.

While Hobbes figures maternal power as the origin of sovereign authority, Antoine Léonard Thomas, in his 1772 *Essay on the character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages*, read maternity as an almost unavoidable experience of extreme vulnerability and weakness. For Thomas and other eighteenth-century conjectural theorists, maternity served as another example of women's biologized inferiority. Their alleged physical and mental weakness becomes naturalized in Thomas's work, a self-evident fact produced by "a survey of all ages and of countries." With such a historical gaze, Thomas argues, "we find the women—almost without exception—at all times, and in all places, adored and oppressed" because "Man, who has never neglected an opportunity of exerting his power, in paying homage to their beauty, has always availed himself of their weakness."⁶⁶

The wide distribution of Thomas's *Essay*—it enjoyed several English translations after its 1772 publication in Paris, including William Russell's 1773 version—illuminates the intense interest in the relationships between women, society, and progress, and to the project of historicizing gender relations more broadly.⁶⁷ Ferguson, Robertson, Kames

⁶⁶ Antoine Léonard Thomas, *Essay on the character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages*. Trans. William Russell. Vol 1. 1773. 1-2.

⁶⁷ Russell supplemented Thomas's text with excerpts from Scottish stadial theorists, including Millar and Kames. His appended chapter, "On the Progress of Society in Britain, and of the Character, Manners, and Talents of the British Women" copied large passages from Hume's *History of England* (1754-1761), drawing from George Ballard's 1752 *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* for examples. Ballard's text falls within the category of "women worthies," texts which told women's history by following the lives and accomplishments of exemplary women. This genre is often pitted against stadial

and Millar all addressed gender relations in their texts and articulated an association between modes of subsistence and women's status in society. Though the "image of women became the symbol of commercial society" in the eighteenth-century, women's link to growing consumer economies was much deeper than the purchase of new goods.⁶⁸ "Man," as William Alexander wrote in his 1779 *History of Women*, "secluded from the company of women is not only a rough and uncultivated, but a dangerous, animal to society."⁶⁹ Women worked as a softening agent on the rude and savage manners of men, a process that culminated in the commerce stage, self-evident in eighteenth-century Europe. In contrast to Hobbes's original maternal dominion in the state of nature, Thomas's use of the maternal situates women in the state of nature as continually oppressed by savage men's brutality. Maternity does not offer the production of sovereign subjects, but rather one of the many continual "griefs" and "miseries," the fear that "they cannot be the means of lie without exposing themselves to the loss of it."⁷⁰ Similarly, the language of war does not situate maternal Lords and male usurpers in an

theory and natural rights discourse, but Russell's easy integration suggests a more nuanced relationship. Philip Hicks, for example, positions the women worthies tradition in opposition to conjectural theory, Cartesianism, and natural rights, "Women Worthies and Feminist Argument in Eighteenth-Century Britain." *Women's History Review* 24, no. 2 (2015): 174–90. Other translations of Thomas's text include William Alexander's 1779 *History of Women, from the Greatest Antiquity to the Present* and Jemima Kindersley's 1781 *An Essay on the character, the manners, and the understanding of women, in different ages. With two original essays*. Kindersley's translation was published again in 1800. In the two additional essays (of her own creation), she extends a cultural comparison of female manners which she began in her 1777 *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies*.

⁶⁸ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 133.

⁶⁹ *The History of Women, from the Earliest Antiquity, to the Present Time*. 3rd Ed. (London: C. Dilly and R. Christopher, 1782), 492.

⁷⁰ Antoine Léonard Thomas, *Essay on the character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages*. Trans. William Russell. Vol 1. 1773. 3.

equal battle for subjects, but rather marks women in the savage state as “a vanquished people obliged to toil for their conquerors,” tying their alleged subordinate position both to their physiology (they are attacked by “cruel distempers”) and to their occupation of a space both inside and outside of civil society (“a vanquished people”).⁷¹ Thus Thomas’s parallelism, “adored and oppressed,” conjoins and naturalizes political subordination and physiological weakness.

Though Thomas’s text was not without critique—Denis Diderot’s well-known essay *Sur les femmes*, published in 1772 in *Correspondance littéraire*, was a response to Thomas’s *Essay*—it articulates a history of gender relations which conjectural historians agreed upon: women had always been adored because of their beauty and oppressed because of their physical weakness. Whereas men in the “savage” state regarded women as inconsequential and treated them as “slaves,” having no concept of “love” other than the gratification of physical desires, which were sluggish at best, in later stages women had a civilizing effect on men. Though Thomas did not follow a stadial progression in his original text, his outline of gender relations was in agreement with those described by the Scottish theorists who outlined a state of gender relations from female slavery in “savage” states to the relative freedom and respect enjoyed by women in commercial societies of Europe.

In a demonstration of the compatibility in this regard, William Russell included excerpts from the stadial theorists in his translation of Thomas’s text, including Millar and Kames. Crucially, most of these are to describe the “savage” state by excerpting

⁷¹ “The women among the Indians of America are what the helots were among the Spartans, a vanquished people obliged to toil for their conquerors.” Thomas, *Essay*, 3, 5.

passages about Indigenous peoples from the Americas, passages which themselves draw on travel narratives about the Americas. In the opening of his translation, Russell quotes Millar “speaking of the women of barbarous nations”: “Nothing (says professor Millar), can exceed the dependence and subjection in which they are kept, or the toil and drudgery which they are obliged to undergo. The husband, when he is not engaged in some warlike exercise, indulges himself in idleness, and devolves upon his wife the whole burden of his domestic affairs.”⁷² In excerpting this tract, Thomas reproduces Millar’s argument concerning the idle, sexually disinterested male “savage” and his overburdened wife, itself widely held by conjectural theorists and a product of a fundamental misreading of various Indigenous cultures. Thomas follows Millar’s quotation with an even more vivid example of Indigenous women killing their female children on the banks of the Oroonoko so as to prevent them from experiencing the miseries of womanhood.⁷³ Interestingly, in his critique of Thomas’s *Essay*, Diderot uses the same example. Both anecdotes draw from José Gumilla 1745 *El Orinoco Illustrado, Y Defendido, Historia Natural, Civil, Y Geographica de Este Gran Rio*, though their interpretations, especially Diderot’s extended one, are only loosely based on the text, altering and even fabricating dialogue in order to emphasize the “dependence and subjection” of the women.⁷⁴ Maternity works in this example not only as an inevitable experience of extreme vulnerability, but also as

⁷² Thomas, *Essay*, Vol. 1 1773, 4-5.

⁷³ “The women among the Indians of America are what the helots were among the Spartans, a vanquished people obliged to toil for their conquerors. Hence, on the banks of the Oroonoko, we have seen mothers slaying their daughters out of compassion, and smothering them in the hour of their birth. They consider this barbarous pity as a virtue,” *Essay*, 5.

⁷⁴ Though written in 1731, *El Orinoco Illustrado* was published for Manuel Fernandez, Madrid, 1745.

evidence of the particular suffering of women in the savage state. In their axiomatic assumption that that Indigenous peoples of the Americas represented a different time, conjectural theorists employ a mode of inquiry and production which makes the consideration of colonial effects irrelevant. In this particular example near the Orinoco, the image of the woman killing her daughter echoes the violent realities of reproduction for many enslaved Indigenous and African women without identifying such relations as pertinent. In an illustration of the universalizing and generalizing principle which shaped conjectural theorists' attitudes toward "savage" societies, this single woman's misrepresented, at best, or, at worst, entirely fabricated dialogue becomes evidence for women both in an imagined history of the "earliest antiquity" and the current state of "more than one half of the globe."⁷⁵

The dependence upon the Americas to supply empirical examples for either the state of nature or the savage state reveals how gender has a vexed temporality in conjectural histories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While women's association with prehistorical time shifted from its visual, ethnographic, and dramatic link with the chaos of pre-civil society, to its association with the civilization process and commercial modernity, the gender difference appears when incongruous and sometime paradoxical temporalities collide, when theoretical coherence demands their occlusion. Extending the consideration of conjectural history beyond its traditional historical and generic parameters also puts in relief the key innovations of the eighteenth century, which were to situate temporalized difference in a complex historical schema, one which enjoyed a new kind of cultural authority. While this discourse presented itself as a

⁷⁵ Thomas, *Essay*, Vol. 1 1773, 4-5.

universal history, social progress could not be narrated without a dual turn to gender and emergent race—the latter which emerges through both cultural and temporal terms. This approach offers a new way of reading narrations of transatlantic encounters by offering a framework which does not separate gender, race, and temporality as distinct axes of subjugation but rather always entangled modes of meaning making.

IV. Theories of Time and Genres of the Human

This dissertation places transatlantic texts in the context of the temporalization of difference. Fictions about the Americas—both conjectural and literary fictions—participate and develop from this larger conceptual shift. Because of the recurrent association between the Americas and primordial time, prelapsarian time, degenerative time—temporalities which are not ‘modern’—transatlantic encounters offer conjectural narratives which temporalize difference, however unevenly. The texts this dissertation examines suggest that while the temporalization of difference was a persistent force, it often left shards of time, specters, and absences in its wake. These temporal “remainders” figure as reminders of the violence of separating past from present and mark the knots of difference which hold together the temporal threads of progressive, hierarchical time.

The temporalization of difference is an Enlightenment process because of its chronological occurrence and its joint investment in classification, universality, and progressive time.⁷⁶ Previous hierarchies of difference which had supported enduring

⁷⁶ The project of the temporalization of difference has in some ways been addressed more explicitly in the field of Anthropology than in literature, and so many of the animating questions about the relationship between temporality, theories of social progress, and the categories of gender and race stem from foundational works in that field which reconsidered the power relationships between anthropological observer/object, and the

conceptual structures, namely the great chain of being, understood “the separate and fixed creation of species” in a serialized but ultimately unchanging world. Over the course of the long eighteenth century, this fixed hierarchy of forms was not replaced, but rather temporalized. Thus, a central “intellectual unsettlement” of the period covered in this dissertation occurred at the intersection of time and difference. It “took the form of a conversion of the purely architectonic, static, and spatial order of categories into a temporal one” sustained by a “historical, evolutionary, or progressive” time.⁷⁷ This temporal transformation coincided with the development of the time of natural history and its animating logic, which considered gradual transitions to be an accurate reflection of how the world operated rather than a transgression of fixed categories. Conjectural history not only follows suit in its approach to transition and developmental sequences (especially stadial theory), but also in its implicit, temporalized ranking of human cultures.⁷⁸ The temporalization of human difference in particular was also tied to a “break” between sacred (Christian) time and secular time, which entailed a shift from a spatio-temporal framework that understood time as “a history of salvation” to a

relationship between Anthropology and colonialism, including Margaret Hogden’s *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1964) and Johannes Fabian’s *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (1983).

⁷⁷ Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. (Philadelphia: UPenn Press, 1964), 434-5.

⁷⁸ While Hogden’s work examines scientific and historical hierarchies broadly stated, when considering “how...this drastic modification [came] about,” she points specifically to conjectural history and its motivating desire to classify difference through a progressive narration. It was the desire to create “some semblance of scientific rigor” Hodgen suggests, that formed “the shapes assumed by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social theory...the first formal drafts of modern ethnology,” *Early Anthropology*, 435. In his *Time and the Other*, Johannes Fabian also identifies important temporal transformations in “the Age of Enlightenment” as the locus of early anthropology as a field but also as a set of methods for perceiving Europe’s “Others.”

framework formed by “the secularization of Time as natural history.”⁷⁹ This shift in conceptions of time coincides with new “temporal relations” between (Christian) Europe and its “Others,” first “pagans and infidels” but then “savages and primitives.” Whereas sacred time was incorporative, secular time was exclusive: “the pagan was always *already* marked for salvation,” but “the savage is *not yet* ready for civilization.”⁸⁰

The joint exclusionary and expansionist character of this temporal move was sustained by new forms of scientific scrutiny and colonial possession. Johannes Fabian identifies some of these forms as “distancing devices.”⁸¹ Designed to create a temporal, rather than spatial distance, these devices place the object or “referent(s)...in a Time other than the present of the producer of...discourse.”⁸² The “*denial of coevalness*,” a dominant distancing device, emerges from this temporal disavowal of the producer of discourse and their referent; while the producer of discourse is in a synchronous moment with the referent, they are not coeval; they do not originate from the same time. In what appears to be a circular move, the “savage” referent becomes a desired object of study through his temporal placement in the past: “What makes the savage significant to the

⁷⁹ Fabian, Johannes, and Matti Bunzl. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. (New York: Columbia UP, 2014) 26.

⁸⁰ Fabian provides a useful visual of these temporal systems. *Time and the Other*, 26.

⁸¹ While Fabian’s central goal is to illuminate the ways in which Anthropology historically and at the time of his writing (in the 1980s) depended upon this denial in its fashioning of the anthropological object, his work usefully illustrates how conceptions of time, including physical time itself, made possible colonial and scientific projects shaped by the time of natural history.

⁸² Here Fabian is speaking specifically about the referents and producers of anthropological discourse. That his terms so effectively describe the structures and even phraseologies of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travel writing and political theory speaks the enduring epistemological relationship between colonial texts, ethnographic, and scientific scrutiny. *Time and the Other*, 31.

evolutionist's Time is that he lives in another Time."⁸³ This denial also works as a tool of colonial dispossession. Linking the idea of physical time to an early modern "system of ideas which include space, bodies, and motion," Fabian argues that when in "the course of colonial expansion a Western body politic came to occupy, literally, the space of an autochthonous body," distancing devices made it possible to relegate "conquered populations [to] a different Time" and thus to justify their removal from the land.⁸⁴

These theorizations of time outline the genealogies of various distancing devices and the centrality of those devices to diverse theories of knowledge. They also suggest productive ways to approach seventeenth- and eighteenth-century transatlantic texts, directing our attention to the representation of observation and distance, and to how characters and agents are positioned in hierarchies of difference and what kinds of temporal language might place them there. A limitation to this application is that it suggests the sole temporal product of distancing devices was the placement of colonized peoples in another, earlier time. But beyond the denial of coevalness is the extent to which that very denial is a—or perhaps *the*—central material with which Europe constructed its own sense of modernity. That is to say, the very concept of modernity with which Europe distinguished itself from the rest of the world was created by this denial.⁸⁵ Furthermore, though Fabian suggests that the temporal placement of colonized

⁸³ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 27.

⁸⁴ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 29-30.

⁸⁵ While I believe that Fabian's formulation is useful in reading distancing devices in the periods covered in this dissertation (as well as the nineteenth century), we must be careful not to assume that an argument *for* coevalness somehow undoes colonial violence. To do so is to forget that the act of temporal distancing is also one of temporal creation. Indeed, as Mark Rifkin has shown, "an emphasis on coevalness tends to bracket the ways that the idea of a shared present is not a neutral designation but is, instead, defined by settler

peoples in another time occurred as an expedient for colonial projects, the reality is perhaps not so linear. From contact onward, the Americas retained a link to anachronism, to a space out of time, a space in prehistorical time, or a space in the earliest stage of human history. But those associations, while lasting, did not always possess the streamlined precision of the colonial tool Fabian describes, at the ready for the purposes of Indigenous dispossession, particularly in earlier periods. If the “savage” as temporally distant referent was the desired object of study for the investigation of human nature because the savage became synonymous with natural, how did “natural” become synonymous with “earliest” or “original”? If difference was temporalized in this period, what difference was transformed into temporal distance in the denial of coevalness? In other words, what imaginative work was necessary in order to develop “distancing devices”?

What emerges from these considerations is the enduring conjectural work required not only to deny the coevalness of colonial discourse’s referent, but also the work required to turn that referent into temporally distant “savages and primitives.”⁸⁶ This work is performed by and within what Stephanie Martens terms “American Imaginaries,” or “recurrent themes, images, and tropes characterizing the travel literature of the Americas, as well as the common perceptions and conceptions circulating in Western Europe” in the early modern period.⁸⁷ It was through the “homogenization, and simplification of...American Imaginaries” that savage/civil binary was created.⁸⁸

institutions, interests, and imperatives,” *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017) viii.

⁸⁶ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 26.

⁸⁷ Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 8, 7.

⁸⁸ Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 8, 7.

Imbedded in this binary creation is the concept of the “*ab-original*,” which conjoins “the *natural* and *original*” and illuminates the theoretical ties between what is first, what is natural, and what is autochthonous to a colonized land.⁸⁹ While the problem posed by the existence of the new continent (and its peoples) activated a series of temporal associations and questions, the denial of coevalness, the bond between what is natural, what is savage, and what is autochthonous, necessitated narratives. These ties were created and sustained through textual and visual stories, especially those which described encounter. Encounter narratives are active creators of these temporal associations.

The universal claims of conjectural history, concomitant with the temporalization of difference, present an important site of contestation. The time of natural history and conjectural history assumes universality; by claiming to tell the history of the natural world, or to hypothesize the gradual development of human societies, these conjectures inscribed a claim to universal vision in their temporal structures and legitimated that vision through empirical systems of representation. In recent scholarship on contract theory and conjectural history there emerges a distinct tension about the interpretation of conjectural history’s allegedly universal aims. As with conjectural history itself, this

⁸⁹ Martens uses the term “aboriginality” to describe the process by which the “ungraspable difference presented by the New Continent is progressively subsumed under a set of powerful binary distinctions: natural vs. civil/artificial, savage vs. civilized, “*ab-originality*” vs. civilization.” Martens pairs this term with “Aboriginalism.” “Aboriginalism” gestures to Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, but draws important distinctions for how the Americas functioned vis-à-vis Europe. “The Aboriginal other is not a “cultural contestant” as the Orient is for the West, it is not a close enemy,” she explains, “rather, it is an escape from the West and its overcivilization—it plays the role for Renaissance and early modern writers, of irreducible nature, both attractive and dangerous.” Thus while “the Orient remains the *other* civilization, “Aboriginalism” calls upon the “anti-civilization” and the “natural.”, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 5, 8.

tension orbits the intersection of gender, race, and colonization: is the “hierarchically organized map of mankind” in conjectural works in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries merely a product of “the ambient racism and ethnocentrism of the times,” or an indication of more fundamental relationships between universality and categories of difference?⁹⁰

By placing human cultures in a temporal hierarchy, European theorists not only claimed modernity, but also relegated other cultures, sometimes entire continents, to subjugated space and time. Furthermore, stadial theories in particular “delineated the universal and uniform image of progress” against which the future will be evaluated.⁹¹ The various structures of universality mobilized over the course of the long eighteenth century are not monolithic and rely on diverse mechanisms for operation. One recurrent quality in conjectural histories, however, is an underlying conflict between the uniformity of the prehistorical past and of “savagery,” and the dynamism of modernity and “civil society” (and later, “civilization”). In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century political philosophy, for example, while contract theory articulates natural law into

⁹⁰ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 9; Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 2. For example, In his work on conjectural history and its lasting influence on the social sciences and literature in the nineteenth century, Frank Palmeri argues that the “the ideology of the form of conjectural history was not, in fact, racist,” but merely Eurocentric. For example, he contends that despite Kant’s advancement of a biologized racial hierarchy, “his conjectural histories make a case for the universal development of potentials among all humans, and the final conjectural history, the latest of all these writings, includes a sharp anticolonial critique.” In addition to placing colonial critique in opposition to racial hierarchy, Palmeri suggests that the “universal development of potentials among all humans” obviates the racism in Kant’s work. These claims to universality—even if that it is not fully realized—ultimately prevent Palmeri from classifying the ideology of the form of conjectural history as racist. *States of Nature, Stages of Society: Enlightenment Conjectural History and Modern Social Discourse*. Columbia UP, New York: 2016. 281-283.

⁹¹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 8.

“universalizable human rights,” it requires a “possibility of radical otherness [that] must be preserved” in order for the project of “universalization” and universal rights to develop and maintain coherence.⁹² This unresolvable problem of the universal brings us to the temporal devices at “the very roots of modernity,” highlighting the not only the coincidence of universal rights and colonization, but their mutual construction.⁹³ In her meticulous examination of stadial theory of the Scottish Enlightenment, Silvia Sebastiani finds similar illuminating tensions. Though some scholarship has suggested that conjectural history was more interested in “national characters” than in race, an examination of how national characters are delineated reveals that “the historical status of the savage” emerges as a dominant line of inquiry, and that “the core of the eighteenth-century discussion... revolved above all around the distance between the savage stage and the civil stage.”⁹⁴

⁹² This possibility of otherness is held in the construction of the savage, the primitive, and the “ab-original.” Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory*, 3.

⁹³ Martens writes, “The articulation of natural law into universalizable human rights coincides chronologically with expanding colonialism and increasing contacts with non-European populations—populations that were then denied those very rights. More than a historical coincidence, this chronological concomitance, marking the beginnings of modernity, cannot be dismissed as an object of the ambient racism and ethnocentrism of the times, but instead reveals deeper intellectual, philosophical, and political connections,” *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought: States of Nature and Aboriginality*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 3, 2.

⁹⁴ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 11. In a final chapter entitled “Were Conjectural Histories Racist?” Palmeri critiques Roxann Wheeler’s assertion in *The Complexion of Race* that stadial theory constituted a “proto-racial ideolog[y].” Palmeri argues that careful examination of stadial theories in their entirety simply do not support such a view, and that ultimately “the ideology of the form of conjectural history was, in fact, not racist.” While Palmeri admits that William Robertson “comes closest to racializing when, in his *History of America* (1777), he represents Native Americans as cowardly, cruel, and incapable of abstract thought,” he argues that conjectural theorists “from Ferguson through Monboddo, and from Rousseau to Condorcet, give little or no evidence of racist thinking” because they do not employ “the modern concept of race as a set of inheritable physical traits” and therefore are “not racist.” Writing of Rousseau,

The generative crux of racial meaning orbits this distance between, on the one hand, modernity and civilization, and on the other an undocumentable past somehow evident in the Americas. The temporal hierarchy of human difference advanced by stadial schemas, Sebastiani argues, creates a “dialectic between a universal image of progress and the enduring and profound differences that it described.”⁹⁵ This dialectic appears between “immobility of savages, Amerindians especially, and the dynamism of Europeans.”⁹⁶ Race is central to the discourse of national characters because this immobility/dynamism paradigm structures “savagery”—allegedly identified in Africa and the Americas—as uniform and locates diversity and change in civilization found in modern commercial Europe and to some degree in Asia.⁹⁷ The tensions between “savage” and “civil,” and “stagnant” and “dynamic” suggest that the temporal association between

Palmeri points out that he does “not characterize people with different traits as races” in *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1755). Similarly, the work of Millar and Ferguson, he argues, do not “biologize or racialize a people’s cultural stage,” and that both theorists “thin[k] in terms of peoples and nations, not races—of climate, not fixed biological traits.” Instead, he argues, “The center of gravity in the form of conjectural history is ethnocentric, but it is not racist, and in most cases hardly concerned with race at all.” While Palmeri’s gesture to climate theory and to the lingering conception of race as “bloodline, class, or rank” are applicable, his narrow understanding of what elements of conjectural theory might support emergent race is narrowly defined, obscuring the very real racializing structures which stadial theory sustained and mobilized. Palmeri’s defense of conjectural history as non-racialized ideology of form, I suggest, is ultimately rooted in his evaluation of its universal shape and aims. *States of Nature, Stages of Society*, 281, 283-4.

⁹⁵ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 9.

⁹⁶ Here Sebastiani writes against an understanding of savagery which diminishes the importance of the Americas for stadial theorists as articulated by J.G. Pocock. While Pocock highlights the gap between savagery and civilization as “a central element in Scottish historiography,” in which he sees a narrative of history that began “with herding peoples, not with savages.” However, Sebastiani points out, for stadial theorists “the Amerindians revealed an otherwise unrecoverable phase in the history of society, one which had also existed in Europe,” 9.

⁹⁷ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 8.

the Americas and the construction of an alternate temporality, one either “before” civil society or “undeveloped” and peopled by “un-civilized being[s]” makes possible racial classification systems.⁹⁸

Because of the ultimately hierarchical and exclusionary function of the universal aims and structures of conjectural history, I approach incarnations of “savagery” in the transatlantic texts of this dissertation as evidence of the root tension which signals the temporalization of difference, rather than a representation of the not-fully-realized recognition of universal potential for humanity. Ultimately, the “universal and universalistic perspective” of conjectural history, and especially stadial theory, “*enabled* the construction of a hierarchically organized map of mankind” through which whiteness was associated with the dynamism of modernity and the complexity of civilization.⁹⁹ The “evolutionary sequences....may *look* incorporative” because “they create a universal frame of reference able to accommodate all societies,” Fabian reminds, but “being based on the episteme of natural history, they are founded on distancing and separation,” distancing and separation which are primarily *temporal*.¹⁰⁰ It was, ultimately, the uniform, universal narrative of social progress which not only placed England (and Europe more broadly) on the top of the human hierarchy but also lashed modernity itself to whiteness.

My focus on narratives of “romantic” Euro-Indigenous encounter highlights another important problem-space within the figuration of difference in the intersection between “savagery” and “femininity.” The temporal quandaries which accompanied

⁹⁸ Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 3.

⁹⁹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 9, my emphasis.

¹⁰⁰ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 26.

conjectural histories of women (like Thomas's *Essay*) highlight the entanglement between the vocabulary of gender and structures of progressive time.¹⁰¹ Women civilize in a linear fashion, but they also represent a number of temporalities as their condition holds both the promise of and evidence of civilization. Gender plays a vexed but central role in theories of social progress and suggests that, as I will argue in my fourth chapter, the conjectural mode was a key discursive force in constructing and naturalizing biologized understandings of gender as sex. While the purpose of conjectural history and stadial theory in particular was to describe broad social changes over time and construct a narrative of social progress, the association between female freedom and commercial society suggested that women, like "savages," were immobile, albeit to different ends. If women in savage societies were always oppressed, and "bought, sold, lent, borrowed, ceded, and constantly treated as the private property of men," but slowly over time as modes of subsistence changed, were able to exert a softening and civilizing force upon

¹⁰¹ A rich body of research has sought to understand conjectural theorists' representation of a social history of sexual desire and marriage practices, on the one hand, and the complex and ambivalent associations between femininity, commercial society, and social improvement. For gender relations and a history of sexual desire in conjectural theory, see Chris Nyland, "Adam Smith, Stage Theory, and the Status of Women." *The History of Political Economy*. 25.4 (1993), 617-640, Pat Moloney, "Savages in the Scottish Enlightenment's History of Desire." *Journal of the History of Sexuality*. 14.3 (July 2005), 237-265, Paul Bowles, "John Millar, the four-stages theory, and women's position in society." *History of Political Economy*. 16.4 (1984), 619-638. For the status and historical associations of femininity, see Sylvana Tomaselli, "The Enlightenment Debate on Women." *History Workshop*. 20 (Autumn 1985), 101-124, Barbara Taylor, "Enlightenment and the Uses of Woman." *History Workshop*. 74.1 (Autumn 2012), 79-87, Mary Catherine Moran, "Between the Savage and the Civil: Dr. Gregory's Natural History of Femininity." *Women, Gender, and Enlightenment*. Ed. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 8-29, and "L'Essai sur les femmes/Essay on Women: An Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Journey." *History Workshop Journal*. 59. 2005, 17-32.

men, then “the stadial model promised their liberation from the very beginning.”¹⁰² Thus while seeming to position women as active agents in social progression, conjectural theorists naturalized sexual difference as temporal difference, since it was “the *natural difference* between the sexes [that] condemned women in a state of savagery to misery.”¹⁰³ That many feminist writers of the eighteenth century were attracted to the possibilities offered by conjectural histories of women does not illuminate liberatory potential, but rather points to an early moment in what we might retroactively call “white feminism,” in which European women writers used examples of allegedly oppressed “savage” women *and* enslaved African women as raw material for their arguments about gender inequality in Europe.¹⁰⁴

Because of the temporal tensions outlined in this section—between stagnant savagery and dynamic modernity, between the immobility of women and their civilizing function, between the universal and the hierarchical—I find the most productive approach to both race and gender is through Sylvia Wynter’s “genres of humanity.” Following Sylvia Wynter, I approach gender and race in this dissertation as “genres of humanity,” versions of the implicitly white, male, and universal “Man.”¹⁰⁵ “A secular model of the

¹⁰² Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 139.

¹⁰³ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 139.

¹⁰⁴ The transformations of Francois Poulain la Barre’s late 17th-century conjectural histories about gender inequality, *On the Equality of the Two Sexes* (1673), *On the Education of Ladies* (1674) and *On the Excellence of Men* (1675) into female-voiced pamphlets and treatises, including the “Sophia” exchanges of the 1730s as well as *Beauty’s Triumph* (1745), *Female Rights Vindicated* (1748), and *Female Restoration* (1780, 1833) illustrate this genealogy. The use of comparative oppression in these texts constructs all “Women” and implicitly white and “Savages” as implicitly male. By the 1780 publication of *Female Restoration*, the comparison between “women” and “Negroes bought and sold at a West-India fair” appears axiomatic.

¹⁰⁵ Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument.” *Cr: The New Centennial*

human,” Wynter explains, “Man” emerged “at the end of the eighteenth century....Man as a selected being and natural organism...as the universal human, ‘man as man.’”¹⁰⁶ Man presents himself as the universal full human, but nevertheless requires “Black subjects, along with indigenous populations, the colonized, the insane, the poor, the disabled” to “serve as limit cases by which Man can demarcate himself as the universal human.”¹⁰⁷ Man’s “human Others—that is, Indians, Negroes, and Natives,” are genres “first invented” in the colonial period.¹⁰⁸ While colonial discourse seeks to represent these genres of gender and race as “a biological or cultural classification” reflecting or revealing, however imperfectly, biological fact, the erasure of the classificatory move is just as central as the classification itself. These assemblages, or “set of sociopolitical processes...discipline humanity into full humans, not-quite-humans, and nonhumans.”¹⁰⁹ While they purported to tell the story of humanity, conjectural histories position “Man” as the quintessential human and thus are a crucial segment of eighteenth-century racializing assemblages. Conjectural history tells the story of Man, not of humanity, and

Review 3, no. 3 (2003): 288. While Wynter’s theorization provides an overall frame for my thinking about race and gender, this dissertation’s approach to race is indebted to Roxann Wheeler’s *The Complexion of Race*, Melanie Newton’s “Returns to a Native Land: Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Anglophone Caribbean,” and especially to Jennifer Morgan’s *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*, and more recently “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*.”¹⁰⁵ These texts are discussed at length in my third chapter, which considers different racial regimes in iterations of Inkle and Yarico.

¹⁰⁶ Sylvia Wynter, “Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles,” *World Literature Today* 63, no. 4 (1989): 645.

¹⁰⁷ Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 24.

¹⁰⁸ David Scott and Sylvia Wynter, “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 4, no. 2 (September 2000): 198.

¹⁰⁹ Alexander Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 4.

in so doing gives whiteness a special purchase not only on the present, but on the future(s) of the human as Man. Commercial Europe enjoys the power of being perpetually in the now, able to define and delineate past periods and peoples from the mountaintop of modernity. In this way, time functions as a technology of race.

Alongside travel narratives, ethnographies, and natural histories, conjectural histories participated in the process of conflating Man and human. In their theorization of “human” history conjectural histories manufacture categories of gender and race, but cover over that very manufacture in order to present such categories as self-evident. In this move, the conjectural mode is revelatory of the fact that “Enlightenment discourse” usually describes an Enlightenment colonizing epistemology, one “which always creat[e] what it seems to organize and individuates what it seems to unify.”¹¹⁰ The conjectural mode uses temporality along with classification to perform this generic work. Non-European societies were not only considered less complex, developed, valuable, beautiful, intelligent, productive, and so on, but were placed in an earlier time and thus were viewed as less evolved and civilized than commercial Europe. The axiomatic nature of this paradoxical placement is a testament to its centrality in conjectural discourses. At the same time, admirable or desirable characteristics of non-European peoples were rendered in nostalgic terms. This is particularly true of indigenous peoples in the Americas, whose representation is marked by a “fundamental dualism by which primitive natives are represented as barbaric man-eaters lurking in the jungle and simultaneously as natural innocents living an Edenesque existence in a world uncontaminated by the fallen

¹¹⁰ Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 33.

values of a ‘civilized’ society.”¹¹¹ In each case, indigenous peoples were exploited as raw material for the European writing of history. Considering gender as genre of humanity rather than “as a category independent of other axes of subjugation” necessitates reading race and gender together. This dissertation takes this approach while also demonstrating how temporality is key to genre-making.

V. Chapter Outlines

Chapter one, “Gender and Time in ‘A Country that Hath Yet Her Maidenhead,’” explores early visual representations of America as allegory alongside travel narratives. Drawing from work that establishes how both reading text and viewing images were integral to early conceptions of race,¹¹² I argue that while the allegorical tradition of representing continents as female bodies was well-established one by the sixteenth century, allegories of America as Indigenous woman were uniquely positioned to construct racial and gendered meanings, which are continually tied to emergent conjectural thinking. I read these figures alongside representations of Indigenous women in travel narratives and other texts about the Americas, including Thomas Harriot’s *The Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588), Vespucci’s *Voyages*, (1506), Raleigh’s *The Discovery of Guiana* (1595), and Jean Mocquet’s *Travels and Voyages* (1616). I argue that the figure of the female cannibal, who appears alongside and

¹¹¹ Frank, Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World: An Inkle and Yarico Reader*. (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999). 3-4.

¹¹² Including Michael Gaudio’s *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), Surekha Davies, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human: New Worlds, Maps and Monsters*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2016), and Elizabeth Spiller, *Reading and the History of Race in the Renaissance*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011).

as allegorical images of America, functions as an item in a curiosity cabinet, simultaneously figuring as material for early ethnographic study and as an exotic object which stimulates wonder. Placed beside texts like Harriot's, which posits a comparative ethnography, the female cannibal reveals the way British conceptualizations of their own cultural and political origins were entangled with gendered myths of the Americas and the construction of an idea of prehistory which was intertwined with female rule.

Chapter two, "Indian Queens: Maternal Sovereignty and Conjectural History in the Americas" considers the use of the Americas in early political theory as the "state of nature" alongside contractual debates concerning maternal sovereignty. Through reading Thomas Hobbes, Sir Robert Filmer, Robert Hooke, Robert Boyle, and Thomas Sprat, I examine the relationship between early ethnography, experimental philosophy, and political theory and gender relations. Building on the previous chapter's visual association between female rule, Indigeneity, and pre-civil society, this chapter argues that maternal power works as a central problem-space in contract theory, and that figures of female sovereignty, implicitly raced and gendered as Indigenous women, have a spectral function in the American imaginaries. The repeated and even obsessive defeat of these figures via romantic and martial conquest occupies several exotic dramas of the period, including Dryden's *The Indian Queen* (1664) and its sequel *The Indian Emperor* (1665), and Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest* (1667). In these readings, I argue that Hobbes's concept of original maternal dominion works as a spectral reminder of the crime of conquest as well as a crime of maternal usurpation.

Chapter 3, "'I Gaz'd my Liberty Away': Maternity, Indigeneity, and Racial Inheritance in Inkle and Yarico" examines key texts in the Inkle and Yarico archive,

including Jean Mocquet's *Travels and Voyages* (1616), Richard Ligon's *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (1657), Richard Steele's *Spectator* 11, and several 18th-century poetic versions. Inkle and Yarico was obsessively retold over the course of the century, and which appeared in over 60 iterations. I read the evolution of and wild popularity of this narrative in terms of racialized maternal inheritance, first codified in Virginia in 1662 using the logic of *partus sequitur ventrem*. Thomas Hobbes uses this phrase, translated as "the birth follows the belly" or "follows the condition of the mother" in a radically different way to describe original maternal dominion in the state of nature. The central evolution of Inkle and Yarico, I argue, depends upon the conjoining of the temporality of the marketplace with *partus sequitur ventrem*. I argue that the recurrent tropes of this story—shipwreck, cannibalism, succor, betrayal, an enslavement—mobilize conjectural histories by drawing from the spatial and temporal ambiguities imbedded in the American setting. Yarico's shift from Indigenous woman to enslaved African woman reveals central mechanisms by which conjectural history co-constructs emergent racial regimes of the period. The evolution of Yarico's reproduction over the course of the century is revelatory both of narratives of Indigenous absence and racial inheritance.

The final chapter, "'Adored and Oppressed': Imagined Communities and the Sexual Contract in Gilbert Imlay's *The Emigrants*" examines the connection between the logic of settler colonialism and conjectural history. It begins with the oft-quoted and circulated argument that women have "in all times, and in all places," been both "adored and oppressed." This language originated in French conjectural history but was widely circulated on both sides of the Atlantic, including in revolutionary-era American periodicals. I trace this conjectural thinking and examine its dependence upon and

creation of gendered and racial categories in the work of François Poulain la Barre, Antoine-Léonard Thomas, William Alexander, and Denis Diderot. Reading Imlay's 1792 *A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America* alongside his 1793 novel *The Emigrants*, I outline the way conjectural thinking makes possible both his arguments for settlement in the Ohio river valley, and his arguments concerning ideal gender and political relations. In *The Emigrants*, I show how Imlay's creation of an ideal community draws heavily on naturalized gender relations and on the tradition of conjectural history. Imlay's use of conjectural history and the narrative performance of the sexual and social contract in this novel depends upon a construction of Indigenous absence.

Chapter 1: Gender and Time in ‘A Country that Hath Yet Her Maidenhead’

Jan van der Straet’s iconic drawing “America” (fig. i) imagines an “inaugural scene” of first contact.¹¹³ Vespucci stands holding a flag and a mariner’s astrolabe, while America, naked and reclining in a hammock, reaches out her hand to her “discoverer.” Various exotic animals wander to America’s right, and to Vespucci’s left, the ship that brought him there waits just offshore. Behind these two, in the distance, a group of female cannibals feast on human flesh. Following the title page, this is the first image of *Nova Reperta*, translated in English editions as either “New Discoveries” or “New Inventions of Modern Times.” The latter perhaps more accurately describes its content, since the text catalogues the inventions that allegedly signaled the arrival of modernity. *Nova Reperta*, published in the late 1580s and edited and engraved by Philip Galle, is comprised of twenty engravings of van der Straet’s drawings, nineteen of which depict various modern inventions, including “the invention of the compass,” “the invention of printing,” “the discovery of the silk worm,” “the invention of the astrolabe,” and “the invention of eyeglasses,” among many others.¹¹⁴ *Nova Reperta* was amended and

¹¹³ Michel de Certeau. *The Writing of History*. Trans. Tom Conley. (New York: Columbia UP, 1988) xxv.

¹¹⁴ The complete list (in chronological order) is as follows: 1. Amerigo Vespucci Discovers America, 2. The Invention of the Compass, 3. The invention of gunpowder, 4. The Invention of Printing, 5. The Invention of the Mechanical Clock, 6. The Discovery of Guaiacum, 7. The Invention of Distillation, 8. The Discovery of the Silkworm, 9. The Invention of the Stirrup (and Saddle), 10. The Invention of the Mill, 11. Invention of the Wind, 12. The Production of Olive Oil, 13. Discovery of Cane, 14. Invention of Oil, 15. Invention of Eyeglasses, 16. Invention of the Determination of the Degree of Longitude, 17. Invention for Polishing Technology for Metal, 18. Invention of the Astrolabe, 19. Invention of Copper Engraving.

reproduced extensively, the product of a complex network of artists, engravers, printers, and publishers.¹¹⁵

While the imaginative and beautifully crafted engravings are entertaining to look upon, *Nova Reperta* functions largely as a textbook. It teaches the reader to view the history of the West as one of technological advance and advantage; the technologies illustrated in *Nova Reperta* were often the very things to which Europeans referred when they desired to distinguish themselves from the “savages” of America. In 1620, perhaps echoing the relationships implied by the ordering of these inventions, Francis Bacon claimed that it was the invention of magnetic compass, the printing press, and of gunpowder that separated Europe from the “wildest and most barbaric districts of New India.”¹¹⁶ While some of the plates simply show the new technology in use, as with the men putting their feet into stirrups in “the invention of the saddle,” the majority are more explicit in their educational purpose. The caption to the plate entitled “the discovery of cane,” which illustrates in vivid detail the collection, chopping, melting, and shaping of sugar, reads “The picture that you see will teach you in very many ways the art in which sugar is made.”¹¹⁷ Similarly, “the invention of the mechanical clock” shows the assembly of watches, grandfather clocks, and other timepieces, the forging and shaping of mechanical wheels, and the adjustment of chimes: “The iron wheel turns evenly, and

¹¹⁵ For an analysis of the original image’s context in 16th-century Florence, see Lia Markey, “Stradano’s Allegorical Invention of the Americas in Late Sixteenth-Century Florence*.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (2012): 385–442.

¹¹⁶ Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, CXXIX. *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*. Ed John M Robertson. Routledge, New York: 1905. 300.

¹¹⁷ Translations of the Latin captions are from Bern Dibner’s collection of the plates, *New Discoveries; the Sciences, Inventions, and Discoveries of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as Represented in 24 Engravings Issued in the Early 1580’s by Stradanus*. 1953.

evenly discloses those times and these” (fig. ii). Here the wheel, which we see molded in the furnace, shapes time, makes it even, discrete from one another (“those” times and “these”), and renders it intelligible, as if previously it were a secret code, (which the word “discloses” suggests). The time covered or travelled in this text is circular: beginning with “America,” *Nova Reperta* ends with the “invention of engraving on copper,” the technology that made the text itself possible.¹¹⁸ This plate is no less detailed than the others: it shows an engraver with a burin in his hand, cutting lines into the copper surface, plates being heated and polished, and finally, paper being pressed upon the plate through the press role. The caption reads: “By a new art the sculptor carves figures on beaten sheets and reproduces them on a press.” Though the technology of engraving preceded Vespucci’s voyage, the technology of pressing metal plates onto paper came shortly after it. While some of the inventions clearly follow the inaugural plate, like the “Discovery of Guaicum,” a medicine used to treat syphilis (also known as the “Spanish Pox,”) derived from *Lignum Vitae*, a Caribbean hardwood, many others precede it, like “the Invention of the Astrolabe,” which Vespucci is holding in “America.”

The positioning of “America” as the first plate suggests that Galle and van der Straet (and perhaps their readers as well) considered this to be the catalyst for the

¹¹⁸ In his *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization*, Michael Gaudio examines “how printmaking was implicated at a fundamental level in the transmission of knowledge about the native inhabitants of the Americas.” In an attempt to “retain a sense of materiality” and the “irreducible physical presence” engraving engenders, Gaudio is interested in the practice and material presence of engraving rather than the iconographic of ideological underpinnings of the image. He observes that during this period engraving was “intimately engaged with a Western fantasy of primitive origins” and argues that “the technique of engraving was, through the nineteenth century, a formative element in the production of ethnographic knowledge,” *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization*. (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press: 2008) xiv, xii.

discoveries that follow it. From the current historical moment, this positioning appears to be correct, since, as Ralph Bauer has observed, previous knowledge systems had proven incapable of detecting and explaining the existence of the Americas. European “discovery” of New Worlds thus resulted in “an unprecedented inflation in the value of empirical forms of knowledge,” a development that “exerted formidable stress upon what Stephen Shapin has called the traditional ‘trusting systems’ of the Old World” and ultimately led to the adoption of new “systems” that would allow for many of the inventions *Nova Reperta* catalogs.¹¹⁹ But when viewed in the context of its textual neighbors, “America” appears incongruous. It is unlike other plates that depict “discoveries”; the discovery of the silk worm, for example, shows women picking cocoons for weaving, and the discovery of “Guaicum” shows the creation of the serum on the right, and the treatment of the sick on the left. What is “America” intended to teach? Or, what kind of technological labor is it illustrating?

I begin this chapter by positioning Jan van der Straet’s image of discovery alongside the invention of mechanical clocks and the invention of copperplate engraving because together they illustrate the technologies which produced and disseminated an association between the Americas and primordial time. Copperplate engraving not only produces the plates of *Nova Reperta*, but also countless other texts whose visual dimensions attempted to capture the strangeness of the New World. While inscribing images of unknown plants, animals, and peoples, engravers also inscribed notions of

¹¹⁹ Bauer, *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003) 4. “Trusting systems” refers to Stephen Shapin’s *Social History: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

technological and cultural superiority, participating in the construction of the savage/civil binary by the very act of engraving.¹²⁰ The invention of mechanical clocks identifies the technology which keeps time but also hides it; in identifying the temporal work of “America,” we reveal the way physical time itself was used as a tool for colonization.¹²¹ The scene of discovery also narrates and anticipates numerous visual, dramatic, and literary reenactments of contact and conquest. Most importantly, however, it illustrates how the act of conjecturing “history” is narrated through a sexualized Euro-Indigenous encounter which naturalizes the violence of colonization and of “*writing that conquers*” by turning to a vocabulary of gender. Through this vocabulary, this plate performs a temporal labor; it constructs an image of history, embodied by Vespucci and armed with “European weapons of meaning,” and of an “original,” prehistorical time, figured as allegorical female body at once Amazonian and Indigenous.¹²²

“America” is in tension with the plates that follow because it is the scene where “the iron wheel” of the mechanical clock’s time must “even out” and “disclose” the time of America in order to integrate ‘discovery’ into its technological and progressive

¹²⁰ Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

¹²¹ Johannes Fabian explains the relationship between concepts and instruments of physical time and colonialism: “the idea of Physical Time is part of a system of ideas which include space, bodies, and motion. In the hands of ideologues such a time concept is easily transformed into a kind of political physics. After all, it is not difficult to transpose from physics to politics one of the most ancient rules which states that it is impossible for two bodies to occupy the same space at the same time. When in the course of colonial expansion a Western body politic came to occupy, literally, the space of an autochthonous body, several alternatives were conceived to deal with that violation of the rule...Most often the preferred strategy has been simply to manipulate the other variable—Time. With the help of various devices of sequencing and distancing one assigns to the conquered populations a different Time,” *Time and the Other*, 29-30.

¹²² De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xv.

trajectory. The “writing of history,” writes, Michel de Certeau, begins by “separate[ing] the present time from the past,” but this separation can never be fully accomplished, leaving shards of displaced time in its wake. Thus the writing of history “everywhere repeats the initial act of division” because it is never complete.¹²³ The reconciliation that this scene attempts, the evening out of time that it requires, is unattainable, yet its repetition animates the conjectural histories and “developmental sequences” that follow the publication of *Nova Reperta* and frames several lines of transatlantic fiction and travel writing in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. “America” intimates that scenes of contact necessarily perform this important temporal work, separating the past from the present and assigning difference to the past. Yet in so doing, the “shards created by the selection of materials,” and “the remainders left aside by explication” stubbornly return, appearing “on the edges of discourse or in its rifts and crannies.”¹²⁴ These “‘resistances,’ ‘survivals,’ or delays” thus “discreetly perturb the pretty order of a line of progress, or a system of interpretation,” lingering on the margins of the text that created them.¹²⁵ Together, the images, the “line of progress” they attempt to trace, and the stubborn remainders are important recurring scenes in “American Imaginaries.”¹²⁶

Van der Straet’s “America” is also a productive image with which to begin because while it gathers and reproduces a number of important thematic associations—the spit-roast cannibals, the hammock, the naked woman as America—it also includes

¹²³ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 3.

¹²⁴ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 4.

¹²⁵ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 4.

¹²⁶ Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory*, 4.

America's 'discover.'¹²⁷ As I have suggested above, this scene performs temporal work, positioning America as the boundary line between the civilizing force of history and the savagery of the past. Vespucci's attendance in this scene makes de Certeau's "remainders" vividly come to life: his presence as an individual, as a man with a history who has written history, makes it impossible to see America only as allegory. His presence underscores the possibility that the 'discovery' of the New World is both scientific and sexual, as the ambiguity of "semper excitam" suggests: the description can be translated as "Amerigo rediscovers America; and he called her once and thenceforth she was always awake," or as "she was always aroused."¹²⁸ Most significantly, however, Vespucci's presence suggests that scientific discovery itself is sexual violence; after all, he does not approach America with outstretched arms, but rather with an emblem of imperial power and the instrument of navigation which led him to her, a tool that hails the beginning of a new tradition of empirical science whose early modern focus was firmly fixed on the Americas. Paired with a man with a name, America is no longer simply a continent, but a woman whose body will undergo the violence of empirical study. Now that her body has been transformed into an external object of knowledge, into an "open

¹²⁷ Surekha Davies tracks the migration of the trope of spit-roast cannibals, who appear in the background of van der Straet's engraving, but also Strafford's (fig. 1.4) and Collaert's (fig. 1.3) from the Caribbean to South America. See "Spit-roasts, barbecues and the invention of the Brazilian cannibal," *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human: New Worlds, Maps and Monsters*. Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories, 24. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 65-108.

¹²⁸ Raymond Waddington, "Rewriting the world, rewriting the body." Ed. Arthur F. Kinney, *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1500-1600*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000) 289.

interiority like a book, or like a silent corpse placed under our eyes,” it produces knowledge by virtual of its visibility.¹²⁹

Visual representations of America in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are important sites of the temporalization of difference. While gendered and temporal associations depended upon a long history of feminine, territorial myths, they nevertheless created new myths when joined to a land which could be studied and colonized.¹³⁰ Van der Straet’s “America,” and similar images, illuminates associative patterns which constructed the Americas as a place out of the time of history, as a place in a prehistorical, original time. As I have suggested in the introduction, the temporalization of difference depended upon an association between the Americas and this primordial time. Beyond this, however, it also depended upon an association between what is “original” and what is “natural,” or “*ab-original*,” and an association between the “*ab-original*” and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas.¹³¹ This chapter argues that one way the “original,” the “natural,” and the autochthonous were bound together was through visual (and textual) representations of America which layered Indigenous bodies, female bodies, and bodies of land upon one another. If “savagery” gathered new weight in its signification of difference and its association with the New World and gained an ambient temporal dimension in the century following contact, gender was an important vocabulary for signifying both difference and relationships of power. Here I approach

¹²⁹ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 3.

¹³⁰ For a discussion on how early representations of the Americas depended upon ancient and medieval gendered myths, see Mario Klarer, “Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America.” *Journal of American Studies*. 27.1 (April 1993) 1-17.

¹³¹ Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought: States of Nature and Aboriginality*. (New York: Palgrave, 2016) 5-6.

gender as both an emergent “genre of humanity” and as a “category of historical analysis.”¹³² As the latter, gender works as “a primary way of signifying relationships of power.”¹³³ As in van der Straet’s drawing, primordial time is signified through a female body and gender difference itself, made vivid through sexual or romantic encounter, reflects the “initial act of division” between past and present. The vexed temporality of this intersection had a persistent, if uneven, relationship with what would come to delineate the mutually entangled and refractory immobility of both ‘savages’ and women in later conjectural histories.

This chapter considers the figure of America as allegory, the female cannibal, and the Amazon as key gendered tropes which forged temporal associations of difference. Within colonial discourse, these tropes participate in the association between the Americas and primordial time. While I distinguish between America as allegory, the female cannibal, and the Amazon here for the purposes of clarity, they are almost always overlapping, even blurring into one another. Indeed, they rarely work in isolation, but rather depend on one another for meaning. As many of the images collected in this chapter demonstrate, America as continental allegory is often represented as an Amazon warrior, overlooking scenes of cannibalism. Alternately, America is herself a cannibal, but carries weapons which associate her with the mythical female warriors. With or without Amazonian armor, America is always naked, a signification of lack which conjoins the objectification of her female body with savagery through a joint empirical,

¹³² Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument.” *Cr: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 288. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History. Gender and Culture*. (New York: Columbia UP, 2018) 42.

¹³³ Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 42.

colonial gaze. In these scenes of confusion and collaboration, both the specter of female sovereignty and the menace of gendered anthropophagy are used to indicate the prehistorical, original moment of the New World.

The images discussed in this chapter are in almost every case paired with text, usually in the form of a travel narrative. While recognizing that there are important technical and historical differences between these modes of meaning making, I also seek to highlight that visual and textual narratives about the Americas both rely on the what is visible in order to communicate the strange, exotic nature found in the New World. Frontispieces, ornamental cartographies, engravings, and other visual texts sought to “capture the otherness of America and preserve it within the pages of the text,” like objects in a curiosity cabinet.¹³⁴ As Michael Gaudio explains, the “appeal to the visible” as way to create “visible facts” and to stimulate the wonder of the viewer was “a structural element of early modern ethnographic discourse and eyewitness accounts in general.”¹³⁵

This chapter begins considering the work of a selection of visual texts in constructing and temporalizing human difference. To illustrate some kinds of difference which emerged from these texts, I turn to allegories of America. I draw out the association between maternity and savagery in these images, including the figures of Amazons and female cannibals. Building from the gendered tropes found in these allegories, I consider the temporal dimension of images in the 1590 edition of Thomas Harriot’s *The Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, engraved by

¹³⁴ Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xi.

¹³⁵ Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xi.

Theodore de Bry. Harriot's comparative framework offers an early example of an evolutionary logic. Furthermore, Harriot's juxtaposition of Carolina Algonquins, Picts, and "Ancient Britons" illuminates the association between, and anxiety around, the femininity of native origins in contemporaneous English texts. In the final sections of the chapter, I turn to Jean Mocquet's *Travels and Voyages* to outline the conjectural thinking at work in the inclusion of "savages" in curiosity cabinets. Lastly, I return to the theme of Amazons in Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*. The language with which Raleigh represents female sovereignty (both that of Elizabeth I and of the Amazons), I argue, is invested in a temporal framework which distinguishes between "Indian maids" and Amazonian warriors.

1.1 *Ab-original America*

Van der Straet's figuration of America follows the sixteenth-century tradition of personifying the four continents as women. This tradition shaped illustrations of early modern maps, travel narratives, and natural histories, while at the same time drawing from those very texts for its representations of plants, animals, landscapes, and peoples. The surge in this imagery at the end of the sixteenth century, particularly in new figurations of "America," traces a shift from the dominance of the "allegorical *tableau vivant*," the living person dressed as one of the four continents portrayed in parades and royal pageants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "to the more abstract idea of personification in a drawing."¹³⁶ Apart from decorative frontispieces, which were

¹³⁶ Clare Le Corbeiller, "Miss America and Her Sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the World." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 19, no. 8 (1961): 210. As Isabel Yaya notes in her discussion of American objects in 17th-century curiosity cabinets,

sometimes circulated separately from their respective texts, this was likely the way many people encountered of “America,” as an imperious female figure, armed with weapons, surrounded by emblems of New World wealth, and shadowed by the threat of cannibalism. Around the same time, these allegorical images were used in a variety of material objects as well, ranging from stove tiles, to decorative arches, to playing cards, to plates, teapots, and tapestries.¹³⁷ Its widespread circulation, and its continuous incorporation of new information from maps and travel narratives, suggest that allegorical America held a central position in early modern “American Imaginaries.”

The rise in these artistic abstractions, especially in the form of engravings, participate in the construction of emergent racial difference.¹³⁸ Engraving was “intimately

England seemed to lag behind France, Spain, and the Netherlands in its obsession with New World materials. However, after the civil war, interest in American curiosities grew exponentially. This interest is reflected through the medium of the parade in the record of the 1672 Lord Mayors’ Pageant, which, in addition to including “an Indian emperor seated on his throne, at whose feet repose the princes of Peru and Mexico” (likely after Montezuma in John Dryden’s 1665 *The Indian Emperor*), the pageant featured an allegory of America: “Above all, upon a mound, sits America, a ‘proper masculine woman, with a tawny face,’ who delivers a lengthy speech, which concludes the exhibition of pageantry for that day,” Frederick William Fairholt, *Lord Mayors’ Pageants: Being Collections Towards a History of These Annual Celebrations, with Specimens of the Descriptive Pamphlets Published by the City Poets*, Vols. 1-2, (London: Printed for the Percy Society, 1884) 74-76.

¹³⁷ For a selection of objects with these images, see Corbeiller, “Miss America and Her Sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the Word,” and Hugh Honor, *The European Image of America*. (Kent: Kent State UP, 1975) 112-122.

¹³⁸ Elizabeth Spiller demonstrates that reading was an embodied act experienced by a “pre-racial” and “humoral” body. Over the course of the seventeenth century, Spiller explains, “a dominantly humoral understanding of the body gave way to...a mechanistic body.” For readers of this period, “reading was an embodied act,” one that “could change who you were, physically as well as emotionally.” In this way, “racial-identity was a text-based practice,” and reading “was often the material process through which early modern ethnic and racial identity were created,” *Reading and the History of Race in the Renaissance*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011) 1-3. Considering the entanglement of visual image with text, the reading of engravings (for themes, narratives, etc.) may participate in similar meaning-making processes.

engaged with a Western fantasy of primitive origins” in two central ways.¹³⁹ Firstly, as the inclusion of “Engraving on Copper” in *Nova Reperta* demonstrates, as an important technology which allegedly set the “advancement of European civilization” against the deficiency of the New World and its “non-metallic technologies, engraving figured as an invention through which Europe signaled its modernity.”¹⁴⁰ Secondly, images of America did not simply illustrate the ideas found in the surrounding text, but rather “serve[d]...as the occasion for...writing” itself.¹⁴¹ While the text attempts to explain the utter novelty of the New World, it is the image which allows for the acting out of the distinctly ocular experience of ‘discovery.’ Engraved images functioned as “visible facts” through which “the Americas were brought back to Europe in raw, visible fragments.” While this “new class of images” which represented Indigenous peoples often incorporated mythical, fantastical elements, its explanatory power came from its “epistemological status as uninterpreted nature.”¹⁴² Engraving thus functioned, “through the nineteenth century, [as] a formative element in the production of ethnographic knowledge.”¹⁴³ By presenting the bodies of Indigenous peoples as objects of knowledge, bodies in a time that had yet to

¹³⁹ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xiv.

¹⁴⁰ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xviii. The purported “lack” of metal-working, and the absence of iron, were two important tropes European writers used to illustrate their supposed technological superiority to Indigenous cultures in the Americas. In his reading of Thomas Harriot’s *Report* and the engraved images which illustrate it, Gaudio explains that the Carolina Algonquin’s use of copper as ornamental signified for Harriot (and his readers) an important dimension of “savagery”: mistaking the tools and materials of civilization for decoration.

¹⁴¹ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xi.

¹⁴² Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xi.

¹⁴³ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xii.

develop the technology which rendered them on the page, engraving figured itself as “a civilizing art” in a nascent “evolutionary paradigm.”¹⁴⁴

Within this technological context, cartographic images played a central role in the construction of racial and gendered difference. Figures of Indigenous peoples often appeared around the borders of early modern maps, sometimes as allegories, and others as more general examples of a land’s inhabitants. Maps were able to create knowledge about humanity as a whole; less tied to (but still inspired by) specific narratives, “illustrated maps...were a genre in which information about a range of peoples was synthesized in one place, offering a unique medium that invited the comparative contemplation of human civilizations.”¹⁴⁵ These contemplations drew upon humoral theory but also created new knowledge about the relationship between culture, climate, geography, civility, and anatomy. Cartographic images of Indigenous people illustrate how “scholars and artisans [rethought] the boundaries of the human” and thus were “a genre in which ethnographic knowledge was a significant goal.”¹⁴⁶ The central tropes of American cannibals, Surekha Davies explains, were first made vivid on maps, rather than in travel narratives. The cartographic circulation of such images in turn influenced both

¹⁴⁴ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xx, xix.

¹⁴⁵ Surekha Davies, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human: New Worlds, Maps and Monsters*. Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories, 24. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 5.

¹⁴⁶ Davies, Some climates were believed to produce monsters, a principle which Davies links to the alleged discovery of Amazons and headless men in South America. Davies’ work explores how “maps were key artefacts in the fluctuating shape of the human in the European imaginary in an era of transformative, often catastrophic, cultural contacts,” *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human*, 3, 16, 2.

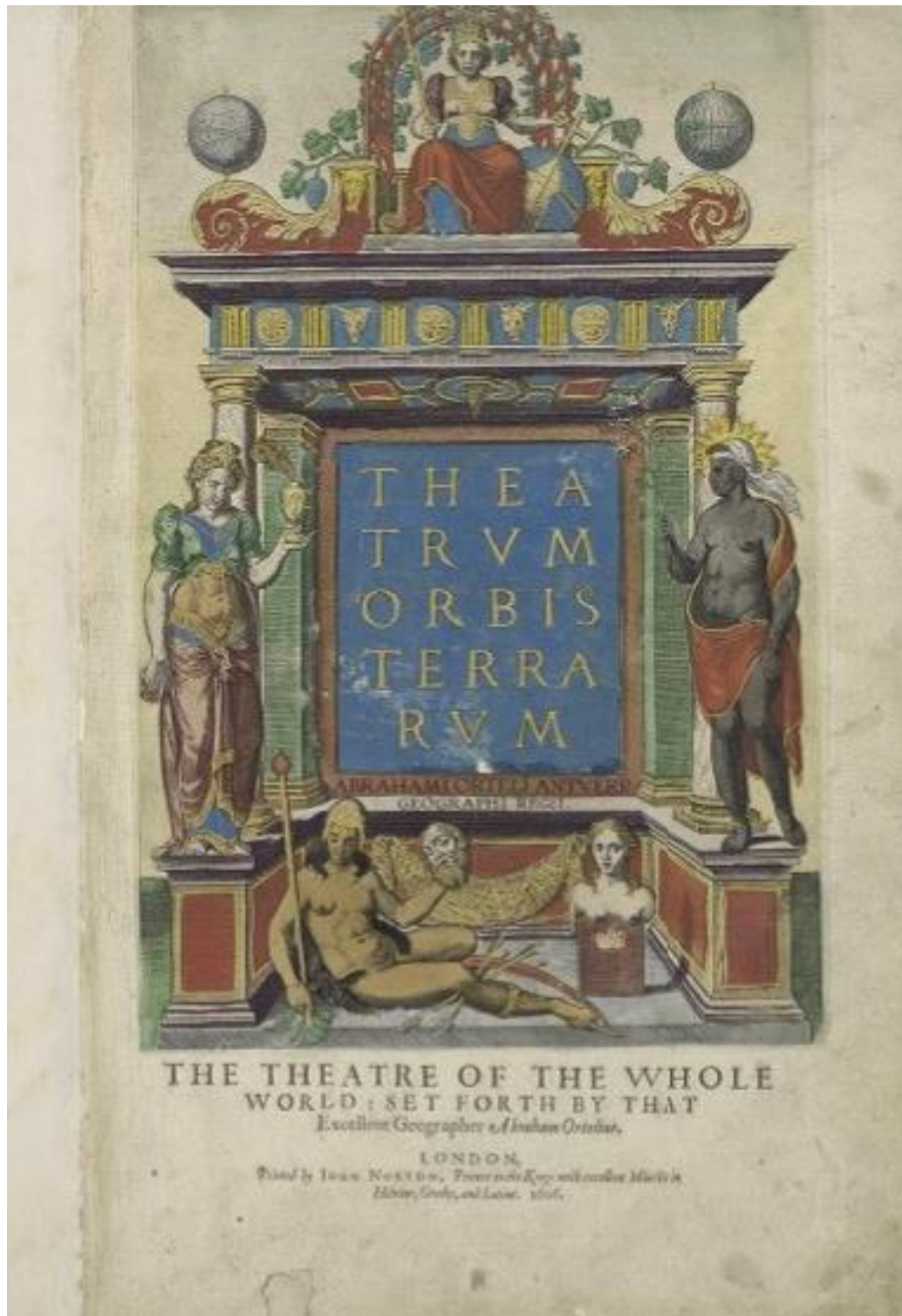


Figure 1: Engraved frontispiece to Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Theatre of the World), c. 1606. Folger Digital Image Collection, Folger Shakespeare Library, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.



Figure 2: Engraving by Phillip Galle, "America," from *Prosopographia*, (Graphic Personifications) c. 1579-1603. Public Domain.



Figure 3: Engraving by Adrien Collaert after Martin de Vos, “America,” from *The Four Continents*, c. 1550-1600. Public domain.



Figure 4: Engraving by John Stafford, "America," *The Four Continents*, c. 1630. Trustees of the British Museum, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

nascent ethnological epistemologies and, she suggests, colonial policies as well.¹⁴⁷

Through engraved and cartographic images of “America,” writers and artists created “visual codes” which constructed concepts of civility and savagery.

The engraved frontispiece to Abraham Ortelius’s 1570 *Ortelius’s Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, widely considered the first “modern” atlas, illustrates one way these visual codes gathered temporal associations. The frontispiece (fig. 1) shows the four continents, with Asia on the left, Africa on the right, America on the bottom, and Europe, here as the “Queen” of the other continents, on the top. In this arrangement, America’s positioning below the other figures outlines a temporal, as well as cultural hierarchy, or rather, a cultural hierarchy which is made cohesive through temporal markers. Unlike her elder sisters Asia and Africa, who stand erect, and Europe, who is seated on a throne, America lies in a state of inertia, not yet “awakened.” “Africa” is also in a state of undress, but America is entirely naked, save for a jeweled leg band and a helmet. While America’s nakedness invites the viewer to conflate the possession of the body of land with the possession of the female body, it functions here primarily as a representation of deficiency. America is not simply nude but *lacks* clothing and thus is in a natural state, like Adam and Eve before their expulsion.¹⁴⁸ The resonance of naked America with

¹⁴⁷ Davies, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human*, 6.

¹⁴⁸ Peter Stallybrass demonstrates some of the visual and textual relationships between Eden and America in his examination of the contradictory descriptions of expulsion in pictorial (mainly prints) and textual interpretations of biblical passages. In one such image, found in Thomas Trevelyan’s commonplace book, maize surrounds Adam and Eve as they are being expelled. As Stallybrass notes, “maize came only from the New World; and even after it was imported to Europe and Asia, the plants themselves would have been visually legible almost entirely through images of the Americas.” The Bible tells a narrative in which Adam and Eve first sew clothes of fig leaves together while still in Eden to hide their shame, God removes these garments and replaces them with the skins of dead animals. Yet, he finds, the visual counterparts to this scene consistently

naked Eve characterizes this temporality as both an original and natural time—a conjoining necessary for the configuration of “*ab-original*.”¹⁴⁹ This allegorical representation is similarly unclothed in Philip Galle’s “America,” from his book of engraved emblems, *Prosposgraphia* (fig. 2), Adrien Collaert’s “America,” (fig. 3) an engraving after Martin de Vos, and John Stafford’s “America,” also an engraving, from *The Four Continents* (fig. 4).¹⁵⁰

Examined together, these allegorical engravings show a consistent and concomitant turn to Amazons and cannibals.¹⁵¹ Ortelius’s image of America is strikingly

depict Adam and Even as either entirely naked or still wearing fig leaves while they are being expelled. The obvious attention to nakedness and to the primacy of garment making gives additional meaning to the persistent nakedness of “America,” both as woman (and daughter of Eve) and as a figure without shame. Indeed, many travel writers are eager to impress their readers with the fact that native women had no shame at all about their bodies, “Visible and Invisible Letters: Text versus Image in Renaissance England and Europe.” *Visible Writings*. Ed. Mary Shaw. (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2011) 86.

¹⁴⁹ Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory*, 5-6. The 1590 edition of Harriot’s *Report* begins with an image entitled “Adam and Eve picking the apple,” points to the entanglement of various “origins” which were of interest in this period. While Adam and Eve are the prominent figures in the frontispiece, in the background we can see a man tilling the soil while a woman cares for her child in a hut, figures of what Adam and Eve will become once Eve has grasped the apple she reaches for. Since they went naked in Eden and didn’t have to work, the scene in the background highlights the fact that the fall is the origin point for gendered clothing, gendered pain (Eve’s ‘multiplied’ suffering in childbirth), and a gendered division of labor. In “Visible Letters,” Stallybrass describes the general ruckus caused by the 1560 Geneva translation of the Bible, which suggested that both Adam and Even wore “breeches” immediately after being expelled. Breeches were “specifically gendered male,” because breeching, he points out, “was a crucial rite of passage through which a boy, who had previously worn skirts, put on the attire of a man.” The word choice was “so odd” that the “Geneva Bible became known as the ‘Breeches Bible,’” 86.

¹⁵⁰ Martin de Vos’s original drawing was drafted in 1594 “for the decoration of the triumphal arch of the Genevans” in Antwerp. Collaert’s print was “widely diffused,” Hugh Honour, *The European Vision of America*, 116.

¹⁵¹ During this period, “cannibalism marked the world beyond European knowledge,” Peter Hulme, “Introduction: the Cannibal Scene,” *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 3.

similar to van der Straet's; in both images, naked America holds a spear, wears a jeweled leg band, and is capped with a helmet.

However, she also has a bow and arrow, a set of weapons which connoted primitivity. Galle's "America" carries a spear as well, and her bow and arrow are similarly laid on the ground behind her. In Collaert's drawing, America holds the bow with one hand and carries a full quiver of arrows on her back. Her spear has been supplanted with an ax, and her helmet has a classical quality. Seated on an armadillo, this image in particular highlights America's Amazonian qualities. Whereas both van der Straet's and Collaert's images push the scenes of cannibalism to the background, Strafford, Galle, and Ortelius bring it into the foreground, with America holding disembodied heads or legs. Ortelius's America, as a "huntress of man," holding the head of a bearded European in her left hand, illustrates the intersection of the Amazon and the female cannibal.¹⁵² The recurrence of cannibalism and other signifiers of monstrosity traces the tensions between 'natural' and 'savage' in these images. The binding thread of 'original' time reconciles, if only partially, these tensions. This logic of this reconciliation is palpable in the verse below John Strafford's engraving. It reads: "Though to my Sisters long unknowne I lay, I am as rich, and greater farr then they. My barbarous rudeness doth at full express what Nature is, till wee had Graces dress. But where the gloomy Shades of Death yet bee, the Sunshine of God's love I hope to see."¹⁵³ While the last two lines point

¹⁵² Michael J. Schreffler, "Vespucci Rediscovered America: The Pictorial Rhetoric of Cannibalism in Early Modern Culture." *Art History* 28, no. 3 (2005): 298.

¹⁵³ The British Museum lists the author of this verse as George Wither, but I cannot locate it in any of his works. Engraved sometime around 1630, this image (in at least two different forms) served as a frontispiece to Fernando Gorges' *America painted to life: the true history of the Spaniards proceeding in conquests of the Indians, and of their civil wars*

to the promise of salvation, and might seem to suggest the incorporative nature of sacred time, the poem's positioning of "barbarous rudeness" as a previous condition situates America in a primordial past.¹⁵⁴ Though in the first line, America speaks for herself ("to my Sisters long unknowne I lay"), her "wee" in the fourth line expands to include humanity as a whole. Thus America, as an occupant in a time where "rudeness" has yet to be clothed, is positioned in a temporal hierarchy.

The tropes of American Amazons and cannibals were inaugurated in Columbus's and Vespucci's respective voyages, and, as they are here, recurrently figured together. America's temporal difference is narrated through this combination of the specter of anthropophagy and the inversion of gender hierarchy, one signifying the most extreme expression of savagery, and the other a mythical time prior to patriarchy. This tropological convergence also points to another important association created by these visual codes of difference: the bond between maternity, often signified through the presence of children or infants, insatiable sexual desire, and cannibalism. Vespucci's accounts in his *Voyages* offer textual elucidation of this convergence. Like Columbus, Vespucci describes the Amazonian strength of indigenous women, noting that "any woman among them can place on her back, and carry for thirty or forty leagues, a greater burden than a man (and even a strong man) can lift from the ground," that they "think nothing of running a league or two, wherein they greatly excel us," and that "the women are far better swimmers than the men."¹⁵⁵ This physical prowess is paired with their

among themselves, from Columbus his first discovery to these later times. (London: Printed for Nath. Brook, 1658-1659).

¹⁵⁴ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 26.

¹⁵⁵ Amerigo Vespucci, *First Voyage*. 1504. 93-94.

sexual appetites, rendered in the language of deficiency (they “lack” matrimony) as well as gender inversion:

They do not practice matrimony among them, each man taking as many women as he likes, and when he is tired of a woman he repudiates her without either injury to himself or shame to the woman, for in this matter the woman has the same liberty as the man. They are not very jealous, but lascivious beyond measure, the women much more so than the men. I do not further refer to their contrivances for satisfying their inordinate desires, so that I may not offend against modesty. They are very prolific in bearing children and...are delivered with very little pain, - so true is this that on the very next day they are completely recovered and move about everywhere with perfect ease. In fact, immediately after the delivery they go to some stream to wash, and then come out of the water as whole and as clean as fishes.¹⁵⁶

Here Vespucci ties the lasciviousness of the women directly to their fertility and to the hardness of their bodies. The ease with which these women give birth distinguishes them from their European counterparts, but it also echoes a prelapsarian time before Eve’s curse.¹⁵⁷ The ease of reproduction mirrors, too, the ease with which female cannibals consume the bodies they are (figuratively) able to produce. These associations are particularly vivid in Theodore de Bry’s engravings in the third part of *America* (1590), which appear after Harriot’s *A Briefe and True Report of the Newfound Land of Virginia* (included in the same volume). This image (fig. 5) draws from Hans Staden’s 1557 *True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, a narrative which popularized the association between the Tupinambá peoples and cannibalism. Seated in a circle, at the

¹⁵⁶ Vespucci, *First Voyage*. 96.

¹⁵⁷ Vespucci’s description of easy childbirth here, including the water imagery, was widely reproduced in a variety of writings about the Americas, fictional or otherwise. Yarico’s scene of childbirth in Richard Ligon’s 1657 *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbados* is one example. Chapter 3 discusses the scene’s racial and temporal implications in the context of the Inkle and Yarico archive.



Figure 5: Engraving by Theodore de Bry, Vol. 3, after woodcuts in Han Staden's 1557 *True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, 1590. Trustees of the British Library, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International.

center of which is a disembodied man's head, the women in the engraving pass around bowls filled with entrails, feeding their children over their shoulders.

Despite Vespucci's vow in this passage to "not offend against modesty," he gives a great deal of detail about "their contrivances" for "satisfying their inordinate desires," especially those contrivances that border on torture. In the first voyage, he gives an account of how the women, for the sake of their own sexual pleasure, infuse food with the fluids of poisonous animals and cover their partner's genitals with the mixture, so that it "swell[s] to such a degree that they appear disproportionate and monstrous."¹⁵⁸ The mutual involvement of female desire and female violence is most explicit in Vespucci's account of a group of cannibal women in his third voyage:

On the seventh day, while we again were making our way to the shore, we discovered that the natives had brought all their wives with them. As soon as we landed they sent many of their women to talk with us ... While we were waiting for them to approach, we decided to send to them one of our young men who was very strong and agile... The young man advanced and mingled among the women; they all stood around him, and touched and stroked him, wondering greatly at him. At this point a woman came down from the hill carrying a big club. When she reached the place where the young man was standing, she struck him such a heavy blow from behind that he immediately fell to the ground dead. The rest of the women at once seized him and dragged him by the feet up the mountain... There the women, who had killed the youth before our eyes, were cutting him in pieces, showing us the pieces, roasting them at a large fire...¹⁵⁹

The women's sexual appetites and their desire for human flesh are collapsed in scene.

The women first caress and admire the young man, and then just as easily roast his body over a fire. For Vespucci, the very thing that makes these women desirable—their sexual availability—is also the thing that makes them dangerous, capable of the most gruesome acts of violence and mutilation. The conjunction of allurements and danger underscores

¹⁵⁸ Vespucci, *First Voyage*. 97.

¹⁵⁹ Vespucci, *Third Voyage*. 1505. 138.

the fact that while the image of virginal America who generously bestows her various bounties on Europeans and the image of America as Amazon, tormentor, and cannibal are situated in opposition to one another, they both operate on the same logic. For in both instances the power of the female cannibal stems from her sexual desire and fertility, which, while tempting and sometimes lucrative, always threatens to create chaos or violence. The allegorical images of America while perhaps not all drawing directly from Vespucci, illustrate the proliferation of these intersecting conceptions of sexual and geographic bodies. Indeed, one can imagine that while van der Straet's "America" strokes Vespucci with her outstretched hand, a woman from the background descends the hill with her club or spear to attack him from behind, after which both women would join their cannibal sisters at the fire and make a dinner of the explorer.

1.1.1. Female Cannibals in the Curiosity Cabinet

The allegorical images discussed in the previous sections illuminate a number of different forms that tropes of cannibalism took in early visual texts. Galle's and Ortelius's allegories position a severed man's head at America's feet; armed with weapons, America's anthropophagy is linked to an implicitly Amazonian encounter. In van der Straet's, Strafford's, and Collaert's engravings, we see the trope of the spit-roast in the background, and in van der Straet's we can see that the cannibal scene in the distance is feminized—women cook body parts while holding their children on their backs. This section turns to another widespread incarnation of this trope, first seen in Albert Eckhout's 1641 oil painting, titled "Tupuya Woman," (fig. 6), and the relationship between the visual image of the female cannibal and the textual curiosities collected in the second book of Jean Mocquet's *Travels and Voyages*, first published in 1616 and translated into



Figure 6: Oil on canvas, Albert Eckhout, "Tupuya Woman," 1641. Public domain.



Figure 7: Oil on canvas, Jan Van Kessel, "America," 1666. Public domain.

English in 1696. Because of its claim to represent individual peoples, and to report first-hand ethnographic evidence, this painting and its reproductions, this circulated image of the female cannibal possessed the “epistemological status as uninterpreted nature” to a greater degree than the previously discussed allegories.¹⁶⁰ This particular image of the female cannibal, I argue, worked as a visual and textual item in a curiosity cabinet, simultaneously figuring as material for early ethnographic study and as an exotic object which stimulates wonder.¹⁶¹ The inclusion of the female cannibal in the curiosity cabinet, while continuing associations between femininity, indigeneity, and temporal removal, constructs a framework through which it would be received as “visible fact.”

Eckout’s painting appeared in a series of life-size portraits that he composed of Indigenous Tupuya and Tupí peoples after travelling to Dutch Brazil. The woman depicted stands upright, holding a branch in one hand and a dismembered arm in another; on her back, she carries a satchel out of which a foot protrudes. A carved coconut cup makes use of this image as well. Once owned by German naturalist Alexander Von Humboldt (it is known as the “Humboldt cup”), it was carved sometime between 1648 and 1653, roughly the same time Eckout was turning his sketches of the Tapuya into oil paintings. Both the painting and the reliefs on the cup were commissioned by the

¹⁶⁰ Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage*, xi. As Virginie Spenlé notes, the image of the female cannibal became “a popular motif in the latter half of the seventeenth century,” “‘Savagery’ and ‘Civilization’: Dutch Brazil in the Kunst- and Wunderkammer.” *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*. 3.2 (2011) 3.

¹⁶¹ For the relationship between the Americas, curiosity cabinets, and early empirical studies see Isabel Yaya, “Wonders of America: The Curiosity Cabinet as a Site of Representation and Knowledge.” *Journal of the History Collections*. 20.2 (2008) 173-188. For a discussion of the types of objects found in this period, particularly objects from North America, see Christian F. Feest, “North American in the European Wunderkammer Before 1750.” *Archiv für Völkerkunde*. 46 (1992).

Governor of the Dutch Colony in Brazil, Johan Mauritis van Nassau (1604-79) for his own on *kunstkamer* (curiosity cabinet).¹⁶² The circulation of this image extended beyond elite circles, however: an anonymous imitation of Eckout's image was featured in Willem Piso and Georg Markgraf's 1648 *Historia rerum naturalium Brasilae*, this time as a cheaper and more easily reproduced woodcut. The woodcut used to illustrate *Historia rerum* would come to be employed as a stock image, easily accessible to various kinds of writers who used it to illustrate their texts (regardless of the whether they were writing about the Tapuya).

Separated into six different books, *Travels and Voyages* documents travel over a twelve-year period to the West Coast of Africa, the West Indies, Guiana, Spain, Morocco, Goa, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Syria, and Jerusalem, and is primarily interested in the description of the inhabitants of the regions Mocquet visits. The title page of the text announces that Mocquet was the "keeper of the Cabinet of Rarities to the King of France, in the Thuilleries," a position he held while he was in the Americas.¹⁶³ *Travels and Voyages* is bounded by the epistemology of the curiosity cabinet and Mocquet's narration is frequently shaped by his desires to collect objects of wonder, including exotic plants, shells, and animals. For the creatures of the New World, however, Mocquet's process of collection reveals that the epistemology of the cabinet entails death, often a slow and agonizing one. While his descriptions of animals often attempt to evoke a sense of wonder, ("the strangest beast of all..."), he also describes their behavior and appearance

¹⁶² Eckout's painting was subsequently presented to King Ferdinand III of Denmark in 1654 to decorate the significantly larger Copenhagen *Kunstammer*.

¹⁶³ As the King's apothecary, Mocquet used his position to negotiate funding for these travels. He received it "on the condition that he collected curiosities for the king's cabinet...of which was appointed custodian."

in detail, comparing and contrasting various monkeys, commenting on their eating habits, and even performing a dissection of crocodile (which he later ate for dinner). In book one of his travels, the collection of strange creatures, their deaths and separations from their homes, is often paired with gendered language, especially language with a maternal dimension.

While with the “Caribes,” a group he describes as particularly “addicted” to cannibalism, Mocquet describes a series of trades which leave him in possession of a “sort of Creature, which is kind of an Ape or Marmot, but more Arch and Roguish, and with a very long Taile. The Indians say,” he continues, “that this Beast carries her young ones upon her Back when she has cast them out of her Belly, and goes jumping from Tree to Tree with them upon her Reins and when any one of them is ready to fall, she holds them up with her Tail.”¹⁶⁴ The invocation of maternity in this passage is key both to the knowledge Mocquet gathers of the creature itself, and to his experience of possessing it as an item for his collection. Its exoticism is tied to its auditory presence and its obvious grief: “This Animal makes such noise about the Woods, that when they are together tho’ never so few, you would stay there were a hundred Hoggs a killing.” The animal purchased by Mocquet, however, is dead silent:

That which I brought was Dead, and cost me a little Horn: It was a Female, having two Teats in the Stomach like a Woman. The Indians had taken it with the Bow, and it had a stroke with an Arrow in the Belly, and carried one of her young ones upon her Back; which they brought us to Sell for a Hatchet. This little one, being in our Ship, howled after such a manner, that it made us all quite Deaf; it died afterward, for it would not eat.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 100-101.

¹⁶⁵ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 100-101. The image of the young upon the animal’s back echoes a woodcut which concludes this section of his text. In the image, multiple women have children on their back, some of whom seem to “suckle over their shoulders.” Jennifer Morgan ties these images, which appear with frequency in relation to both

Mocquet's description positions the "Belly" as a productive site (the womb), and as the site of a fatal wound. The young animal seems forced out into the world by the shot of the arrow. In this instance, its death is represented not only as an auditory relief, but as an inevitable consequence both of its failure to feed and of Mocquet's collecting requirements.

While Mocquet's overt collecting activities in *Travels and Voyages* involve similar passages, his narrative is an important illustration in the broader project of the temporalization of difference because of its collection of textual curiosities in the form of Indigenous peoples, especially women. Echoing van der Straet's "America," Mocquet describes "an Indian Woman, sitting upon her *Amica*, or Hanging-Bed [singing] a very pleasant and agreeable song."¹⁶⁶ Similarly, in presage of Eckhout's painting, Mocquet describes women who offer the body parts of slain enemies to him and his companions. "We saw also," he writes, "how they served their enemies, who had been killed upon the place. They eating them Roasted, an Indian Woman offered a roasted Hand to our General, but he angrily refused."¹⁶⁷ The most detailed textual curiosity in this section, however, takes the form of 'romantic' encounter. Meeting an English ship off the coast of Cumaná, Mocquet relates a story told to him about the English pilot. Several years earlier, the pilot had been shipwrecked on the coast of South America on the way to St.

Indigenous and African women, to the representations of reproduction and the mobilization of the language of livestock to describe African women's reproductive capacity, "Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder: Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology," *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 12-49.

¹⁶⁶ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 81.

¹⁶⁷ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 80.

John. “A great storm overtook them,” Mocquet writes, “which cast them upon the coast, where they were all lost, except this pilot, who saved himself by swimming to land, carrying with him a little Sea-compass, and went thus wandering about to return by land to the Newfound countries.”¹⁶⁸ While “wandering,” the pilot “found an Indian Woman, of whom he was enamoured,” and to secure her companionship and knowledge, he made her “fine promises by signs, that he would marry her, which she believed,” and so she “conducted him through [the] deserts; where she shewed him the fruit and roots good to eat, and served him for an interpreter amongst the Indians...she telling them that he was her husband.” The couple continued this way two or three years, living as husband and wife, eventually having a child together. But when the pilot finally saw an English ship, “being ashamed to take along with him this Indian-Woman thus naked,” he abandoned her, “pretend[ing] she was savage.” Realizing, Mocquet writes, that she was “forsaken by him, whom she had so dearly loved, the woman “after having made some Lamentation, full of Rage and Anger, took her child, and tearing it into two pieces, she cast the one half towards him, as if she would say, that belonged to him, and was his part of it; and the other she carried away with her, returning back to the mercy of fortune, and full of mourning and discontent.”¹⁶⁹

As a textual curiosity, this encounter constructs knowledge about the Indigenous woman, her relationship to ‘savagery,’ and to reproduction. The unnamed woman of this tale leads the pilot through the “dessarts,” maps out their route, and gives him access to important knowledge of plant life. In this way, she represents a figure who translates New

¹⁶⁸ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 123-125.

¹⁶⁹ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 125.

World knowledge which is necessary for the European's survival. However, the 'romantic' dimension of this encounter erases this function and buries it in their mutual attraction, rendering her translation as love and care. Similarly, the pilot's "little Sea-compass," which falls away during their time in the wilderness, reemerges as the tool of his salvation, positioning this navigational instrument as a tool which has successfully allowed him to dominate his environment. The dismembered child and the severing of the child-parent relationship are in forcefully mirrored by the monkey, shot through the womb with her dying offspring on her back. The creature's deafening cries—for food, for its mother—are the dark mirror to indigenous woman's "Lamentation."

The mythic and wondrous quality of this story also suggests its affiliation with the cabinet of curiosities. Each item in the curiosity cabinet was an object of wonder, meant to provoke a sense of awe.¹⁷⁰ Generally, the cultural objects of exotic peoples were grouped by material rather than by tribe or by location, and labelled collectively as "the objects of savages."¹⁷¹ In this way, they appear to participate in the homogenization of "American Imaginaries" which helped to construct the binaries of "civil" and "savage."¹⁷² The curiosity cabinet, generally found in only the most elite homes, was founded upon the desire to scale down the universe itself, to create a microcosm of the known world that could fit in a European residence. The purpose of these collections was to gather

¹⁷⁰ In addition to housing specimens of insects, flowers, shells, corals, minerals, exotic material culture like ceremonial masks, clothing, pottery and canoes, they often also included supposed unicorn horns, and the bones of dwarves and giants. Fabled creatures described in the Bible and in classical texts were also included; curators of these cabinets would sew together different animal parts to represent creatures like basilisks, hydras, and griffins.

¹⁷¹ Isabel Yaya, "Wonders of America: The Curiosity Cabinet as a Site of Representation and Knowledge." *Journal of the History of Collections*. 20.2 (2008) 177.

¹⁷² Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory*, 4.

specimens from all corners of the Earth, to show the diversity of God's creation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, masses of objects from the new continent meant that curators were faced with an extension of the known world, one that produced uncertainty, including uncertainty about the origin and nature of the Indigenous peoples of America, the extent of the land itself, the flora and faunas of the New World's relationship to the world and so on. In light of this, "the cabinet attempted to control and frame the unfamiliar."¹⁷³ During the latter part of seventeenth century, items from the Americas were no longer simply reflections of European exoticism and fantasy; they came to form the focus of comparative intellectual investigation.

The enduring relationship between gendered and temporal myths and early forays into empirical study, and the relationship between visual and textual curiosities, is made vivid in Jan van Kessel the Elder's "America," (1666), an oil on canvas painting which evokes the curiosity cabinet (fig. 7).¹⁷⁴ "America," one in a series of the four continents, depicts a large room full of exotic creatures and objects. The ceiling and walls are decorated with incredibly detailed insects, that appear to be pinned there—beetles, butterflies, moths, bees, and worms. To the right these insects are depicted in a painting, and stacked behind it, another painting shows various exotic birds perched on a tree. Fish

¹⁷³ Yaya, "Wonders of America: The Curiosity Cabinet as a Site of Representation and Knowledge," 177.

¹⁷⁴ Kessel (1626-1679) was a Flemish painter born in Antwerp. The full installation includes paintings of all four continents. Each continent is surrounded by a border of smaller pictures, each individually framed. Kessel was "mainly a meticulously accurate painter of flowers, insects, and animals," though his work was sometimes "relieved by touches of fantasy." An example of this "fantasy," according to Honour, is his "use of snakes and caterpillars wriggling to form the letters of his name," and his occasional combination of "exotic flora and fauna" with "fabulous beasts," *The European Vision of America*, 109.

of all sorts lie on the ground, loosely lined up into rows. Other creatures are living, and roam about the “cabinet” more freely—monkeys, possums, armadillos. The walls are lined with arches, the top of each of which is decorated with a different mask. Kessel also includes representations Indigenous people in the piece. Some, like one incarnation of America, lie on the floor surrounded by overturned pots of gold and jewels, while others stand under the arches. An effect of Kessel’s meticulous style is that the cabinet has come to life, or, that the objects whose deaths were required for the process of collection have now suddenly returned from the dead. To the right of the frame, a version of Eckout’s “Tupaya woman” stands under one of the archways; as in Eckout’s original, she holds a branch in her right hand and a severed arm in her left. A ghostly arrow hangs behind her, seemingly unattached to her quiver (which is filled with body parts), and she wears a distinctly menacing impression. Among Kessel’s painstakingly accurate illustrations of exotic flora and fauna, no doubt drawn from travel writing and natural histories, then, is an image of a female cannibal unquestionably guided by gendered myths. While the room of curiosities contains many different temporal markers—those of the living specimens and the dead, the human and the animal, the painted insect and the pinned one—this woman, like the allegories, is situated in between the mythic time of primordial America and the “even” time of empirical study and natural history.

1.2 The Femininity of Native Origins: Thomas Harriot’s Picts and Algonquins

The temporal flexibility of the myth of the Americas and its recurrent gendering is demonstrated by the increasingly frequency with which early travel writers made comparisons between the Indigenous peoples of America and their own “barbarous” European ancestors. In his widely read *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land*

of *Virginia*, originally published in 1588, Thomas Harriot describes his travels and observations during his 1585-1586 voyages to Virginia and the Carolinas.¹⁷⁵ While the text spends a great deal of time describing commodities, the enlarged 1590 version, engraved by Theodore de Bry, draws the focus to Indigenous bodies. While de Bry relies on the content of the originals (watercolors made by John White) for the positions and objects, he reframes the bodies considerably, highlighting their musculature and giving them European features.¹⁷⁶

The *Report* is invested in a concept of savagery which emerges against the “civilizing” processes of engraving, identifying the “lack” of the constituent processes of writing and metal-working as evidence of the Carolina Algonquins’ position in an earlier stage of cultural development. In this way, Gaudio argues, the *Report* “anticipates comparative ethnology” and “implies a narrative progress from past to present and from savage to civilized.”¹⁷⁷ While writing and metal working function as a crucial referents

¹⁷⁵ The first edition of Harriot’s report was published “in London in 1588 as a piece of ephemera, capitalizing on recent news from the New World...this version of Harriot was not a book but a pamphlet, made up of six sheets of paper, each folded twice so as to make a small quarto of forty-eight pages” (Stallybrass, *Admirando narratio* 9). The pamphlet, though much simpler than the 2nd edition of the work, must have been incredibly popular, since, as Stallybrass notes, only two years later a much expanded and decorated Latin edition was published in Germany (at the time, a center of arts like engraving). The 1590 edition was an expensive undertaking, which “required a range of skills that were hard or impossible to find in England” (9). It’s important to note that the images of Carolina Algonquians and Picts did not appear in the pamphlet, but rather made their debut in the 1590 edition (the version that all subsequent reprintings were based upon).

¹⁷⁶ Some versions of the text, which have been either professionally or amateurly colored, make the Carolina Algonquins blond.

¹⁷⁷ “just as the Briton’s of Raleigh’s day have matured from the savage state of their ancestors,” Gaudio continues, “so, too, we are left to assume, will the Virginians mature into civilized British subjects. Gaudio refers to Joseph-François Lafitau’s 1724 *Moeurs des sauvages américains, comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, a text which draws upon his “observations” of Indigenous peoples, primarily the Haudenosaunee, and

with which to differentiate the Algonquins' technological development, the primary mechanism of differentiation in Harriot's text is temporal.¹⁷⁸ Harriot places these technologies in a progressive framework, thus assigning those who possess, or those who lack, certain technologies to a particular time. The Report's attitude toward the oral cultures of the Carolina Algonquins is a part of a long history which represents oral traditions as mere 'sounds,' misrecognizing or obscuring oral epistemologies. In the *Report*, the dismissal of oral culture is achieved through a framework of gendered origins:

For mankind they say a woman was made first, which by the woorking of one of the goddes, conceived and brought forth children: And in such sort they say they had their beginning. But how manie yeeres or ages have passed since, they say they can make no relation, having no letters nor other such meanes a we to keepe recordes of the particularities of times past, but onlie tradition from father to sonne.¹⁷⁹

The "lack of letters" and of writing fails to preserve important events, but it also, Harriot implies, can invert the gendering of historical events. An effect of the stage of 'savagery,' then, is to misrecognize the relationship between gender and history. The Carolina

compares them to other peoples from earlier historical periods: Harriot "anticipates comparative ethnology what will become systematized in Lafitau's *Customs of the American Indians*," *Engraving the Savage*, 15-16.

¹⁷⁸ While the de Bry engravings vividly display complex tattoos and systems of marking, the *Report*, Gaudio observes, renders them as "savage marks."

¹⁷⁹ Thomas Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. 2nd Ed. 1590. 25-26. While the other engravings in this edition were based on John White's paintings, the five images of the Picts and the neighbors are based on watercolors done by Jacques Le Moyne, (c. 1533-1588) c. 1585. Le Moyne was a part of French colonial expedition to Florida led by Jean Ribault and René Laudonnière in 1594-5 (the expedition was a failure, but many of Le Moyne's drawings were later engraved by de Bry).



Figure 8: Engraving by Theodore de Bry, after watercolors by Jacques le Moyne, “younge dowgter of the pictes,” *America*, 1590. Trustees of the British Library, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.



Figure 9: Engraving by Theodore de Bry, after watercolors by Jacques le Moyne, “true picture of a picte woman,” *America*, 1590. Trustees of the British Library, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

Algonquins have thus “forgotten their true history” and replaced it with a history with maternal origins.¹⁸⁰

The 1590 *Report* concludes by incorporating several images of ancient Picts, both men and women. While the enlarged *Report* is filled with engravings of Indigenous bodies, I argue that work of emerging racial construction occurs primarily in these last few pages. These images serve an explicitly comparative function, one which positions the Carolina Algonquins alongside “Picts” and ancient Britons:

The painter whom I have had the first of the inhabitants of Virginia, gave me all of these 5 figures following...as he did assur[e] me in an old English chronicle, he which I would well set to the end of these first figures, for to show how that the inhabitants of the great Britannie have been in times past as savage as those of Virginia.¹⁸¹

Of the three images of Picts, two are female, one a “true picture of a woman Picte,” and the other her offspring, “a yonge dowgter of the Pictes” (fig. 8). The “savagery” here is specifically a female savagery, one that, unlike the image of the Pict man, demonstrates a direct relationship between the increase of such savagery and the development into womanhood. While still adorning her from head to toe, the paints on the “yonge dowgter” are considerably fainter than those of the “woman picte,” and form the shapes of flowers and vines. This “dowgter” carries only one weapon—a spear.

Harriot’s “true picture of a womane picte,” (fig. 9) however, is considerably more ferocious in her appearance, and she bears more resemblance to an Amazon than to Harriot’s “chief ladies of Secota.” She is decorated with vivid tattoos of powerful creatures and celestial bodies rather than faint flowers; a sunburst covers her abdomen, a

¹⁸⁰ *Engraving the Savage*, 15.

¹⁸¹ Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. 2nd Ed. 1590. 67.

crescent moon her neck, and stars her breasts. On her shoulders we can see growling griffin heads, and on her knees the faces of lions. She carries multiple weapons—a curved sword and three spears. According to Harriot, these Pictish women “did let their hair fl[y] about their shoulders,” were “no worser for the warres then the men,” and always carried spears or swords about them.¹⁸² It is telling that in creating an image of an early British woman, Harriot draws from Amazon legend, for it underscores the fact that representations of Indigenous women were already in conversation with both Britain’s female ancestors and with the mythical female warriors. This triangle of primitive women illustrates just how powerful the “gendered deep structures of colonial discourses” were to conceptualizing Anglo-Indigenous racial and cultural difference and how these discourses were tied to complex temporal relations.¹⁸³ Imbedded in this triad is a gendered history of power, one that connects female strength with a mythical past in which gender relations were radically different.¹⁸⁴ Here we can see how European ethnographic descriptions of Indigenous people were entangled with the representations of their own mythic past.

Harriot’s special attention to the female Picts is a part of a larger seventeenth-century interest in Britain’s “prehistory” and in the project of “recovering...[British] native origins.”¹⁸⁵ Writers in this period sought “the logical vanishing point for the perspective of history they were coming more and more to consider essential, not only to

¹⁸² Harriot. *A Brief and True Report*. 70.

¹⁸³ Mario Klarer, “Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America,” 17.

¹⁸⁴ Though much later, Tennyson’s 1847 *Princess* illustrates this point: “Glanc’d at the legendary Amazon as emblematic of a nobler age” (OED).

¹⁸⁵ Jodi Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early Modern England*. (New York: Routledge, 1998) 3.

the completion of their picture of universal history but to their own orientation in an age of ever more evidence change.”¹⁸⁶ As Harriot’s fierce Picts suggest, they found the “utter antiquity,” or the “undocumentable past,” and the “self-destructive savagery of ancient Britain” to be disturbing, a product of the “double-bind of native origins—barbarous if unknown and barbarous when found.”¹⁸⁷ More disturbing than their nakedness, paganism, and lack of civility, Jodi Mikalachki argues, was their “apparent indifference to the masculinist principle of gender hierarchy,” particularly the fact that they made no distinction between men and women when it came to positions of political and martial power.¹⁸⁸ Perhaps because of this anxiety, “early modern historiographers gave disproportionate attention to examples of female authority in accounts of ancient Britain.”¹⁸⁹

While there were several such figures, Harriot’s Picts (and the “olde chronicle” he refers to) which likely referring to Boadicea (or Boudica), an Iceni Queen whose reentry into British historiography was precipitated by the rediscovery of ancient Roman texts, particularly Tacitus’s *Agricola*. Her first early modern appearance was in the second book of Polydore Vergil’s *History* (1534), followed by Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicles* (1577), book two of Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queen* (1590), Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher’s play *Bouduca* (1610), and Thomas Heywood’s *Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts of Nine the Most Worthy Women in the World* (1640), in which she is

¹⁸⁶ A. B. Ferguson, *Utter Antiquity: Perceptions of Prehistory in Renaissance England*. (Durham: Duke UP, 1993) 1.

¹⁸⁷ Ferguson, 1 *Utter Antiquity: Perceptions of Prehistory in Renaissance England*, Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 4, 9.

¹⁸⁸ Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 11.

¹⁸⁹ Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 11.

described as “Bunduca, the Heathen.”¹⁹⁰ Despite the “savagery” she signified, Boadicea’s story captured literary and historical imagination. It begins with the death of her husband and consort. After his death, the Romans reneged on a previous contract that recognized Icenian independence and subsequently annexed their lands; they then publicly flogged Boadicea and raped her daughters. In response, she led (and was elected to lead) a rebellion “acknowledged in classical sources as having very nearly driven the Romans out of Britain.”¹⁹¹ According to Holinshed, her daughters rode with her into battle, and prior to the attack, she invoked the goddess Adraste, underscoring (and reveling in) the fact that it was “a goddess which governest the Britons.”¹⁹² Though Boadicea was ultimately defeated by Suetonius, and died shortly after (whether by her own hand or illness is unknown), her military campaign caused major losses for the Roman army. According to Mikalachi, Holinshed found the Queen’s violence during the rebellion to be “the strongest evidence of her savage female excess,” an excess best demonstrated by her indiscriminate killing (i.e., the murder of other women).¹⁹³ Holinshed writes:

They spared neither age nor sex: women of great nobility and worthy fame, they took and hanged up naked, and cutting off their paps, sewed them to their mouths, that they might seem as if they sucked and fed on them, and some of their bodies they stretched out in length, and thrust them on sharp stakes.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ The fascination with Boadicea, though perhaps unmatched with that of the early modern period, lingered on well into the nineteenth century. William Cowper’s “Boadicea, an ode” (1782) sings her praises, as does Tennyson’s “Boadicea,” while Queen Victoria associated herself with the earlier queen. An immense statue of Boadicea was constructed in 1905, commissioned by Prince Albert. The statue stands next to the House of Parliament and is inscribed with lines from Cowper’s poem, “Regions Caesar never knew/Thy posterity shall sway.”

¹⁹¹ Mikalachi, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 12.

¹⁹² Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, London, 1557. 44.

¹⁹³ Mikalachi, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 13.

¹⁹⁴ Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, London, 1557. 45.

The “terrible parody of maternal nurture in this atrocity,” an atrocity committed by a woman who is avenging both the violation of her lands, her sovereignty, her own body and the bodies of her daughters, underscores the “*overwhelming femininity of native origins*.”¹⁹⁵ The gendered dimension of native origins clearly extends beyond the borders of Britain. The use of the maternal as an emblem of both female appetite for violence and for fertility—Boadicea’s daughters riding into battle—is mirrored by the scenes of Indigenous female cannibals feeding Europeans to their children. In their search for the “logical vanishing point... of history,” early modern historiographers discovered a figure of savage female power.¹⁹⁶ Not only are “native origins” specifically gendered female—they also mark the space in which Western “history” attempts to reconcile the “undocumented past” with the present. Boadicea’s “eruption” of the British “process of civilization by Rome” makes vivid the contradiction that van der Straet’s “America” covers over—that the “vanishing point” of history is marked by a female body that interrupts the martial, temporal, and discursive “colonization” by the progressive logic that animates *Nova Reperta*.¹⁹⁷

The fact that Harriot has given his ferocious “picte woman” a “yonge dowgter” suggests that he was in conversation with his contemporary historiographers, who were captivated by the problem of Boadicea. Harriot’s placement of the Pict’s “neighbors,” however, illustrates just how this problem was solved. Two of the five figures that

¹⁹⁵ Mikalachki also astutely points out that Rome itself “had a savage female breast at its origin” in the figure of the she-wolf who nursed Romulus and Remus. Unlike the wolf, whose savagery is “rechanneled into the male line of Romulus,” Boadicea’s savagery remains unrestrained and carried on through her solely female offspring. *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 14-15.

¹⁹⁶ Ferguson, *Utter Antiquity: Perceptions of Prehistory in Renaissance England*, 1.

¹⁹⁷ Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea*, 11.

conclude the *Report* are not Picts but rather members of *another* contemporaneous tribe. The name of this nation is strangely avoided, (“Ther was in the said great Brittainne yet another nation nigbour unto the Pictes”), though Harriot provides several details about their garments: “[they] did apparel them selves with a kind of cassake other cloath jerkin...They did also wear longe hears, and their moustaches...and did carry the pick or lance in their hand...”¹⁹⁸). But the fact that they “did apparel them selves”—that they did *not* go naked like the Picts or the Carolina Alongquins—is the first (and most significant) marker of a less “savage” culture, followed by their use of the “pick or lance” rather than the bow and arrow. While Harriot’s purpose in concluding the *Report* with these five figures is purportedly to illustrate the potential for civilizing the Carolina Algonquins, by “show[ing] how that the inhabitants of the great Britannie have been in times past as savage as those of Virginia,” the effect of the inclusion of the unnamed “neighbors” is to create a clear boundary between early Britons and the Picts.¹⁹⁹ While the Picts, with Boadicea and her daughter as their figureheads, remain in “savagery,” tainted by the specter of female rule and violence, the Britons display the beginnings of cultural development. These concluding pages of Harriot’s report position Picts, Britons, and Carolina Algonquins in a scheme which delineates civility and savagery through temporal and gendered language.

¹⁹⁸ Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report*, 73. Andrew Hadfield remarks that it is rather strange that Harriot remains so vague about their identity (though, as Hadfield notes, these “neighbors” are “obviously the Britons,” “Bruited Abroad: John White and Thomas Harriot’s Colonial Representations of Ancient Briton.” *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature*. Ed. David J. Baker and Willy Maley. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 166.

¹⁹⁹ Harriot, *A Briefe and True Report*, 67.

Not only is Harriot placing the Picts in a different stage of social development than their “neighbors,” he is also distancing them from the Britons spatially, for the Picts were associated with Scotland, and particularly with the Scottish Highlanders. Holinshed describes the Picts as a distinctly backward people, resistant to civilization: they were “a cruell kind of men and much given to warres...more desirous of spoyle than rule of government.”²⁰⁰ In his *Britain, or a Chronicle description of the most flourishing kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1586), William Camden elaborates in even more gruesome detail,

They drank the bloud out of wounds of the slain: they establish themselves, by drinking one anothers bloud and suppose the great number of slaughters they commit, the more honour they winne and so did the Scythians in old time. To this we adde that these wild Scots, like the Scythians, had for their weapons, bowes and arrows.²⁰¹

The temporal shift between the “wild Scots” that *drank* the blood of their enemies and those that currently *suppose* their slaughters to be the measure of honor, as the Scythians did in *old time* speaks to the long history of the image of the primitive Scotsmen or Highlander. This view of Scottish culture persisted well into the eighteenth century in various cultural texts and came to represent the less developed stages of social evolution

²⁰⁰ Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* 67.

²⁰¹ William Camden, *Britain, or a Chronicle of the most flourishing kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. 1610. 114. Camden also refers to the Scythians, whom he mentions twice in this brief excerpt. By calling up the Scythians, Camden is taking a stock photo, as it were, from cultural history: since the writings of Herodotus, the Scythians had signified the epitome of barbarism. But Herodotus *also* associates the Scythians with the Amazons; he claims that they were in geographic proximity. While it is difficult to know what “olde Chronicle” is referenced in Harriot’s explanation of these final images, or whether or not he was familiar with the Pictish association with the Scythians and the Scythian association with the Amazons, somewhat later works, like Peter Motteux’s *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* (1707) and John Weston’s *The Amazon Queen: or the Amours of Thalestris to Alexander the Great* (1667), draw heavily on the latter association.

in Enlightenment stadial models.²⁰² The “wild Scots” inferiority, like the Indigenous peoples of America and the Amazons, is also technological: they use “bowes and arrows” rather than the “lance or the pick.” The enduring nature of the association between Scottish Highland culture, role reversal, and barbarity is also illustrated in the frontispiece of a 1774 edition of Thomas Southerne’s *Oroonoko: a Tragedy*. Here Oroonoko is a half-naked, “dark-skinned Highlander in a forest-like setting,” crowned with a rude fur hat, and, as Nussbaum observes, clothed in a “low slung furry loin cloth” that strongly resembles a kilt. This barbaric “hybrid African-Scots creature” is accompanied by an Imoinda who, because of her great height and classical garb (which “unveils only the right breast,”) recalls an Amazon.²⁰³ The “claw-like arm” with which Imoinda grasps Oroonoko “suggest[s] her bestial affinity with the savage” and “seem[s] to infantilize...and even effeminate him.”²⁰⁴ Because the frontispiece accompanies Southerne’s version of the play, Imoinda is white; her Amazonian tendencies, therefore, are not simply aligned with barbarity in the abstract but also with the barbaric as it is associated both with the wilds of Africa and the wilds of British prehistory. In the eyes of early modern British historiographers this prehistory appears to be tied to a threat of female savagery.

If the effect of Harriot’s distinction between the Picts and their “neighbors” is to separate the history of the former from that of Britain, then his special attention to female Pictish savagery points to the function Boadicea and her (literal and literary) daughters.

²⁰² The character of Lishmago, in Tobias Smollet’s 1771 *Humphry Clinker* is an example.

²⁰³ Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995) 179.

²⁰⁴ Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives*, 179.

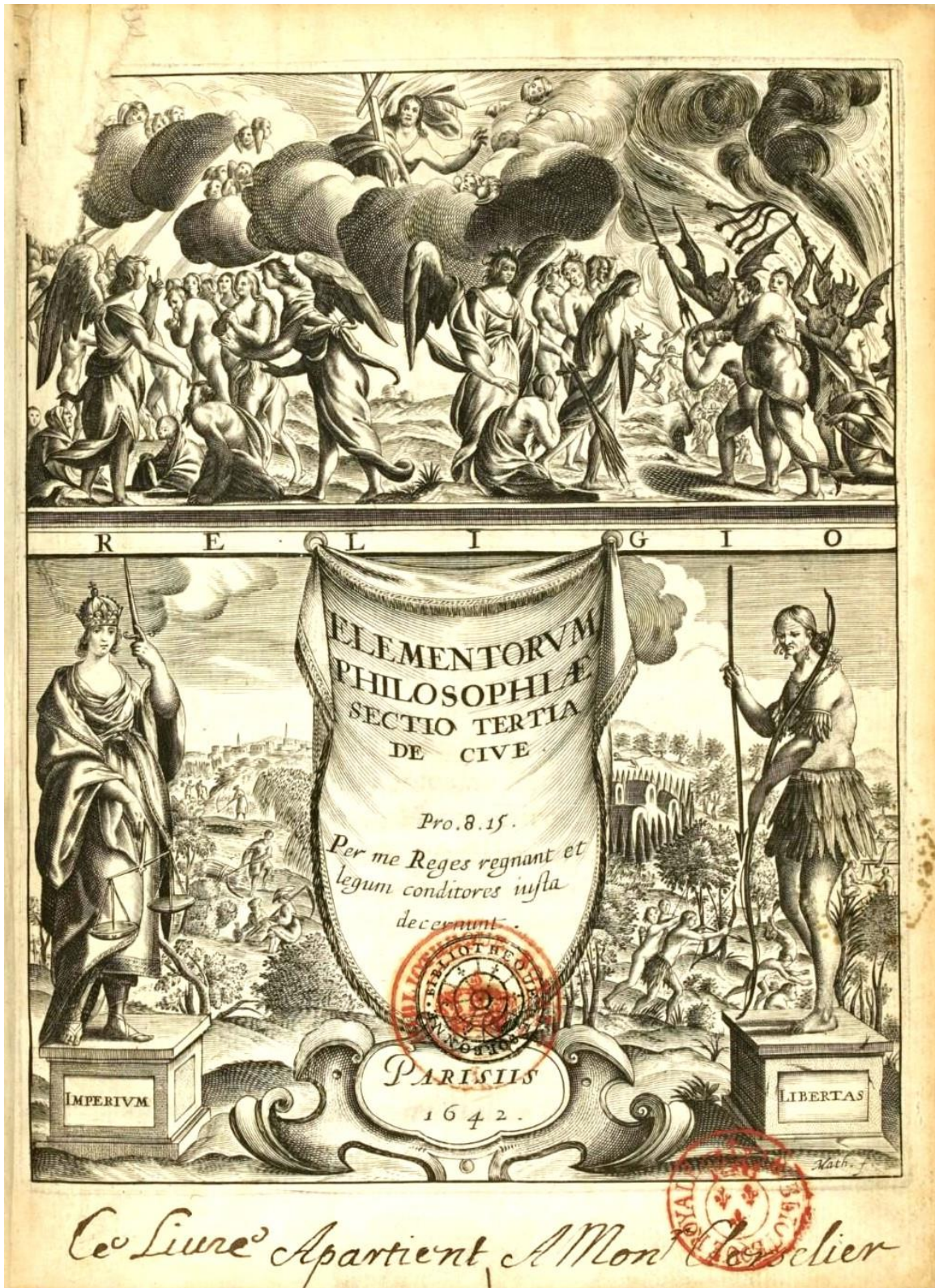


Figure 10: Engraved frontispiece by Jean Malthus, to Thomas Hobbes's *De Cive*, 1642. Public domain.



Figure 11: Engraved frontispiece by Theodore de Bry, to Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, 1590. Trustees of the British Library, Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

Nova Britannia (1609), a report commissioned by the Virginia company, makes it clear that historiographers saw the invasions of Rome as a process of masculine civilization: the Britons would have remained in a state of savagery if “Julius Caesar with his Roman Legions (or some other) had not laid this ground to make us tame and civil.”²⁰⁵ Harriot’s inclusion of the early Britons ensures that the “us” here does *not* refer to both Picts and Britons. Andrew Hadfield suggests that the inclusion of the Picts performs a similar function to that of Hobbes’s “state of nature”—it serves as a warning of civil dissolution.²⁰⁶ Most significantly, this warning takes the form of a specter of female rule; it situates the female savagery spatially in Scotland and temporally in de Certeau’s “past,” or at the “vanishing point” of both history and civil society.

In light of Boadicea’s legacy, the gendering at work in Thomas Hobbes’ frontispiece to *De Cive* (fig. 10) has important implications for the temporal function of “American Imaginaries,” and specifically for the state of nature. The frontispiece, framed by the figures of *imperium* and *libertas*, draws from de Bry’s engravings of Indigenous hunting scenes in the 1590 edition of Harriot’s *Report*. In the background of Hobbes’s frontispiece, men hunt with bows and arrows. However, unlike the Carolina Algonquins in de Bry’s engravings, who hunt deer, Hobbes’s figures hunt each other, illustrating the war of all against all which characterized his state of nature. The dual work of gender and temporality becomes clearer, however, if we compare the frontispiece of *De Cive* to the frontispiece of Harriot’s *Report* (fig. 11). For though both *imperium* and *libertas* are personified by female figures, *imperium*, whose bountiful clothing, which

²⁰⁵ Anonymous, *Nova Britannia*, London, 1609. 13.

²⁰⁶ He writes, “The Picts...appear to warn the reader of a path that should not be taken.” 166.

covers her entire body, and her erect posture, stand in stark contrast to the naked and hunched *libertas*, who carries a bow and arrow. *Libertas* takes the place of Harriot's Algonquin woman, while *imperium* takes the place of the Algonquin man. Through this positioning, the chaotic threat that total liberty represents is situated as feminized, indigenized origin of savagery. The mechanisms of differentiation at work in the gendering of *libertas* and *imperium* gives the subtitle (the "rudiments") to Hobbes's work another dimension: transformation and conquest of this female savagery is the first lesson of "society" and "government." *Imperium* is the result of "*writing that conquers.*"²⁰⁷

Both Harriot's and Hobbes's solution to the problem of female savagery is a temporal one. Like her American sisters, Boadicea represents a feminine "eruption" of savagery into a masculine history, marking the point at which the linear time of progressive history dissolves into the inexplicable time of past and in which the body becomes (or fails to become) an "open interiority like a book." Located in the *there* of Scotland and the *then* of prehistory, the Pictish women serve as a haunting reminder of the "remainders" that cannot be incorporated into "the writing of [Western] history."

²⁰⁷ In the 1651 English edition, *De Cive* is entitled the *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. It's important to understand the association between "rudiments" and *instruction*, and to a lesser extent, to *origin*, particularly in the early modern period. The *OED* defines them as "the first principles or elements of a subject; those points which are first *taught* to, or acquired by, a person beginning the study or practice of a branch of knowledge, art, etc." As in W. Marshall's *Playne & Godly Expos. Commune Crede* (1534), "This heavenly phylosophie hath certayne rudymentes and pryncples or rules and instructyons which are fyrste taught to hym," Christopher Marlowe's *Tragicall History of D. Faustus* (1593), "First Ile instruct thee in the rudiments, And then wilt thou be perfecter then I," and Swift's *Hist. Vanbrugh's House in Miscellanies in prose and verse* (1703), "From such deep Rudiments as these, Van is become by due Degrees For Building Fam'd."

1.3 Amazons in “A Country that Hath Yet Her Maidenhead:” Sir Walter Raleigh’s *Discoverie of Guiana*

In his *Letter on His First Voyage*, Columbus repeatedly insists that he has “not found the human monsters which many people expected.”²⁰⁸ This claim underscores the fact that prior to contact, the explorers and those that speculated on their voyages already had an image of America in mind, one rife with fantastic creatures that occupied *terra incognita*. Columbus’s discussion of cannibalism in the passage that follows this claim is particularly significant because it demonstrates how the gendered myths identifies are incorporated into this first vision of the New World to create the only American “monster.” Columbus writes,

Not only have I found no monsters but I have had no reports of any *except* at the island called ‘Quaris’...which is inhabited by a people who are regarded in these islands as extremely fierce and who eat human flesh...They are no more ill-shaped than any other natives of the Indies, though they are in the habit of wearing their hair long like women...It is these men who have relations with the women of Matinino, where there are no men and which is the first island you come to on the way from Spain to the Indies. These women do not follow feminine occupations but use cane bows and arrows like those of the men and arm and protect themselves with plates of copper, of which they have much.²⁰⁹

While the “‘Quaris’” and the “‘women of Matinino’” may not confirm a traditional representation of the monstrous, they nevertheless function as vehicles through which Columbus echoes the association between cannibalism and role reversal. The women of Matinino, with their rejection of “feminine occupations,” their use of “bows and arrows,” and their copper armor resemble Amazons. The annual or seasonal “relations” between

²⁰⁸ Christopher Columbus, “Letter on His First Voyage.” 1492-3. *Four Voyages*. 1500. Ed. J. M. Cohen. Penguin, New York: 1969. 121.

²⁰⁹ Columbus, “Letter on His First Voyage.” 121-122 (my emphasis). Note that the Amazonian Mantino women use bows and arrows.

these two groups recall similar arrangements described in tales of the mythic female warriors, as does their occupation of an all-female island, removed from the world at large. Significantly, Columbus does not actually *see* these women, but rather hears of them from the barbaric Quaris; like Herodotus's Amazons, they are located but not *found* on the edges of a male society that epitomizes savagery. While the flesh-eating Quaris are "extremely fierce," they also wear "their hair long like women," and their association with the masculine female warriors implicates them in an inverted or disrupted gender order.

In this brief passage Columbus inaugurates the myths of American Amazons and of Indigenous cannibalism. These two myths would become tropes of difference in a variety of narratives to come. Both the presence of cannibals and Amazons push the limits of what is believable or even imaginable about human behavior, and unsurprisingly they would often be associated with one another. In his *Second Voyage*, Columbus names an additional tribe that practices cannibalism. These "Caribs" are also a group of male cannibals who make war parties to win and then to devour their captives, but unlike their Quari counterparts, they do not associate with Amazonian women, but rather raid villages for female prisoners. These women are not eaten, but instead used as breeders of future men. He writes,

These women say that they are treated with a cruelty that seems incredible. The Caribs eat the male children that they have by them, and only bring up the children of their own women; and as for the men they are able to capture, they bring those who are alive home to be slaughtered and eat those who are dead on the spot. They say that human flesh is so good that there is nothing like it in the world; and this must be true, for the human bones we found in their houses were so gnawed that no flesh was left on them...In one house the neck of a man was

found cooking in a pot. They castrate boys that they capture and use them as servants until they are men.²¹⁰

We know nothing of the Carib women themselves, but the captive women, unlike those of Mantino, do not appear to display any Amazonian characteristics. Rather, it is the Carib men who seem to replicate the trope of dismemberment, castration, or child murder often associated with Amazons in medieval legend.²¹¹ Like the Amazons, their “male offspring are killed, maimed,” and “mutilated to prevent them from using weapons.”²¹² The Carib men will only eat other men, and sometimes their own grown sons (“they say that the flesh of boys and women is not good to eat”); symbolically they perform a form of self-cannibalism, since their desire for human flesh is directly related to how closely their victims mirror them.²¹³ The idea of a man not only castrating his own sons but also seeking out his own sons to eat would have been especially disturbing to Columbus and his companions, as for them, sons represented the ability to pass on one’s property, holdings, title, and name. Perhaps more disturbing, however, is the Carib men’s distinction between their sons by captive women and their sons by Carib women. This distinction suggests that, in another behavior that inverts Patriarchal systems of descent, these men may trace their kinship through maternal lines. Only their sons by Carib women were considered a part of their cultural group. This possibility is supported by the exogamous cannibalism behavior that Columbus attributes to the Quaris and other

²¹⁰ Columbus, *Second Voyage*. 1493-6. 136-7.

²¹¹ Mario Klarer, “Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America.” *Journal of American Studies*. 27.1 (April 1993), 11.

²¹² Klarer, “Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America,” 11.

²¹³ Columbus, *Second Voyage*. 1493-6. 137.

cannibalistic tribes: “These people were all friendly to one another as if of one family. They do no harm each other but make all war against the neighboring islands.”²¹⁴

Four decades after the publication of Vespucci’s travels, in 1542, Francisco de Orellana and Gaspar de Carvajal formed a party under the command of Pizarro to explore what is now known as the Amazon river. Unlike most explorers, they claim to see, firsthand, Amazons in America. Carvajal recounts his encounter with a group of Indigenous peoples thusly: “[They] are the subjects of, and tributaries to, the Amazons, and our coming having been made known to them, they went to them to ask help, and there came as many as ten or twelve of them, for we ourselves saw these women, who were there fighting in front of all the Indian men as women captains, and these latter fought so courageously that the Indian men did not dare to turn their backs.”²¹⁵ The appearance of these female warriors prompted Orellana to request “his Majesty for a commission to conquer them.”²¹⁶ Orellana and Carvajal’s invocation of the Amazon myth differs somewhat from that of Columbus or Vespucci, and these departures mark the shifts in colonial power and the redeployment of gendered discourses to new ends. While Orellana’s and Carvajal’s Amazons still suggest a close relationship between female violence and a feminized landscape, the trope of the female warrior is now more intimately tied with literal wealth than with stories of cannibalism, to the point that references to Amazons and to hidden gold became inseparable.²¹⁷ Orellana and Carvajal focus the threat of female power into the image of the Amazons and disentangle this

²¹⁴ Columbus, *Second Voyage*. 1493-6. 136.

²¹⁵ Gaspar de Carvajal, *Discovery of the Orellana River*, 214.

²¹⁶ Gaspar de Carvajal, *Discovery of the Orellana River*, 214.

²¹⁷ Katherine Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*. (Durham: Duke UP, 2000) 55.

threat of cannibalism, associating the threat instead with the lure of riches. This is an important development in the how gendered myths were employed in travel writing and in natural histories. That Amazons encountered in person or by hearsay lead Orellana to request permission to conquer them and claim the treasures of gold and land they guarded marks a new function of these gendered tropes: colonial ambition is marketed by the presentation of an exceptionally alien, and potentially ancient female power, one that is rooted firmly in the New World and seems to linger on the edges of the explorers' maps.

The uncertainty present here, the inability to know, for certain, that the Amazons have been conquered, points to their temporal dimension in these narratives. The conflict of desires, the simultaneous need to possess that which is sought and to seek that which one cannot find, culminates in the identification of gendered continuities and temporal incongruities.²¹⁸ Orellana and Carvajal's simultaneous "need to sustain a state of mystification" and "to possess" underscores the fundamental importance of the conquest they fantasize about and also signals the shifting temporalities at work in their quest.²¹⁹ The Amazons, like van der Straet's America and Harriot's female Picts, signal the "initial act of division," in which a mythic time is separated from the time of history. These women represent both the time before female savagery was conquered via the male civilizing process as well as the immediate threat of the eruption of that savagery into current moment. They are bodies that have as yet been unwritten by "*the writing that conquers*."²²⁰ Presented with the embodiment of this "vanishing point," Orellana and Carvajal will seek what they will never find in an attempt to recreate the originary

²¹⁸ Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*, 53.

²¹⁹ Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*, 56.

²²⁰ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xxiii.

moment in which the epitome of female savagery was conquered by masculine civilization. Thus Orellana and Carvajal's quest is animated by the desire to reenact Hobbes's first "lesson" of society—to incorporate the Amazons into the time of history by military conquest and by robbing them of their wealth, to reinscribe the writing of history onto a pre-"historical" body. They never find and conquer the Amazons not simply because there aren't any Amazons, but because the originary moment they seek is a discursive one, one that is endlessly repeated.

Sir Walter Raleigh takes up the Amazon focus in his *Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*, first published in 1596, but his inclusion of fair Indian maidens, perpetually vulnerable to sexual attacks, gives a fuller picture of the temporal work being done by "Amazon quests." Like Harriot's Picts and Britons, Raleigh's Amazons and Indian maids are located in a temporal schema. Amazons, the quintessential images of female sovereignty, embody the unreachable time beyond the "vanishing point" of history. Raleigh depends upon a gendered language and a body of gendered tropes to describe the peoples, land, dangers, and treasures of Guiana. A particular goal of the *Discoverie* is to distinguish English colonial ambitions from Spanish ones and to garner interest (and patronage) for future expeditions. In order to achieve this goal, he engages with the language of lust and rapacity with which the English had long described Spanish endeavors. At the same time, Raleigh seeks to represent future exploration of Guiana as desirable to future participants and investors. As Louis Montrose suggests, Raleigh found the most difficulty in navigating between his position as male explorer taming the feminized New World and his position as a male

subject to a Queen, one whose symbolic virginity must be carefully distinguished from that of Guiana.

Central to Raleigh's difficulty is his ubiquitous use of the language of sexual violence, as well as the conflict of meaning between the image of the New World as virginal Indian maiden and between the specter of female power, which is represented by both the Queen he serves and by the Amazons he pursues. But while he draws upon the now familiar associations between the Americas and female appetite, power, violence, fertility, and desirability, Raleigh separates these concepts and positions them more firmly in different representations of women. Vespucci's cannibal women were desirable because of their sexual appetites, and their voracious desire was tied directly to their physical power. But unlike Vespucci and Columbus, for whom the lure of feminized America was always tied to its dangers, Raleigh locates voracious sexual appetite not in the Indigenous women themselves, but in their Spanish conquerors. The "sexual conduct of European men in the New World" should be read, Montrose argues, as "an ideologically meaningful (and overdetermined) act of violence," violence that is "impelled by, enacts, and thus reciprocally confirms the imperatives of appropriation, possession, and domination" which are "themselves discursively figured in gendered violence," rather than as an example of "essential male lustfulness."²²¹ Raleigh's careful distinction between the Indian maids and the Amazon warriors is, I argue, one of his strategies for enacting and confirming the "imperatives" Montrose names, but it also marks the limitations of sexual violence, and more importantly, the temporal function of sexual violence in this emerging gendered history.

²²¹ Montrose, "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery," 19.

The division Raleigh creates between the Indian maids and the Amazons is also in conversation with the gendered history described by Harriot's Pictish women and by Hollinshed's writing on Boadicea. Whereas van der Straet's seemingly virginal America is always closely shadowed by her cannibal sisters, Raleigh has divorced the threat of female anthropophagy from sexual allurements. Raleigh separates these tropes in his respective descriptions of Amazons and Indian maids as both an elaboration on Harriot's Pictish women/Pictish neighbors and as a strategy for navigating the precarious position he occupies as a male subject to a female Queen, invading a land described in feminine terms. The fair Indian maidens Raleigh includes are markedly different from the Amazon warriors he searches for, and while he pursues the Amazons with erotic fascination, his motive, he assures the reader, is firmly tied to the potential glory of having conquered the legendary nation of women and having claimed their supposed masses of gold for himself. He situates himself as the protector of the Indian maidens from the threat of Spanish sexual violence, and in so doing, characterizes these women as appealing because they lack desire as well as the ability to defend themselves. Here we have the appearance of a different layer in the "gendered deep structures of colonial discourse": an emerging opposition between female desire and desirability.²²² The Amazons, whose bodies are more clearly tied to an autonomous female body politic, possess their power because they are *not* sexually vulnerable to invaders. Relegating their intimate relations with men to appointed times and seasons, these women exercise careful control over their sexuality.

²²² Klarer, "Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America," 17.

While Raleigh's inspiration for his Amazons most likely, at least in part, drew from classical sources as well as maps and travel narratives, it is likely that he was familiar with Harriot's Pictish women as well. Harriot had been involved with Raleigh's projects since the early 1580's. During this period, Raleigh became increasingly interested in exploring the Americas, but, knowing little about the process, employed Harriot, by 1584 an accomplished traveler and scientist, to teach him cosmography and navigation.²²³ It's almost certain Raleigh was familiar with Harriot's *True and Brief Report* by the time he wrote the *Discoverie*, and therefore with Harriot's inclusion of the Pictish women and their neighbors, particularly since he was the patron of Jacques Le Moyne. Le Moyne was the artist who painted the original watercolors of the Picts used in Harriot's *Report*, which were completed (c.1585) after he had secured patronage from Raleigh.²²⁴

Harriot's Amazonian Pictish woman is considerably more savage than both the Carolina Algonquins and the Picts' "neighbors," and the ancient British savagery that he aims to convey through these images is a distinctly female one. However, I want to suggest that it was not simply the savagery of Harriot's Picts that Raleigh drew on, but rather the distinction Harriot makes between the female Picts and the female "neighbors" to the Picts. While the female neighbor is still 'savage,' the threat she embodies has been markedly scaled down. She is not naked, but rather clothed in a skirt and bodice; while

²²³ John Shirley, "Sir Walter Raleigh and Thomas Harriot." *Thomas Harriot, Renaissance Scientist*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) 38.

²²⁴ Le Moyne had been party to Jean Ribault and René Laudonnière's colonial expedition to Florida in 1564-5 (an experience that probably recommended him to Raleigh). When he was forced to leave France to escape the Huguenot massacres in 1572, Le Moyne went to London, where he eventually met Raleigh and secured his patronage.

the bodice still reveals her breasts, it is secured with tight strings through loop holes, and encircled with a belt. She also stands side face, unlike her Pictish counterparts, who face the page straight on and gaze menacingly back at their viewer. Most importantly, the Pict's neighbors are represented by one man and one woman. For the Picts, the threat of female savagery is literally doubled in the image of the "yonge dowghter," who may harken to Boadicea's daughters *or* to the off solely female offspring that the Amazons chose to keep. The effect of this division is to place the Pictish woman and the female savagery they embody in a distant time and space (i.e. Scotland), unlike the neighboring women, who we should think of as the contemporaneous British ladies' ancestor. Raleigh's fair Indian maids mirror Harriot's Pictish neighbors, for while both are still "savage," they have a stronger relationship to time of history: both are defined, albeit to different degrees, by their sexual relationships with men and by their sexual vulnerability. Likewise, Raleigh's Amazons mirror Harriot's Pictish women, as they both mark the temporal and spatial boundaries that separate the savage from the civilized and the mythic past from the present. Raleigh makes vivid Harriot's subtle distinction between the Pictish women and the female neighbors, and in so doing reveals it to be a distinction between women who have been incorporated into history, bodies that have been inscribed by "*the writing that conquers*," and bodies that have yet to be inscribed, women who remain untouched in a land both temporally and spatially out of reach. Raleigh's text shows that it is not only "discovery" that is figured as sexual violence, but also that sexual violence is figured as a tool of the civilizing process.

Raleigh articulates the distinction between Indian maids and Amazons early on in the *Discoverie*, characterizing the Spanish as the rapists of both the land and its people,

and the Indian women as victims of active Spanish desire. Raleigh situates himself, and England at large, as the protectors of Indigenous ‘chastity’:

...when the poore men and women had seen us, and that wee gave them meate, and to every one something or other, they beganne to conceive the deceit and purpose of the Spaniards, who indeed (as they confessed) tooke from them both their wives and daughters dayly, and used them for the satisfying of their owne lusts, especially such as they tooke in this manner by strength. But I protest before the Majestie of the living God, that I neither know nor beleieve, that any of our company one or other, by violence or otherwise, ever knew any of their women. . .I suffered not any man. . . so much as to offer to touch any of their wives or daughters: which course so contrary to the Spaniards . . . drewe them to admire her Majestie, whose commaundement I tolde them it was.²²⁵

Raleigh’s branding of the English as the defenders of these women allegedly wins him Indigenous support and trust. The vulnerability of both the Indigenous men and women is rendered in distinctly sexual terms, and the “dayly” kidnap and violation of Indian “wives and daughters” is presented as a symptom of Spanish lust for material wealth, a practice that Raleigh purportedly condemns and reverses by giving them “meate” and ensuring that “everyone [received] something or another.” His insistent emphasis on how “many” of the women were “in [his] power” points to the tenuousness of his vow to defend them, underscoring Raleigh’s heroic self-denial.²²⁶

Raleigh’s attempt to position himself as the agent of the Indigenous defense, and his alleged goal “to deliver them from the tyrannie of the Spaniards,” begins to break down when he turns his attention to the attractiveness of the country and its potential for future exploration and colonization.²²⁷ Raleigh redirects his attention to his male readers

²²⁵ Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*. 1596. 391.

²²⁵ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 391.

²²⁵ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 399.

²²⁶ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 414.

²²⁷ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 346.

and urges them to join his cause before the Spanish win greater territories, admitting that two nations “came both for one errant . . . both sought but to sacke & spoile them.”²²⁸

Though “Charles the 5 . . . had the maidenhead of Peru,” Guiana remains ripe for English sexual conquest:

To conclude, Guiana is a countrey that hath yet her maydenhead, never sackt, turned, nor wrought, the face of the earth hath not bene torne, nor the vertue and salt of the soyle spent by manufacture, the graves have not bene opened for golde, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their Images pull’d downe out of their temples. It hath never bene entered by any armie of strength, and never conquered or possessed by any christian Prince.²²⁹

Here Raleigh explicitly portrays the land of Guiana (and implicitly, the bodies of its women that he had previously defended), as virginal, helplessly awaiting the moment in which she will be subjected to a series of violence acts, when she will be “sackt, turned . . . wrought,” “torne,” “opened,” “broken,” “entered,” “possessed” and “spent.”

Thus the desirability of the land is tied not only to its association with a female body, but its moment in time, to the “yet” which appears in Raleigh’s description of the land. In so doing, he textually performs the very crimes he had previously accused the Spanish of committing. Unable to render conquest in any other terms but those of sexual violence, Raleigh inadvertently paints a picture of English colonizers which reveals them to be simply more deceptive versions of their Spanish counterparts. The land of Guiana and the bodies of the Indian women who so easily stand in for it are left without protection, doubly betrayed by their first and second European invaders. Given the intensity with which Raleigh describes both his and his Spanish rivals’ insatiable desire for the riches of the New World, both material and erotic, the deflowering of Guiana appears inevitable.

²²⁸ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 414.

²²⁹ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 428.

“For whatsoever Prince shall possesse it,” he writes, “shall be greatest, and if the king of Spaine enjoy it, he will become unresistable.”²³⁰

When Raleigh turns to the Amazons, the gynocentric and “warlike” nation of women, this sexual dynamic is inverted. In Raleigh’s text, Montrose suggests, the Amazons are “figured but not fully contained by the collective imagination of European patriarchy.”²³¹ Raleigh writes:

[I] was very desirous to understand the truth of those warlike women, because of some it is beleevd, of others not. And though I digresse from my purpose, yet I will set downe that which hath bene delivered me for trueth of those women. . . . The memories of the like women are very ancient as well in Africa as in Asia. . . . In many histories they are verified to have bene, and in divers ages and provinces: but they which are not far from Guiana doe accompany with men but once in a yere, and for the time of one moneth, which I gather by their relation to be in April: and at that time all kings of the borders assemble, and queenes of the Amazones; and after the queenes have chosen, the rest cast lots for their Valentines. . . . If they conceive, and be delivered of a sonne, they returne him to the father; if of a daughter they nourish it, and reteine it: and as many as have daughters send unto the begetters a present; all being desirous to increase their owne sex and kind: but that they cut off the right dug of the brest, I doe not finde to be true. It was farther tolde me, that if in these warres they tooke any prisoners that they used to accompany with those also at what time soever, but in the end for certeine they put them to death: for they are sayd to be very cruel and bloodthirsty, especially to such as offer to invade their territories.²³²

If he galvanized his male readers with the tales of virginal and defenseless Indian maidens by playing upon their own lustful desires, Raleigh rouses their enthusiasm for more a more martial brand of violence in his description of the Amazons. These mythical women present the ultimate set of challenges: first, the challenge of discovering their land, which always seems one step beyond *terra cognita*, second, to claim their legendary

²³⁰ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 431.

²³¹ Louis Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery.” *Representations*. 33. Special Issue: The New World, (Winter 1991), 1-41.

²³² Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 366-7.

treasures and wealth, and finally to battle women who are able to fight back, and whose allegedly cruelty is greatest to those who “offer to invade their territories.”²³³ Whereas in Raleigh’s discussion of sexual encounter is represented as an act of active male aggression on passive female subjects and as an inevitable violence that desirable maidens must always fear and sometimes endure, sexual contact among the Amazons is a regulated and calculated event, used for the purposes of procreation and to “increase their owne sex and kind.” Their “bloodthirsty” character is tied to their invulnerability in this respect and to their autonomy as a nation of women. The Amazons are feared and pursued precisely because they cannot be “ravaged” in the way the Indian maidens can. It is the self-perpetuating cycle of their military prowess, which defends them from sexual attack, and their careful regulation of sexual desire which guarantees their autonomy that gives them access to power unavailable to the Indian maidens. Raleigh’s textual engagement with the Amazons is thus one of “reciprocal aggression” because the tool of sexual violence does not have the same effect on women who cannot be “spoile[d].”²³⁴

In addition to the political resonances, the sexual in the *Discoverie* is also entangled with the temporal, and the struggle over bodies that Raleigh initiates is a struggle between different “times” and the way that bodies are discursively organized in those times. The Amazons are impenetrable for both Raleigh and Orellana because their lands are unreachable and unknown, but also because they only seek contact with men during a short period of time. The control they exert over this contact—control that is integral to their own martial invulnerability—is both sexual and temporal. The Amazons

²³³ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 366-7.

²³⁴ Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” 25, Raleigh *Discoverie*, 414.

of Guiana “doe accompany with men but once in a yere, and for the time of one moneth,” and Raleigh is only able to speculate which month it is. Unlike the Amazons, the Indian maidens are perpetually open to attack because they are always accessible. Raleigh illustrates their sexual vulnerability by underscoring the fact that they suffer “daily” kidnap by the Spaniards, a threat that is as predictable as it is inevitable. Thus the “point is not whether Amazons ‘win’ or ‘lose,’” in this struggle, but rather what could be won or lost, and how victory is achieved.²³⁵ Raleigh’s elaboration on Harriot’s distinction between the Picts and their neighbors emphasizes the sexual passivity and vulnerability of the less “savage” women. If Raleigh’s inaccessible Amazons, guarded by their military prowess and the vigilance they observe when it comes to heterosexual contact, represent bodies that have not yet been inscribed with the writing of history, if they represent the moment before the “rift between discourse and the body...forces the silent body to speak,” then Raleigh characterizes the method by which “discovery” is accomplished as one of sexual violence.²³⁶ If van der Straet’s personification of America suggests that discovery was both scientific and sexual, Raleigh’s manner of distinguishing between the Indian maids and the Amazons reveals that discovery is both sexual and violent. Sexual domination is figured as both an enactment of colonial imperatives and a (re)enactment of the “initial division” between past and present.

Raleigh’s development of Harriot’s Pict/Pict neighbor produces a specter of female savagery and sovereignty is situated in a temporally unreachable mythic space, one that becomes increasingly elusive as it is pursued. By divorcing the threat of female

²³⁵ Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*, 53.

²³⁶ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 3.

savagery from allurements, Raleigh intensifies the extent to which Amazons can represent bodies that have not yet been written into history. As such, the struggle over bodies is not simply a struggle over actual bodies, but rather a struggle over bodies as theoretically and symbolically loaded terms. Schwarz has argued that Amazon quests are “implicated in the construction of familiar space” just as much as they perform a disruptive female masculinity. The desire to relocate the Amazon into that familiar and domestic space is irresistible despite the fact that their “incorporation into the social makes the line between conquering Amazons and being invaded by them indecipherable.”²³⁷ Placed alongside the legacy of Boadicea that Mikalacki traces, however, the “mixture of motives” involved in Amazon quests, the simultaneous need to “possess” and to “sustain a state of mystification” reveals an even more intimate and unsettling kind of familiarity. In light of the “overwhelming femininity of native origins,” Raleigh’s quest for the Amazons appears also as a response to the perennial lure of origins.²³⁸ While Boadicea was a female military leader, Raleigh’s Amazons are even more closely associated with the issue of female rule—they are only governed by Queens. In distinguishing the Amazons from the Indian maidens, Raleigh’s text produces evasive “native origins” that tied to female sovereignty.

While Raleigh’s distinction between Indian maidens and Amazons allowed him to represent Guiana as both virginal and vulnerable as well as worthy of conquest, this distinction fails him when he addresses both the Amazons and Queen Elizabeth I in the same paragraph. Raleigh attempts to create a third type of femininity for the Queen alone

²³⁷ Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*, 3.

²³⁸ Jodi Mikalacki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early Modern England*. (New York: Routledge, 1998)14.

when he names her as the guardian of Indian maids, a Virgin Queen protecting other virgins. But she is inevitably linked to the virginal Indian maidens and the “bloodthirsty” Amazons as well. Though Raleigh is careful not to mention her other colonial holdings, the reader can’t help being reminded of Virginia, a land whose purity and abundance is unambiguously linked to her image as the Virgin Queen. In this sense, Raleigh’s overtly sexual descriptions of Guiana—“a country that hath yet her maidenhead”—and his insistence on conquering and plundering its lands come dangerously close to replicating a symbolic attack on her body politic. At the same time, Elizabeth bears resemblance to the leader of the Amazons; both are Queens who exercise female sovereignty over a distinct nation of people. At the close of the *Discoverie*, Raleigh urges his Queen to invest in future colonial efforts in Guiana and to support a campaign against the female warriors:

For whatsoever Prince shall possesse it shall be greatest, and if the king of Spaine enjoy it, he will become unresistable. Her Majestie herby shall confirme and strengthen the opinions of all nations, as touching her great and princely actions. And where the South border of Guiana reacheth to the Dominion and Empire of the Amazones, those women shall hereby heare the name of a virgin, which is not only able to defend her owne territories and her neighbors, but also to invade and conquere so great Empires and so farre removed.²³⁹

To distinguish herself from the Amazons, it seems, Elizabeth I must follow “a policy of invasion and conquest.”²⁴⁰ As we have seen, however, this policy is invested in a language that depends on the image of the violated virgin or virginal land to function. And however Elizabeth may position herself alongside this language, she “cannot

²³⁹ Raleigh, *Discoverie*, 431. As Montrose notes of this passage, “Raleigh’s rhetorical tactic for convincing the queen to advance his colonial enterprise is apparently to associate her ambiguously with the Amazons and then to offer her a means by which to distinguish herself from them,” “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” 29.

²⁴⁰ Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” 29.

comfortably be analogized to Charles V” in this respect.²⁴¹ It is Raleigh’s position as a male subject to a female ruler, then, that indicates the point at which his use of gendered tropes collapses. What this collapse reveals is the “ideology of gender hierarchy” that authorizes the violation and conquest of “the feminine body of the New World” and the way in which the “hierarchical discourse of colonial exploitation...confirms that ideology’s hegemonic force” in Raleigh’s *Discoverie* is predicated upon a division first between female desire and desirability—desirability is based on the absence of this desire—and secondly upon the opposition of desirability and female agency, particularly political agency and power.²⁴² Queen Elizabeth’s position as both “Virgin” and female sovereign becomes impossible in light of this division. Because of the irrevocable association he has created between virginity and vulnerability, Raleigh’s desire for the Amazons to “hereby heare the name of a virgin” cannot simply position Elizabeth as a conqueror among other conquerors. As his descriptions of unrestrained Spanish lust and the desirability of the virginal land demonstrate, to “hear the name of a virgin” means to be subjected to both sexual and discursive violence—to have one’s body invaded by history as well as by a male assailant.

By hunting the Amazons, Raleigh pursues figures of both British and American “native origins,” but he characterizes these figures as distinctly symbolic of female sovereignty. It is the circular movement of the narrative that causes the collapse of gendered meanings and gendered times in this text. His unsuccessful rhetorical maneuver to Elizabeth as a protector of Virgins cannot erase the otherwise alarming connotation of

²⁴¹ Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” 31.

²⁴² Montrose, “The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery,” 12.

virginity throughout the narrative, where it signifies not purity but rather the inevitable process of being “spoiled” and “torne.” To engage his readers and to attract support for future “discoveries,” Raleigh creates two distinct images of femininity: the image of the vulnerable Indian maid, already within reach through the discursive inscription of history on the body, and the image of the inaccessible Amazons who present the opportunity for future explorers to reenact first contact, who are themselves time portals of sorts into a mythical past. Underwritten by his own Queen, Raleigh seeks out queens of the unreachable past, but then urges her to conquer them. Raleigh has not only situated virginity in the *Discoverie* as in invitation for violence, but has confused the time of the Amazons with the time of his own Queen, essentially placing her sovereignty in a pre-historical past, one that threatens to erupt into the present moment at any time.

In this chapter, I have traced visual and textual examples of recurrent gendered tropes in early “American Imaginaries” and outlined ways that those tropes were tied to emerging notions of difference and to mechanisms of temporal distancing. While it occurred in uneven and sometimes contradictory ways, the conjoining of “natural” and “original” was often enacted through visual and textual representations of embodied “America.” This embodied form, with its overlapping associations between bodies of women (Amazonian, cannibal, Indigenous) and bodies of land, functioned as a visual and discursive marker of the “initial act of division” between past and present.²⁴³ These early images make vivid the vexed temporality present at the intersection of gender, temporality, and ‘savagery’ and are refracted in later texts of transatlantic encounter. As

²⁴³ De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 11.

the reading of the frontispiece to Hobbes's *De Cive* outlines, contract theory, and its use of the state of nature, depending upon many of these tropes, but particularly on the association between the Americas and primordial time. With dependence came the temporal tensions between primordial savagery and femininity. In the next chapter, I link these tensions to the figure of the aboriginal sovereign, whose dramatic defeat was played out in variety of ways on the Restoration stage.

Chapter 2: Indian Queens: Maternal Sovereignty and Contract Theory in the Americas

As a performative space for the enactment of difference, seventeenth-century exotic drama served as an important site of colonial discursive production and the temporalization of difference.²⁴⁴ Along these lines, Restoration playwrights, particularly John Dryden, Sir Robert Howard, William Davenant, and Aphra Behn, drew upon and contributed to “American Imaginaries.”²⁴⁵ A selection of these plays, those which occur in the Americas or geographically and temporally indeterminate spaces, theorize conjectural histories, I argue, because they dramatize the state of nature, the sexual contract, and the social contract.²⁴⁶ In these dramatizations, they produce new knowledge about gender difference, human nature, social progression, and political right. Contract theory ultimately depends upon a political fiction told through a conjectural mode. This chapter looks to Restoration theater as a producer of conjectural lines of fiction. In staging scenes of the state of nature, of sexual contract, and social contract, Restoration dramas spoke to the pressing concerns about the origins of sovereign authority while constructing dramatic maps of mankind.

This chapter examines these key scenes by pairing inconsistencies of gender in contract theory, represented here by the problem of maternal sovereignty, with exotic dramas of the Restoration period. Contract theories maintained either an anxious silence about women in the state of nature, or, as in the work of Thomas Hobbes, imagined

²⁴⁴ See Bridget Orr, *Empire on the English Stage, 1660-1714*, and Claire Jowitt, *Voyage Drama and Gender Politics, 1589-1642*.

²⁴⁵ Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought*, 7.

²⁴⁶ “Sexual Contract” refers to the concept developed by Carole Pateman, discussed later in this chapter. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford UP, CA: 1988.

women in the state of nature to rule by original maternal dominion. Hobbes and his contemporaries did not explain how women were contracted into society before the social contract itself, a question provoked by the political crises of the interregnum and the Restoration, and also by the epistemological demands on theories of sovereignty and land ownership generated by colonial expansion. As Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* famously argued, the patriarchal family functioned like a microcosmic state, with a "father-king" at its head, ruling over wife and children. When patriarchalism weakened in the face of growing belief in subjects' rights to choose their own ruler, the domestic analogue was implicated as well."²⁴⁷ Both contract theorists and dramatists attempted to answer the extent to which this analogous right did, or did not, exist, but imbedded in their discussions was the origin of gender hierarchy and sexual difference. Maternal sovereignty's conspicuous absence in the work of most contract theorists, and its equally significant presence in the work of Hobbes, which was highly influential to dramatists of the time—produces what I call the haunting power of original sovereignty.

These plays demonstrate the wide circulation and familiarity with the image of an aboriginal female sovereign, a figure symptomatic of crises brought about colonialism, political revolution, and shifting epistemologies of gender.²⁴⁸ Sycorax's libidinous nature in *The Tempest*, for example, recalls visual interpretations of scenes from Vespucci's narratives, where female cannibals lure European men to the shore with the promise of

²⁴⁷ "At or about the same time subjects asserted their right to elect a sovereign in the Glorious Revolution," Susan Staves explains, "women acquired the analogous right to elect husbands. *Player's Scepters: Fictions of Authority in the Restoration*. (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1979) 189.

²⁴⁸ As discussed in the previous chapter, I am building from Martens' explication of this term as "ab-original," the conjoining of 'original,' 'natural,' and autochthonous.

sex and then kill them to eat. Similarly, in *The Indian Queen*, Zempoalla's imperiousness, her hunger for power, and especially her spectacular feather headdress, stained with the blood of human sacrifice, recalls images of allegorical America, armed with weapons and an Amazonian air. As in the images of the previous chapter, the conjoining of "original," "natural," and autochthonous occurs through the visualization of these layered female bodies. In these dramatic manifestations of maternal dominion, aboriginal female sovereignty is transferred through maternal inheritance and through a channel of earthly spirits.

While the Amazons of Raleigh's *Discoverie* and the savage Pictish women of Harriot's *True Historie* remain always out of reach, separate both spatially and temporally from the men who seek to possess and conquer them, these plays conjure that moment of contact, imagining the aboriginal female sovereign, Indigenous, Amazonian, or often both, defeated by an involuntary and destructive love for her enemy. These plays render male usurpation, completed through romantic love, the vehicle through which dangerous female power is tamed and savagery mastered. Romantic love is thus positioned simultaneously as a civilizing force on savage women, as revelatory of the sexual difference which marks women inferior to men, and as a weapon with which to unseat wielders of native sovereignty. The women who survive the process of civilization are the women who agree to participate in an inequitable marriage contract, thus severing themselves from maternal power. In this emerging story of conjectural history, romantic love both produces obedient female subjects and eliminates disobedient ones. Aboriginal female sovereigns, however, seem to ability to haunt their conquerors; this spectral

quality emanates from their ability to remind both of the crime of conquest and the crime of the usurpation of original maternal authority.

In this chapter, I begin with John Dryden's American imaginary, drawing from his work in the preface to his translation of *Plutarch's Lives* (1683), his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668), and his prefatory dedication to Prince Anne preceding the text of the *Indian Emperor* (1667). Analyzing his classificatory project of history, I argue that his drama operates as an embodied form of *biographia*, and thus serves as method of temporal experimentation, a "prospective glass" for human nature, present, future, and especially, past. I then articulate the central role of maternal power in disagreements between Patriarchalists and contract theorists. To explore the dramatic manifestations of anxiety over maternal power, I turn to two of John Dryden's plays, *The Indian Queen* (1664), co-authored by Sir Robert Howard, and its sequel *The Indian Emperor* (1665), written by Dryden alone. In his New World plays, I argue, Dryden performs conjectural history by anticipating a basic premise of the genre: that human passions, or the capacity for them, remained constant throughout time, and thus through examining, or in this case, creating characters to act out historical events, Dryden and his fellow dramatists theorize the formation of both social and sexual contracts. Thus, the theatre functions as a space of conjectural experimentation. Working both with Hobbesian and Filmerian ideas, Dryden engages with Hobbes's idea of original maternal dominion through his characters Zempoalla and Almeria. When both plays are read together, Dryden's intervention in conjectural history is clear through the implication that the defeat of maternal sovereignty is accomplished by an often violent, 'romantic' love, and that this defeat is lashed to the

conquest of the Americas and the inauguration of “history.”²⁴⁹ Maternal dominion is linked both to the origin of sovereign power and to the chaos of total liberty, and thus is represented as that which must be eschewed before history can begin and before subjects can be contracted in to civil society.

I conclude with Dryden’s *The Tempest* (1667), co-authored with William Davenant, to examine two other manifestations of aboriginal female sovereignty during this period: Sycorax and Hippolito. Sycorax’s authority rests upon a maternal aboriginal claim to the island, and the femininity of these origins is heightened in Dryden and Davenant’s sequel with its multiplication of female characters. Crucially, Dryden and Davenant give the original Sycorax, a character who is dead when the play begins, a living daughter of the same name. This figure of aboriginal sovereignty differs from that of Zempolla and Almeria in her increasingly marked racial difference and in her abandonment, rather than defeat, at the end of the play.²⁵⁰ *The Tempest* demarcates an increasing association between female sovereign power, female sexual appetite, and racial difference, which would be developed in the following century. In the other female additions, I argue, Dryden and Davenant highlight the artificiality, rather than authenticity, of gender roles, forcing scenes of gendered learning into spotlight. With their queer character Hippolito, Dryden and Davenant theorize a new post-civil war subject whose peaceful existence depends upon a highly theatricalized performance of both gender and subjecthood. The division between nature, represented by natural passions, and culture, represented by social lessons and language learning, is both

²⁴⁹ “History” in Michel de Certeau’s sense of the world.

²⁵⁰ Tellingly, while Dryden and Davenant’s other additions to Shakespeare’s original endured well into the nineteenth century, Sycorax’s daughter disappears by 1789.

gendered and placed in a specific time. To form civil society, the new subject must adorn his feminized natural passions with masculinized cultural clothes, an act of crossdressing of which the player and the audience are aware of and depend upon for their peaceful existence. Imbedded in Hippolito's performance, then, is the acknowledgement of the fable of the sexual contract and the haunting presence of the maternal sovereign, which he retains after leaving the island through his Amazonian name.

The popularity of these three plays suggest that the act of envisioning female aboriginal sovereigns and states of nature captured the imaginations of audiences in the seventeenth century and beyond. *The Indian Queen* was a success both financially and artistically, and its spectacularly exotic scenery and elaborate stagecraft generated a great deal of attention.²⁵¹ *The Indian Emperor* was even more successful than its predecessor, and performed with more frequency and until 1732, and was the subject of Robert Dodd's 1731 engraving, after Hogarth's print, *The Indian Emperor; or, The Conquest of Mexico*.²⁵² Dryden and Davenant's *Tempest*, "the most frequently revived play of the

²⁵¹ *The Indian Queen* was performed in 1664, 1668, 1695. 1696, 1697, 1701, 1706, and 1715 was first staged in Dorset Theatre and in Drury Lane. The play also inspired an opera of the same name, with music by Henry Purcell, in 1695. On February 5th, 1664, just over a week after the play opened, John Evelyn described *The Indian Queen* as "a Tragedie well written," but especially remarkable for being "so beautified with rich Scenes as the like had never been scene here. Similarly, in observing "a streete filled with coaches" a few days after the opening of the play, Samuel Pepys writes in his *Diary* that "for show [The Indian Queen] exceeds Henry the Eighth." Later in the week, after he took his wife to see the play, Pepys praises Anne Marshall's performance as Zempoalla in particular: the "eldest Marshall did do her part most excellently well as I ever heard woman in my life." Pepys saw *The Indian Queen* at least twice, but was even fonder of Dryden's collaboration with Davenant, and enjoyed *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* at least five times. *Diary of Samuel Pepys Online*, Wednesday, January 25th, 1664, Monday, February 1st, 1664; *The London Stage Database, The London Stage: 1600-1800*.

²⁵² *The Indian Emperor* was performed in Drury Lane, Dorset Garden, and the Queen's Theatre, Haymarket, in 1665, 1705, 1707, 1710, and 1732.

entire Restoration,” similarly illustrates a fascination with the exotic, indeterminate location of the island and the interplay between gender, subjectivity, and the rise of social order.²⁵³ Its performance throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century established the play as a primary discursive rendition of social and sexual contracts, firmly rooted in a New World setting.²⁵⁴

2.1 Dryden’s New World

Dryden considered the ‘discovery’ of the Americas to be an event of singular historical importance. Speaking of Montezuma in his 1667 dedication of *The Indian Emperor* to Princess Anne, Dryden writes that “[Montezuma’s] story is, perhaps, the greatest, which was ever represented in a Poem of this nature; the action of it including the Discovery and Conquest of a New World.”²⁵⁵ The insistence of “Discovery’s” historical significance not only to Europe but to humanity as recalls Galle and van der Straet’s nonchronological placement of “America,” as the first plate of *Nova Reperta*; they position discovery as the central event which created or inspired other discoveries, inventions, and ideas (objects of the “New Science”), even when they pre-dated Vespucci’s landing. The “*European Customes*,” the “Shipping, Armour, Horses, Swords,

²⁵³ Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992) 59-60.

²⁵⁴ The indeterminate location of the island is closely tied to the New World and the expanded navigational abilities generated by the gadgets Vespucci holds, and thus *The Tempest* also “bears the impress of the chronicles of American travel,” and “embodies the literary themes that had been emphasized by the voyages: the contrast of art and nature, civilization and primitive society, sophisticated manners and morals and their untaught native equivalents,” John Loftis, “Exploration and Enlightenment: Dryden’s *The Indian Emperor* and Its Background.” *Philological Quarterly*, (45) 1, Jan. 1966, 74.

²⁵⁵ *The Works of John Dryden*. Vol XI (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). 25.

and Guns,” of the Spanish colonizers produce history because they make conquest possible, yet the moment of conquest marks history’s beginning.²⁵⁶ The disruption buttresses the narrative of progress in Dryden’s dedication as it does in *Nova Reperta*: though the technological tools Dryden labels crucial to the Spaniards’ success were invented before conquest, it is only conquest itself which reveals their true historical power—to engender history.

The theatre performed an experimental function in the period, and the “reciprocal relationship of science and theatrical performance” meant that “live drama” worked as an “empirical and embodied form,” comparable to “an experiment in natural philosophy.”²⁵⁷ Part of what signaled the success of the “New Science,” in Thomas Sprat’s view, was that it was “so much dispers’d,” that all “places and corners” were “busie, and warm about [the] Work.” In his *History of the Royal Society*, Sprat claims that new discoveries were made every day in diverse places: “not onely by the Hands of Learned and profess’d Philosophers; but from the Shops of *Mechanicks*; from the Voyages of *Merchants*; from the Ploughs of the *Husbandman*; from the Sports, the Fishponds, the Parks, the Gardens of *Gentlemen*.”²⁵⁸ The “Voyages of *Merchants*” were doubly productive in that they provided opportunities to gather much-desired information about the inhabitants of “New Worlds.”²⁵⁹ The theater had the capacity to examine human nature in a closed room,

²⁵⁶ *Works of John Dryden*, Vol. XI, 27.

²⁵⁷ Al Coppola, *The Theater of Experiment: Staging Natural Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2016), 6. John Shanahan, “The Dryden- Davenant Tempest, Wonder Production, and the State of Natural Philosophy in 1667,” 96.

²⁵⁸ Thomas Sprat, *The history of the Royal-Society of London*. (London, 1667) 71.

²⁵⁹ In a 1665 piece entitled, “General Heads for a Natural History of a Countrey, Great or Small, Imparted Likewise,” Robert Boyle insists that “There must be a careful account given of the Inhabitants themselves, both Natives and Strangers, that have been long settled there; and in particular, their Stature, Shape, Colour, Features, Strength, Agility,

populated with witnesses, and its ability to create the proper amount of distance between the characters and the audience, or the objects and their observers. The Royal Society's investment in colonial expansion as a method for gathering knowledge, and the spatial reach of experimental work in a variety of domestic social spaces suggests that one of the stage "rearticulates" the "isomorphism between the colonial and the scientific."²⁶⁰

Dryden's conjectural experimentation was invested in the natural philosophy, which suggested that the examination of human passions and human history could follow experimental principles.²⁶¹ A central assumption that Dryden shared with his fellow Royal Society members was that, "mankind [is] the same in all ages, agitated by the same passions, and moved to action by the same interests."²⁶² By dramatizing characters who act out historical events, Dryden and Davenant could explore the causes of human behavior that lead to larger historical changes, in addition to staging the performance of human passions. Drawing from the production of new scientific knowledge, Dryden aims

Beauty (or want of it) Complexions, Hair, Dyet, Inclinations, and Customs that seem not due to Education. As to their Women (besides the other things) may be observed their Fruitfulness or Barrenness; their hard or easy Labor, etc. And both in Women and Men must be taken notice of what diseases they are subject to, and in these whether there be any symptom, or any other Circumstance, that is unusual and remarkable.

Philosophical Transactions. Vol 1. January 1665. 188.

²⁶⁰ Denise Albanese, *New Science, New World*, 59.

²⁶¹ Dryden was elected a member of the Royal Society in 1662. In 1664, along with Thomas Sprat and John Evelyn, he joined a new committee concerned with the relationship between language and science. While his membership had lapsed by the time *The Tempest* was published, Dryden was a member of the Royal Society while he composed both *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*. For Dryden's interest in science, see Louis I. Bredvold, *The Intellectual Milieu of John Dryden: Studies in Some Aspects of Seventeenth-Century Thought*, (Ann Arbor: Michigan UP, 1959); Richard Kroll, *The Material Word: Literate Culture in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1990), Philip Harth, *Contexts of Dryden's Thought*, (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1968).

²⁶² Dryden, "Life of Plutarch." 1683. *Lives of Plutarch*. Ed. M. Dacier. Vol. 1, London, 1775. 38.

to find the “secret causes” of human action and historical change by placing them in a theatrical space. As Neander offers in *The Essay of Dramatick Poesy* (1668): “if Natural Causes be more known now, it follows that Poesy and the other Arts may with the same pains arrive still nearer to perfection.”²⁶³ If human nature is the everywhere the same, it can be used as a constant upon which to test theories of history.

In his preface to *Plutarch's Lives*, Dryden outlines a theorization of history which animates his dramatic experimentation with human nature. This system is built upon a triumvirate classification of genres (“commentary or annals,” “history properly so called,” and “*biographia*”).²⁶⁴ Commentary or annals are “naked history,” or “the plain relation of matter of fact, according to the succession of time, divested of all other ornaments.” In line with natural philosophy, the historical facts here speak for themselves: “The springs and motives of actions are not here sought, unless they offer themselves, and are open to every man’s discernment.”²⁶⁵ While some historical facts “offer themselves” to the observer, others need to be “sought” through the investigation of causes. It is for this reason that Dryden privileges “history properly so called” above

²⁶³ “Essay of Dramatic Poesy,” *The Works of John Dryden: In Verse and Prose, with a Life*, Vol. 2. (New York: Harper, 1844), 26. The Baconian echo is a distinct one, and Dryden seems to have taken the following injunction seriously: “For man being the minister and interpreter of nature, acts and understands so far as he has observed of the order, the works and mind of nature, and can proceed no further; for no power is able to loose or break the chain of causes, nor is nature to be conquered but by submission: whence those twin intentions, human knowledge and human power, are really coincident; and the greatest hindrance to works is the ignorance of causes, *New Atlantis and The Great Instauration*. (Malden: John Wiley & Sons,) 32-33.

²⁶⁴ Dryden, *Plutarch's Lives*, 59.

²⁶⁵ Dryden, *Plutarch's Lives*, 58.

“naked” commentary. History proper fulfills Bacon’s injunction by “guess[ings]...secret causes, inducing to actions” by drawing from “the most probable circumstances.”²⁶⁶

The third category, “*Biographia*, or the history of particular mens lives,” offers the most fruitful possibilities for investigation into human nature and human action, past, present, and future. *Biographia* serves as a model for Dryden’s heroic plays, which examine historical figures as they experience critical moments both in their personal histories and in the broader histories of country, religion, or human invention. While the other two genres offer the raw data of historical events and sequences, and the possibility to seek causes, it is biography which best facilitates the discovery of “The springs and motives of actions.”²⁶⁷ The narrower scope of biography enables this investigation, as it makes possible a method of seeing human nature with temporal flexibility. Dryden admits that *biographia* “is in dignity inferior to the other two,” because it is “confined in action,” treating events of “wars,” “counsels,” and “public affairs of nations” “only as they relate to him whose life is written.”²⁶⁸ This is an act of distillation: by being “driven to a point,” *biographia* condenses the power of history into one revelatory and instructive story. The “pleasure” it evokes in so doing is both a product of the pleasing language with which it is related, and a method of enabling the transfer of more “perfect” ideas; in both “pleasure and instruction,” *biographia* “excels” history proper and commentary, as it “not only comprehends them both, but has somewhat superadded, which neither of them have.”²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 58.

²⁶⁷ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 59, 58.

²⁶⁸ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 61.

²⁶⁹ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 63.

As the sun-beams, united in a burning glass to a point have greater force than when they are darted from a plain superficies; so the virtues and actions of one man, drawn together into a single story, strike upon our minds a stronger and more lively impression, than the scattered relations of many men, and many actions; by the same means that they give us pleasure, they afford us profit too. For when the understanding is intent and fixed on a single thing, it carries closer to the mark, every part of the object sinks into it, and the soul receives it unmixed and whole.²⁷⁰

By limiting the scope of events and individuals, writers of *biographia* ensure the purity and “wholeness” of their ideas. *Biographia*’s effectiveness draws from its visual power; it is the manner of *seeing* the historical figure which helps “fix” the mind on the objects of history. While commentary and history proper give variety, they are unable to capture the attention of the reader/viewer; the “diversity of posture, habits,” and “shadowings,” “distrac[t] the pleasure” and thus confuse the transfer of meaning. “The lineaments, features, and colourings of a single picture,” found in *biographia*, however, “may be hit exactly.”²⁷¹ *Biographia* thus “allures than forces us to virtue,” as historical example “gently glides into us, is easy and pleasant in its passage; and, in one word, induces into practice our speculative notions,” and in this way pleasure is both the method for transferring ideas and the consequence of that transference.²⁷²

Biographia succeeds as an investigative tool because it creates a method of pleasurable observation. Dryden figures this as a kind of spectating, similar to that which an audience in a theatre would do. Unlike its more “dignified” historical counterparts, and *like* drama, *biographia* is allowed into the private spaces of historical figures. In history and commentary “you are conducted only into the rooms of state,” but in

²⁷⁰ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 62.

²⁷¹ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 62.

²⁷² Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 63.

biographia “you are led into the private lodgings of the hero,” where, “the pageantry of life” removed, “you see the poor reasonable animal, as naked as ever nature made him.”²⁷³ Holding the prospective glass *biographia*, or its dramatized sibling, over the heroes of history reveals both their own “follies,” and also human nature in its most “naked form.” In this way, in both biography and heroic drama, “nature [is] wrought up to a higher pitch.”²⁷⁴ If *biographia* is the most effective method for capturing a reader’s interest and thus in imparting “unmixed and whole” ideas, then Dryden’s heroic plays are the superlative “burning glasses”; to the narrow scope of a single story, heroic plays “super add” visual pleasure; no longer left solely to the imagination, the “lineaments, features, and colourings of a single picture,” come to life on the stage. Placed in center view and delivered with emotion, they “strike upon [the] minds” of the audience with an even “stronger and more lively impression.”²⁷⁵

This knot of pleasure, ocularity, and temporal experimentation is illustrated in Dryden’s figuration of history as a “prospective glass,” a tool both of measurement and prediction. Dryden uses this instrument to advance his theory of history by offering *biographia*—and by extension, drama—as a method of temporal experimentation. By seeking out the secret causes of human behavior, the “springs and motives of actions,” the careful study can both illuminate the dark corners of human past and intimate the trajectories of human future. “In the way of human causes,” he writes, “a wise man may easily discern, that there is a natural connection betwixt them; and though he cannot

²⁷³ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 64.

²⁷⁴ “Essay of Dramatic Poesy,” *The Works of John Dryden*, 91.

²⁷⁵ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 62.

foresee accidents, or all things that possibly can come, he may apply examples, and by them foretell, that from the like counsels will probably succeed the like events.” This kind of historical writing, is, he continues,

... if you will pardon the similitude, a prospective-glass carrying your soul to a vast distance, and taking in the farthest objects of antiquity. It informs the understanding by the memory: it helps us judge of what will happen, by showing us the like revolutions of former times. For mankind being the same in all ages, agitated by the same passions, and moved to action by the same interests, nothing can come to pass, but some precedent of the like nature has already been produced; so that having the causes before your eyes, we cannot easily be deceived in the effects, if we have judgement enough but to draw the parallel.²⁷⁶

Dryden makes use of the multivalent meanings of prospective glass, a metaphysical and experimental tool. That we might “tak[e] in...objects” suggests at first what was likely the most novel meaning of the term at the time, “a telescope or pair of binoculars;” a “glass prospective good and true,” as William Browne writes in his 1616 *Britannia’s Pastorals*, is a tool “by which things most remote are full in view.”²⁷⁷ But while he proposes history as a method for viewing remote objects, one must be *transported* in order to have this staged, or imagined, visual experience. It isn’t only man’s eyes, or mind, which are transported, but also his “soul,” which is carried “to a vast distance” both in time and space. The prospective glass of history allows the reader and the watcher to slide along the spectrum of time, surveying “revolutions of former times” as a way to examine a constant human nature as well as to “judge...what will happen” next. Dryden’s use of this term thus blends its two main definitions, drawing upon the prospective glass

²⁷⁶ Dryden, *Plutarch’s Lives*, 58.

²⁷⁷ The OED cites the earliest use of “prospective glass” in this way to date from 1616, in William Browne’s *Brittania’s pastorals* (1613-1616). Nearest to Dryden’s writing, a 1672 piece in *Philosophical Transactions* describes a scene in which Charles II was “shew’d...a little prospective glass, made according to Mr. Newton’s invention.”

as tool of empirical scrutiny which by definition occurs in the present moment, and as “a magic glass,” a “mirror, or crystal in which it is supposed that distant or future events can be seen.”²⁷⁸ His central innovation is that when history becomes a prospective glass, it does not simply give a view of spatially remote objects or suggest omens for the future, but rather allows its operator to travel into the past specifically for the study of human nature.

Drawing again upon the dual meanings of the word ‘transported,’ Dryden positions heroic drama, an embodied *biographia* come to life on the stage, as best suited to “strike upon [the] minds” of his readers. It gives them a “more lively impression” as it both carries them from one space/time to another, and causes them to be “carried away” with emotion. Here he figures the transportation of the “soul” as a kind of enraptured attention with another time. Read in this light, his heroic dramas take up key historical moments in order to theorize human nature. Not only do Dryden’s plays, function as experimental works, but they also suggest that this genre is an effective method for this form of temporal experimentation.

The Tempest, *The Indian Queen*, and *The Indian Emperor* are temporal experiments insofar as they imagine the state of nature, which they tie to the New World. However, they imagine this state somewhat differently. In *The Tempest*, central characters like Dorinda, Hippolito, Sycorax, and Caliban are stripped of most cultural learning, have never participated in large social groups, or been subjects to a government,

²⁷⁸ The OED gives examples of this usage through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, Robert Greene’s 1594 *The Honorable Historie of Frie Bacon*, “In a glass prospective I will shew whats done this day in merry Fresingfield,” and a 1673 edition of John Milton’s *Vacation Exercise in Poems*, “A Sybil old, That in times long and dark Prospective Glass Fore-saw what future days should bring to pass.”

but instead have resided in the ‘wilderness.’ In the earlier two plays, Dryden’s America is not entirely brutish or savage, largely because the imperial Incan and Mexican courts appear to contain “society,” “arts,” and possibly “letters.”²⁷⁹ Comparatively, the three plays illustrate gradations of social and cultural development. Despite its basic form of monarchy and systems of inheritance, the political instability of the world of *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor* do describe characteristics of the “natural condition of mankind,” including the “continuall feare, and danger of violent death,” and absence of an “Account of Time.”²⁸⁰ While *The Indian Emperor* exists in what De Certeau calls “the time of history,” *The Indian Queen* does not: introduced by prelapsarian children describing the time of prophecy, the world of *The Indian Queen*, like that of *The Tempest*, depends upon the purposeful erasure of both temporal and geographic space between the Incan and Aztec empires in order to tell its story. The moment of contact also marks the moment in which historied time meets mythical time. Dryden chooses to bookend *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor* with a distinctly Edenic scene of native life, one at once outside of the time of history, and distinct from the ‘time’ of the play itself.

²⁷⁹ The complexity of the Incan and Mexican courts in these plays is always in tension with the alleged ‘simplicity’ of the New World inhabitants. Conjectural historians struggled to explain these civilizations because they did not necessarily fit the stadial schemas which structured their theories of history. Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 96-99.

²⁸⁰ In Chapter 13 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes explains that in the “naturall condition of mankind,” “there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture on Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and the danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short,” 89.

While in *The Indian Emperor* Cortez and Montezuma bond over a seemingly universal code of honor, Dryden is careful to point out that this first encounter ultimately produces a powerful sense of strangeness, particularly for peoples of the “Peruvian” and “Mexican” empires. Writing to Princess Anne in his dedication, Dryden notes that “...as near as I could, have traced the Native simplicity and ignorance of the *Indians*, in relation to *European* Customes; The Shipping, Armour, Horses, Swords, and Guns of the *Spaniards*, being as new to them as their Habits and their Language were to the Christians.”²⁸¹ This strangeness is conveyed through a comparative perspective, as Dryden highlights the religious, cultural, and especially technological differences between indigenous peoples and Europeans. But while he preserves his right as a poet to alter the telling of events, he does not make a similar assertion about the cultural differences between the Spaniards and the Mexicans and Incans. These differences—epitomized by the alleged technological simplicity of the New World—are inscribed as immutable nature. This desire for something like authenticity about the Americas extended beyond the writing of the characters to the performances themselves and to the visual objects used in the stage productions of both plays. The spectacular stage

²⁸¹ *The Works of John Dryden*. Vol XI (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). 27. While there has not been scholarly agreement on which particular sources Dryden used in his imagining of the Americas, the important point is that he did draw from travel narratives and that he had access to an abundance of them. Because much of this scholarship has focused on historical sources for the male characters, I point out a few details concerning the names for the female ones. In several travel narratives and histories, the name “Zempoalla” or “Zempoala” appears to refer to a city or group of towns near the coast of the gulf of Mexico. The inhabitants are alternately described as the victims of Montezuma’s empire (which they resisted), or his especially ‘barbaric’ enemies. See Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *The general history of the vast continent and islands of America*, Vol. 3. (London: printed for Jer. Batley, 1725) (originally published between 1601-1615), Anonymous, *The world displayed; or, a curious collection of voyages and travels*. Vol. 2. (London: printed for J. Newbery, 1761) 41.

machinery and the elaborate costumes, the most famous of which Zempoalla's feather headdress (allegedly transported by Aphra Behn from South America) stimulate wonder both because of their intricacy and their exotic origins.²⁸²

2.2 Contract Theory: Original Maternal Dominion and the Origins of Sovereign Power

One of the historiographical shifts of the late sixteenth century sought to explain the social evolution of the British people while interrogating the value of colonial and imperial ambition and resistance.²⁸³ This historiographical shift gained theoretical shape and political force with the appearance of early modern political treatises about social contract; scenes of prehistorical savagery began to serve a specific conceptual purpose: to tell the origin story of human society and political organization as a tool for outlining political and social rights. Major seventeenth-century works in this field include Hugo Grotius's *De jure belli ac pacis* (1625)²⁸⁴, Thomas Hobbes *De Cive* (1642) and *Leviathan*

²⁸² See Dougald MacMillan, "The Sources of Dryden's 'The Indian Emperour,'" *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 13.4 Aug. 1950, 356.

²⁸³ In the previous chapter, the work of Camden and Holinshed as it relates to 'ancient Britons' helps illustrate this shift.

²⁸⁴ Grotius's work, and especially his work on the concept of "just war," was greatly influenced by Spanish philosopher and theologian Francisco de Vitoria. Vitoria's letters and notes, *Relectiones XII Theologicae in duo libros distinctae* were published posthumously in Antwerp in 1604. His work theological and political work considered international law and commerce, as well as laws of war. One of his major endeavors, however, was to argue on behalf of Native Americans; Vitoria was a proponent of indigenous property rights, and claimed that the Spanish did not have a right to take land, resources, or other property from native peoples, nor did they have the right to approach them with violence, unless they were attacked first. He was a regular advisor to Charles V. Grotius became familiar with Vitoria's work after the publication of his *Relectiones*, and his own idea of "just war" demonstrates influence from Vitoria's defense of native land rights. Additionally, Grotius's work on a pamphlet written between 1604-5, *De Indis*

(1651), Samuel Pufendorf's *De jure naturae et gentium libri octo* (1672), and John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* (1689).²⁸⁵ While these theorists disagreed crucially at times about human nature, the role of the Prince or ruler, and the duties and rights of citizens, contract theory did begin with certain shared Enlightenment goals: to use reason to approach the formation of human society and the creation of political powers. A central purpose of contract theory was to explain, or to critique, the legitimacy of political power using the origin of that power as a touchstone. While contract theorists argued from distinct and often irreconcilable political positions—Hobbes, for example, argued for political absolutism, while Locke argued for a certain amount of shared power between Parliament and the crown, and later Rousseau's contract theory would be used to support republican politics—together they critiqued the Divine Right doctrine and the Patriarchalists who defended it.²⁸⁶ Civil society and political power were not ordained by God, they argued, but rather chosen by the people. Social contract labels the possibility of a moment when humans in the natural state, or state of nature, came together and made a compact which formed the basis of civil society. It is because this initial agreement is both hypothetical *and* historical that the theoretical purpose of contract theory is far more complex than its political counterpart.

Rooting modern political order in the moment of contract requires a contract of the state of nature, which demands the conceptual possibility that human nature and

("On the Indies"), which discussed property law in the Americas, point to a strong engagement with Vitoria's American arguments.

²⁸⁵ A limited edition of *De Cive* was published in 1642; the English edition would be published nine years later in 1651.

²⁸⁶ See, for example, Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha, or The Natural Power of Kings* (1680). Filmer argues against contract theory and posits a divine origin for monarchical authority. His arguments in this text were criticized by Locke's *Two Treatises* (1689).

natural freedom can be separated from politics and political order. The precarity of the social contract concept lies in its temporality, in its combination of the mythical and the historical. Social contract marks a hypothetical moment which is nevertheless necessary for the formation and existence of modern political order. It marks what De Certeau calls “the initial act of division” between past and present, and as such makes possible the modern conception of political life as articulated by contract theorists.²⁸⁷ The mythical nature of an originary moment was long-established; to a certain degree, in the shift from sacred to secular time, social contract replaced the moment of Adam and Eve’s expulsion from Eden, since the latter also marked the end of a timeless existence. However, in this new schema, the division between “savage” and “civilized” is marked by the time of history; the former’s difference is generated by temporal distance as well as geographical. Thus social contract describes both a fable of origins and a historical and political development, a contradiction that speaks to its function as an “empirical myth.”²⁸⁸ This contradiction is underscored by the fact that while the “state of nature” denoted a pre-historical moment, it was allegedly present in contemporaneous America. The circularity of the temporalities invoked in contractarian’s use of the state of nature is also evident in the moment of collapse between theory and praxis. We have at once the obvious contradiction between the far-away conception of the state of nature and the present manifestation of that state in the New World, as well as the contradiction between the long-ago initial social contract, and the fact that, in America, at least, it had not yet come

²⁸⁷ *The Writing of History*, 3.

²⁸⁸ Jonathan Elmer, *On Lingering and Being Last: Race and Sovereignty in the New World*. (New York: Fordham UP, New York: 2008), 11.

to pass. Thus in their colonial discussions of property, rights, custom, and human nature, contract theorists found themselves intervening in a pre-contract landscape.²⁸⁹

Debates concerning the nature of political sovereignty and the origins of sovereign power were often described in distinctly gendered terms. Drawing from scripture, Patriarchalists claimed that all political authority came from God and was given not to all men, but specific men, and so was inherently paternal. They contested the contractarian claim that political power came from the consent of the governed, noting that the bible did not guarantee this freedom.²⁹⁰ As such, neither the social contract nor the state of nature were concepts accepted by Patriarchalists, who mocked the idea of a pre-law and pre-social time in human history. In his 1665 *A Defence of True Liberty from Antecedant and Extrinsicall Necessity*, Bishop John Bramhall dismisses the state of nature as an impossibility because men could never be separated from politics:

There never was any such time when mankind was without Governors and Lawes, and Societies. Paternall Government was in the world from the beginning, and [by] the Law of Nature. There might be sometimes a root of such Barbarous Theevish Brigants, in some rocks, or desarts, or odd corners of the world, but it

²⁸⁹ This intervention was centered largely on the right to land and property. While his political theory is founded upon a separation from the doctrine of divine right, Locke nevertheless uses biblical sources in order to argue in his *Two Treatises* that native land can be claimed if it has not yet been cultivated and that seeking out such land in order to shape it with human labor was a divinely sanctioned venture. Locke drew from Genesis 13 to argue that if native land had not cultivated agriculturally (hunting and gathering here did not constitute cultivation), then the land belonged to no one was considered *terra nullius*. Barbara Arneil explains that “The principle is the same for Locke as for the other writers. It is not only lawful but pleasing to God that people who have been industrious and used all their own land and resources should move to another place which the inhabitants make now use of,” 112,

²⁹⁰ In his “Observations on Aristotles *Politiques*,” (1652), Sir Robert Filmer argues that “I cannot find any one place or text in the Bible where any power or commission is given to a people either to govern themselves, or to choose themselves governors, or to alter the manner of government at their pleasure. The power of government is settled and fixed by the commandment of ‘honour thy father,’” 111.

was an abuse and a degeneration from the nature of man, who is a political creature.²⁹¹

Gesturing to contract theorists' dependence on travel narratives to imagine their states of nature, Bramhall suggests that they have confused the direction of cause and effect: chaotic or savage societies in the "odd corners of the world" do not represent the origins of human society, but rather are products of its degeneration. This critique underscores the temporal nature in the epistemological shift from "sacred" to "secular" time, as Bramhall traces a temporal trajectory which would later be reversed by eighteenth-century conjectural historians.²⁹²

Writing in 1652, partially in response to the ideas of Hobbes and Grotius, Sir Robert Filmer similarly describes the state of nature as "a fiction or a fancy," held by those "who please themselves in running after the opinions of philosophers and poets."²⁹³ Filmer's main line of critique here is that "Grotius, Selden, Hobbes, Ascham, and others" deny the existence of God in their "conceit of original freedom," an idea they share with "heathen philosophers," and thus their political doctrines are not only dangerous but also blasphemous. The origin of political power is rooted in Adam, power that was given to him by God. "The power of government," Filmer argues, "is settled and fixed by the commandment of 'honour thy father.'" He writes, "All power on earth is either derived or

²⁹¹ *A Defence of True Liberty from Antecedant and Extrinsicall Necessity*. London, 1655. 107.

²⁹² Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 2-3. The innate sociability of humans was also critique conjectural historians made of some conceptions of the state of nature, but against the backdrop of secular rather than sacred time.

²⁹³ "Observations on Aritstole's *Politiques*," 110.

usurped from fatherly power, there being no other original power to be found whatsoever.”²⁹⁴

In arguing against the political-religious theory that Filmer articulates, contract theorists did not dismantle patriarchy itself, but rather paternal political authority. Paternal rule, argues Carole Pateman, was replaced with fraternal rule. While they may have argued against Patriarchalists like Filmer, contract theorists only shifted authority from that of the father to that of the *brother*, or other equal who has also consented to contract in, to create what Pateman calls “the modern *fraternal patriarchy*.”²⁹⁵ The shift from paternal to fraternal power elides the hidden and silent half of the story of social contract: the sexual contract. The sexual contract names the submission of women to men during the marital contract, a submission that contract theorists (aside from Hobbes) assumed occurred in the state of nature. Thus, for most contractarians, sexual difference guaranteed submission and agreement to a contract even before the social contract itself. This assumption, Pateman points out, remains “silent,” as contractarians seemed to avoid explaining how women in the state of nature were already in states of inequality before political inequality could be said to exist. This absent “other half” of the contract shapes modern political order and the social laws and customs that accompany it. While Pateman generally implies that this silent assumption was relatively easy, an examination of Filmer’s 1680 *Patriarcha* and Hobbes’s more concept of original maternal dominion

²⁹⁴ “Observations on Aristotle’s *Politiques*.” 1652. *Divine Right and Democracy: An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England*. Hackett Publishing, New York: 2003. 111, 117.

²⁹⁵ *The Sexual Contract*. (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988) 3.

demonstrates that contract theorists were unable to contain the problems created by a critique of the paternal origin of power.

The language Filmer applies in his confirmation of Adam's authority over Eve in *Patriarcha* suggests an anxiety about the possibility of interpreting birth and maternity as generative of sovereign authority:

[There are] two other reasons for the superiority of the Man above the Woman; For the Man is not of the Woman, but the Woman of the man, that is, *Eve* was formed out of *Adam*; Neither was the Man created for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man. So that before the Fall, or any command given her by God she was made in a state of subjection to her Husband, and he very well understood it when he gave her a Name, which was a mark of his Sovereignty and Dominion.²⁹⁶

The issue of contention here is the first manifestation of sovereign power and whether or not it is paternal or maternal. Both Hobbes and Filmer use the same logic: that he or she who first creates a subject first exercises sovereign power over that subject. In his turn to Adam and Eve, Filmer issues a corrective to the assumption that all men are born of women, and insists that women are the children of men because "*Eve* was formed out of *Adam*." While all men after were born of women, this first generation figured a man as the subject-producer, and thus as the first wielder of divinely-given sovereign power. Because all people descended from Adam and Eve, Filmer claims, all authority is paternal. Filmer's insistence on the origin of power is thus a counter both to the idea of power emanating from consent of the governed and also to the idea of maternal power. "All power on earth," he writes in "Observations on Aristotle's *Politiques*" "is either derived or usurped from fatherly power, *there being no other original power to be found*

²⁹⁶ *Patriarcha, or The Natural Power of Kings*. 2nd Ed. (London:1685) xiii.

whatsoever.”²⁹⁷ Filmer’s attempt to locate reproductive power in a primordial father rather than mother nevertheless lends power to the idea that birthing a subject represents the origin of sovereign authority.

Hobbes’s critique of Patriarchy, on the other hand, was unique in that it asserted that original sovereignty was maternal. Unlike both Locke and Filmer, Hobbes did not begin with the premise that the state of nature already contained matrimonial laws which subjugated women.²⁹⁸ Hobbes’s original subjects, then, were not a pair of biblical parents but rather a group of humans in the “savage” state. Grotius and Locke argued that “preeminence of the male sex” explained female submission to men in marriage the state of nature, thus preserving what Pateman calls male fraternal power over women while dismantling paternal power over sons. They generally neglected to give any explanation of the marital contract in the state of nature, choosing to imply that women “cannot take place in the original contract” because “they lack all that is required to create and then protect the protection.”²⁹⁹ While the ease with which this assumption takes place appears axiomatic, the silence is an anxious one, since the necessity of assuming sexual inequality and subordination of women in the state of nature was a direct product of the critique of paternal power. If, as their critique of divine paternal right implied, power was not

²⁹⁷ “Observations on Aristotle’s *Politiques*,” 117.

²⁹⁸ Pateman highlights contract theorists’ avoidance of the marital pact, arguing that this original bond functions as the “hidden” origin of the social contract, *The Sexual Contract*, 102. Jean Bodin (*Six Books of the Commonwealth*, 1576) and Filmer claim that it is against the law of both nature and God for women to rule; Filmer argues that all Kingly authority descends from Adam, the divinely chosen father. Pateman argues that though Rousseau and Locke are “keen to overthrow Filmer’s identification of father-right with political right,” they nevertheless “accept the father’s legacy of sex-right” to further their own purposes, *The Sexual Contract*, 86.

²⁹⁹ *The Sexual Contract*, 102.

paternal, and if Adam was in fact not the first producer of subjects, then maternity emerges as a powerful example of original sovereignty. Hobbes's suggests that once original paternal authority is eschewed, logic demands that maternal authority takes its place. Grotius, Locke, and Rousseau solve this problem by naturalizing the marriage contract and thus explaining that all children born in marriage in the state of nature must obey their fathers. The position of children born outside of this contract, or the possibilities presented by cultures who trace matrilineal descent present difficulties for this understanding of authority. In this problem-space, we can feel the distinct pressure of the division between the hypothetical vs. the historical, a line which becomes more heavily burdened by cultural and historical examples.

Hobbes proceeds from the notion that marital bonds, like other social bonds, are a product of civil society and thus are only enacted after the social contract. Similarly, gender difference as it is recognized and performed in society depends upon convention, rather than nature. Offering a compelling story of female sovereignty in the state of nature, Hobbes highlights, rather than effaces, the balance of power between men and women prior to the social contract. Hobbes's turn to the Amazons as evidence of female sovereignty makes vivid the temporal paradox found in his and others' use of the "state of nature." Imbedded in his ethnographic examples we can find both myth and mythical time. "Women," he writes, "namely the Amazons, have in former times waged war against their adversaries, and disposed of their children at their own wills, and at this day in diverse places, women are invested with the principal authority."³⁰⁰ This principle

³⁰⁰ *De Cive*, 122. For a study of how Amazons were invoked and represented in early Modern drama see: Simon Shepard, *Amazons and Warrior Women: Varieties of Feminism in Seventeenth-Century Drama*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981).

forms a strange continuity between the temporally and geographically distant “state of nature” and the contemporaneous political order.

The language of reproduction and parental authority are the central terms with which Hobbes outlines gender relations in the state of nature. Hobbes’s articulation of original maternal dominion also suggests that in the state of nature, the human experience is filtered through this initial relationship; the mother as “Lord” represents the original sovereign, one who appears to linger on even after her government has been displaced by patriarchal civil order. In *De Cive*, Hobbes argues that the parent-child relationship mirrors the relationship between the sovereign and the subject because parental authority represents the original sovereign power. This parental authority is specifically maternal; in the state of nature, Hobbes asserts, the mother has the power to kill or nourish her child:

By right of nature the conqueror is Lord of the conquered: by right therefore of nature, the dominion over the infant first belongs to him who first hath him in his power; but it’s manifest that he who is newly born is in the mother’s power before any others, insomuch as she may rightly, and at her own will, either breed him up, or adventure him to fortune... And thus in the state of nature, every woman who bears children becomes both a mother, and a Lord... Wherefore original dominion over children belongs to the mother, and among men no less than other creatures: the birth follows the belly.³⁰¹

Thus every child-bearing woman in the state of nature is “a Lord,” but perhaps more significantly, every human in the state of nature owes their first obedience to a figure of female sovereignty. Thus every individual’s relationship with power is first articulated through a relationship to female figures of power, either through a break from that original authority or a return to it. Though he presents the possibility of a woman entering

³⁰¹ *De Cive: Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. Ed. Howard Warrender. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 122.

into an unequal conjugal union in the state of nature and thus losing her authority over her children, he also names several alternatives to this type of union, including the possibility that the woman may have supremacy over her husband. “And universally,” he writes, “if the society of the male and female be such a union, as the one have subjected himself to the other, the children belong to him or *her* that commands.”³⁰² In the case that there is an equality of power, maternal right takes precedence: if “neither is subject to the command of the other, the children are the *Mother’s*.”³⁰³ Thus this original “dominion passes from the mother in diverse ways”: by exercising her sovereign power over the child by exposing or abandoning it, (in this case, if the child does not die, whoever finds it enjoys the power of the “preserver”) by voluntarily entering into an inequitable marriage contract, and lastly, by conquest.³⁰⁴

The last method Hobbes renders unmistakably violent and male. In the state of nature, men must wage war on women because women possess similar, if not equal, strength and intellectual capacities. War is also necessary, Hobbes suggests, for men to obtain sovereign power; men must usurp it from women, since they are not naturally endowed with it. Arguing against theorists that claim the father has authority over the child based on the “preeminence of sex,” Hobbes asserts that “the inequality of their natural forces is not so great, that the man could get dominion over the woman without war.”³⁰⁵ Thus the only way, both in the state of nature and in the political state, for a man to gain sovereign authority is through usurpation. Here, “biological generation” does not

³⁰² *De Cive*, 123. My emphasis.

³⁰³ *De Cive*, 124.

³⁰⁴ *De Cive*, 122.

³⁰⁵ *De Cive*, 122.

produce dominion, but rather “provides the occasion for a mother’s decision to nourish and protect the child, just as victory provides the occasion for the victor’s decision to allow the vanquished life and corporal liberty by living openly under the victor’s protection.”³⁰⁶ The logic for obtaining a subject is the same in the case of mothers and victors: “he that hath dominion over the person, hath also dominion over all belonging to the person.”³⁰⁷ However, the process is not. The crucial difference here is that not only is the father incapable of producing a subject, but also he must always vanquish a mother to gain one. Even if a subject is passed along from victor to victor, at the beginning of the line there is always a Hobbesian mother. Thus any conquest in the state of nature inevitably has a gendered history. Because Hobbes’s countering of paternal authority argued that the origin of authority is maternal, and not paternal, original power cannot be tied to paternal power. The same cannot be said for maternal authority, however, and by using original maternal dominion as a critical weapon in his critique of Patriarchy, Hobbes creates the problem of explaining contemporaneous gender hierarchies.

Hobbes makes vivid the inevitable femininity and maternity of original sovereign power in the state of nature. His theorization of the state of nature also centers gendered usurpation in the rise of civil society. As we have seen in the last chapter, Hobbes’s conception of this state was illustrated by the allegedly chaotic lives of “the savage people in many places of America,” an association he also made in his quotation of De Bry’s engraving in the 1590 edition of Thomas Hariot’s *Report* in his own frontispiece of *De Cive* (1642). As I have suggested in the last chapter, the gendered positioning of the

³⁰⁶ Thomas J. Lewis, “Recognizing Rights: Hobbes on the Authority of Mothers and Conquerors.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 1 (2003), 53.

³⁰⁷ *De Cive*, 123.

civilized *imperium* and the savage *libertas* gives meaning to the subtitle of *De Cive*: the transformation and conquest of this female savagery is indeed the first lesson of “society” and “government,” and the female *imperium* is the result of “*writing that conquers*.”³⁰⁸ Hobbes’s argument that the origin of all sovereign power in the state of nature is not only feminine but also maternal implies that conquering female savagery necessitates usurpation of maternal sovereignty. By pairing Hobbes’s writing on the origins of sovereignty with his illustration of the state of nature, we can see that not only does the hunched figure of *libertas* suggest what Mikalachi calls “the overwhelming femininity of native origins,” but it also the maternity of native origins and its entanglement with the origins of sovereign power. It also situates the process of conquest as one that simultaneously defeats native and maternal sovereignty, positioning a male, European, civilizing force as one that disrupts primordial female time with the arrival of history. History becomes analogous to patriarchal systems of organization and European control of savage land.

2.2.1 “Restoration theatre was political theatre”: Hobbes on the Stage

Early Restoration drama, strongly linked to the artistic and theatre culture revived by Charles II upon his return to the throne, had a distinctly political value. “To write for the stage or to become involved in theatre business in the early 1660s,” as did Sir William Davenant, Sir Robert Howard, and John Dryden, among others, explains Paulina Kewes, “was to declare one’s royalist and pro-Stuart credentials.”³⁰⁹ Questions of sovereignty on

³⁰⁸ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, xxv.

³⁰⁹ Kewes, “Dryden’s theater and the passions of politics,” *The Cambridge Companion to John Dryden*. Ed. Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 131.

stage often served as sites of catharsis; plays frequently performed regicides and rebellions, managing the traumas of the interregnum period by “reconfigur[ing] rebellion as aristocratic usurpation” followed by “inevitable failure” and “the return of the right of ruler or his heir,” or by “cast[ing] the agents of rebellion as comic dupes.”³¹⁰ In their pursuit of this catharsis, Restoration dramatists were attracted to Hobbesian ideas and frequently engaged with his conceptualizations of individualism, desire, and power, and particularly his theory of social contract. His support of monarchy as the best way to avoid the perpetual war he viewed as constituting the state of nature gave playwrights tools for exploring problems of sovereignty, political crisis, civil war, and usurpation.³¹¹ Hobbes’s value for dramatists thus stemmed from his theories’ ability to construct productive patterns of conflict while keeping in view a guide for returning to political order.³¹²

While much has been written about Dryden’s engagement with Hobbesian ideas of desire, individualism, and sovereign rule, there has not been an examination of the way

³¹⁰ Kewes, “Dryden’s theater and the passions of politics,” 135.

³¹¹ “The various ideas about sovereignty which Dryden’s characters canvas,” Susan Owen observes, “had a particular urgency in the aftermath of the Cromwellian period and the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.” *Perspectives on Restoration Drama*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 17.

³¹² Scholarship has tended to describe Dryden’s engagement with Hobbes in absolute terms, often pointing arguing that Dryden must have been writing against Hobbesian ideas since they so often are articulated by the villainous characters in his plays. These “tyrants and rebels,” however, “are not simply ‘villains,’ but brilliant politicians and lawbreakers who justify their behavior by a complicated Weltanschauung.” This perspective is particularly important to remember when considering Zempoalla, the “usurping Indian Queen.” *The Intellectual Design of John Dryden’s Heroic Plays*. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1970) 39.

Dryden engages with Hobbes's concept of original maternal dominion.³¹³ There are several compelling reasons to do. Maternal dominion is central to Hobbes's critique of Patriarchal thought and to the contract vs. Patriarchal argument more broadly, and was likely familiar to Dryden, not least of all because of Hobbes's uniqueness in his idea of maternal sovereignty. Anne Barbeau has persuasively argued that Dryden explored the political ideas of both Hobbes and Sir Robert Filmer in his works, and while both thinkers supported absolute monarchy and underscored the importance of external law (rather than natural or internal right), they crucially differ in their positions on the "state of nature" and the origin of sovereign power, the intersection at which we find maternal sovereignty.³¹⁴ Dryden mirrored his contemporaries in his focus on gender and specifically gender relations and constructions of femininity.³¹⁵ Furthermore, Dryden's repeated creation of formidable female characters, including queens, princesses, witches, and usurpers, outlines a recurrent theme of female sovereignty. In *The Indian Queen*, *The Indian Emperor*, and *The Tempest*, these figures of female power wield an aboriginal power rooted in an uncharted or unfamiliar geography.

While most playwrights did not engage as explicitly with Hobbesian ideas as did Dryden, Davenant, and Howard, the association between figures of female power and *terra incognita* may be a conceptual space in which we hear an echo of Hobbesian

³¹³ See Louis Teeter, "The Dramatic Use of Hobbes's Political Ideas." *ELH*. 3.2 (June 1936), 140-169, and John A. Winterbottom, "The Place of Hobbesian Ideas in Dryden's Tragedies." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. 57.4 (Oct. 1958), 665-683.

³¹⁴ See "Dryden's Play of Ideas," "Dryden and Hobbes," and "Dryden and Filmer," in Anne Barbeau, *The Intellectual Design of John Dryden's Plays*, 1-52.

³¹⁵ "Restoration drama," Katherine M. Quinsey explains, "is overwhelmingly concerned with questions of gender identity....to a degree and a depth not seen in a comparably popular form of entertainment before or since" *Broken Boundaries: Women and Feminism in Restoration Drama* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996) 1.

ideas.³¹⁶ A variety of dramatists assumed that imagining the “state of nature” and staging representations of the New World in particular meant simultaneously turning to issues of gender inequality and the origins of sovereign power. The appearance of plays like Fletcher’s *The Sea Voyage* (1622) and *The Island Princess* (1621)³¹⁷, Edward Howard’s *The Women’s Conquest* (1670) and *The Six Day’s Adventure* (1671), Settle’s *The Empress of Morocco* (1674), D’Urfey’s *The Commonwealth of Women* (1686), and Weston’s *The Amazon Queen* (1667), among others, illustrate how central gender relations were to envisioning exotic, imaginary, or politically unstable lands that recall the state of nature. These plays often contain female sovereigns who are the sole wielders of political power, and like Thalestris in Weston’s *The Amazon Queen*, harshly critical of the institution of marriage and the law of coverture. Howard’s Mandana and Parisatis in *The Six Day’s Adventure*, enjoy uncontested authority until the intervention of male invaders. These invasions—romantic, martial, or both—are complicated by the part these queens play in their own demises. As Bridget Orr notes, Howard’s plays suggest that “in

³¹⁶ Catie Gill argues that Hobbes enjoyed a “widespread influence” on Restoration dramatists, including those who made overt references to his philosophies, and those who “might implicitly echo [his] theories” because of their general familiarity with his ideas, “Introduction.” *Theater and Culture in Early Modern England, 1650-1737: From Leviathan to Licensing Act*. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 1-2.

³¹⁷ Like many of Fletcher’s plays, both *The Sea Voyage* and *The Island Princess* were revived during the Restoration. The play was adapted four different times, by Thomas D’Urfey, by Peter Motteux, and by Nahum Tate. An anonymous version was staged in November of 1668 under the title *The Island Princess, or Generous Portugal*. It was the anonymous version that Samuel Pepys was so taken with (he saw this production four times over the course of 1668-69. *The Sea Voyage* was restaged in 1667 under the title of *The Storm* (again, Pepys saw this production more than once), and revived by D’Urfey in 1685 as *The Commonwealth of Women*. The 1667 restaging was meant to serve as competition for Dryden and Davenant’s adaptation of *The Tempest*, but D’Urfey’s version enjoyed the greatest (and longest) success: it was performed in 1702, 1707, 1708, and 1710.

a contest between heterosexual love and political power...women always choose love, despite the fact that—or in fact, perhaps, because—they are so manifestly disadvantaged by the institutionalization of love in courtship and marriage.”³¹⁸ My reading of Dryden’s plays argues that the reason for this latter claim—that female wielders of sovereignty choose love *because* it disadvantages them—occurs as an attempt to perform the theoretical gap left by Hobbes and his contemporaries in their contract theories. For Bodin, Locke, and Grotius, who imagined female inferiority produced subservience before the social contract, these narratives suggest a reason for that inferiority: an inherent need for, or powerlessness against, romantic love. For Hobbes, they bear a larger burden, as they suggest that female subservience is produced out of an involuntary release of original sovereign authority. While Hobbes describes the ways a maternal sovereign can lose her authority—violent usurpation, abandonment, and voluntary entrance into an inequitable contract—this last possibility seems to be the one that Hobbes had most difficulty describing. Indeed, he seems unable to answer the question his own formulation provokes: why, if women were equal in the state of nature, would they voluntarily become servants of their husbands? Dryden, I suggest, imagines the latter in the form of an unwanted love for one’s enemy. The performance of the female sovereign’s defeat thus fills in a gap in the narrative that contract theorists were eager to construct. For even Hobbes, though he goes to some lengths to represent women as powerful figures in the state of nature, seems to lose them afterward.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ Orr, Bridget. *Empire on the English Stage, 1660-1714*. (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2001) 200.

³¹⁹ As Susan Moler Okin notes, “Having argued not only that women were men’s equals in the state of nature but that they were likely to be their children’s sovereign lords, he was faced with having to explain actual seventeenth-century patriarchy. His attempts to

Centering Dryden's engagement with maternal dominion offers a new way to approach romantic love in Dryden's plays. Rather than reading the love plots as utterly conventional and separate from the political action of the plays, we must read the love plots in Dryden's plays as political narratives in and of themselves.³²⁰ Recognizing the potential significance of maternal sovereignty to both Hobbes and Dryden positions the love plot as a central political movement, as it is through romantic love that female sovereigns lose their power. Dryden's *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*, and Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest*, set in an imagined and mythical space of the New World, dramatize this lost moment; by staging the defeat of female sovereigns through the love plot, these plays attempt to articulate a narrative in which women willingly enter into an inequitable bond by the force of love and heterosexual attraction. While several of the other plays mentioned earlier include similar narratives, Dryden's work is unique in that it offers an opportunity to uncover the way maternal sovereignty and native sovereignty were put in association with one another through their representation of women in the state of nature. If one reads Dryden's women as possessors of their own sovereign authority rather than servants, it becomes abundantly clear that submission is the mode of survival in this staged world; one must submit to one's male conqueror, or face death. That the end of this project is also the means is significant as well. The

do so...include simply losing women," "Feminism, the Individual, and Contract Theory." *Ethics*. 3 (1990), 663.

³²⁰ For example, Barbeau argues that the love plots have garnered too much attention which has distracted from the political dimensions of Dryden's 'play of ideas': "Beneath the surface of a conventional plot, a love story which purposefully does not involve his audience emotionally, Dryden sets to work to dramatize sets of highly complex opinions regarding the obligations of man within his society, *The Intellectual Design of John Dryden's Heroic Plays*, 5.

temporality invoked in placing the narrative in the New World—both a representation of a primordial past and a current moment— generates and operates on a circular logic that threatens to undo itself at any moment. Dryden’s recurring creation of the Indian queen in these two plays, and her spectral appearance after death, suggest that maternal sovereignty enjoys a special symbolic afterlife. Generated by the critique of Patriarchal theory itself, maternal sovereignty appears as a haunting emblem of original sovereign power, a haunting which possesses a paradoxical temporality as it both signals a primordial past and a threatening future, if the state of nature were to return.

2.3 Ghosts of History: Spectral Sovereignty and Indian Queens in *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*

Dryden’s plays offer rich ground upon which to read dramatic manifestations of both maternal sovereignty and pre-contract woman in the state of nature. They also offer insight as to how romantic love became increasingly tied to conceptions of civilizing femininity. The *Indian Queen* and the *Indian Emperor* dramatize the scene upon which contract theory and conjectural theory depend: one that traces the movement away from a savage state of nature and depicts the inauguration of the time of history. Drawing from Hobbes and contemporaneous images of aboriginal female sovereigns (described in the previous chapter), Dryden imagines this scene in the form of two conquests: the first, the conquest over original maternal sovereignty through the characters of Montezuma and Zempoalla, and second, the conquest of Europeans over the empires of the New World. In the ordering of these conquests, Dryden follows Hobbes’s suggestion in *De Cive* that maternal dominion (“*libertas*”) must be conquered before civilized society (“*imperium*”) can begin. The latter conquest is completed through a narrative of sexual and

technological violence. The New World, described as both infant female and maternal giver of bounty, is invaded by a culture of “Armour, Horses, Swords, and Guns,” “forced” to give up its simultaneously fertile and virgin lands.³²¹ This invasion also removes the peoples of the New World from a timeless Eden and places them in the time of history, positioning their defeat as the shift from savagery to civilization. While the first conquest is completed by the time of the Spanish arrival, the maternal sovereignty supposedly vanquished in the first play enjoys a spectral afterlife in its heir, Almeria, its influence over the spirit world, and its manifestation in the ghostly figure of Zempoalla. The bloody scene of *The Indian Emperor* in which Zempoalla’s ghost emerges from the underworld would have been the most spectacular of the play, drawing on contemporary audiences’ desire for what Jean Marsden calls “the spectacle” of “horror and pathos,” creating an impression of haunting female sovereignty for its audience.³²² Almeria’s presence at the thematic intersection of these two conquests underscores the centrality of maternal power and inheritance in the play, as she at once symbolizes the usurped maternal sovereignty she inherited from her “Mighty Mother” Zempoalla, and represents the only possibility of subduing the Spanish invaders.³²³ Thus this incarnation of the “state of nature” in Dryden’s plays positions the conquest of maternal power as historically linked to the conquest of native peoples.

³²¹ Quotations from this short preface, entitled “Connexion of the *Indian Emperor*, to the *Indian Queen*” and from *The Indian Emperor* (IE) are from *The Works of John Dryden*. Edited by John Clyde Loftis and Vinton Adams Dearing. Vol. Volume IX, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). 27, IE, I, i, 34.

³²² *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720*. (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2006) 227.

³²³ IE, II, ii.

The usurpation of Zempoalla's maternal power in *The Indian Queen* echoes Hobbes's description of "maternal Lords" in the state of nature. First, Zempoalla suffers the disintegration of her power over her first-born child, her son, Acacis. Secondly, she experiences a series of military losses which lead her to meet her undoer, Montezuma. Lastly, Zempoalla is struck by an unwanted and powerful love for her "mortal enemy," one which paralyzes her and prevents her from exercising her sovereign authority.³²⁴ Caught between the choice of life as a private citizen and a violent death as a Queen, Zempoalla chooses the latter. Stabbing herself in the heart with a dagger, the Indian Queen uses her final words to claim Montezuma's soul in the "dark Dominions," positioning maternal sovereignty as a spectral force that haunts its usurper(s).³²⁵

Zempoalla's power over her son deteriorates throughout the first play, culminating with his betrayal of her sovereign authority. Not only is Acacis her heir, but he is also symbolically her first subject, and thus this betrayal signifies the loss of her original maternal sovereignty. Acacis's performance of masculine "precise virtue" is achieved through his rejection of his mother's power: the mourning of his uncle, his allegiance to his uncle's memory, and his ultimate disavowal of his mother's right to rule inaugurate a string of losses which culminate in Zempoalla's death. Paralyzed by his "unhappy...Title to [the] Throne," because "blood made way for [his] succession: blood of an uncle too," Acacis can "do nothing else but grieve."³²⁶ In addition to rejecting his

³²⁴ Quotations from *The Indian Queen* (IE) are from Dryden, John, John Harrington Smith, and Dougal MacMillan, *The Works of John Dryden, Volume VIII : Plays: The Wild Gallant, The Rival Ladies, The Indian Queen*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965). IQ V, i, 96.

³²⁵ IQ, II, i.

³²⁶ IQ, II, iii, 15-17, 34.

mother's crown, Acacis's version of the usurpation changes the narrative of her sovereign rule and weakens her political power, as his retelling suggests that Zempoalla was a more of a puppet for Traxalla, the military general with whom she has a "clandestine marriage," than a catalyzing figure for change of rulership.³²⁷ The first sign of Zempoalla's loss of her original subject, then, manifests through Acacis's narration of historical events, which have the dual effect of separating his claim to power through the maternal line, which he rejects, from his own mourning of his paternal uncle, as well as positioning his mother as a woman controlled by a commoner through her own bloodlust. Though Montezuma will ultimately seize both Acacis's love interest as well as his future kingdom, Acacis refuses to take up arms against Montezuma, insisting to him that "Thy Virtue is my Rival, not my Foe."³²⁸ In the final act of the play, Acacis officially aligns himself with Montezuma, publicly rejecting his mother as his "Shame" as he dies. In his own death, Acacis not only seeks to prevent his future suffering from unrequited love, but also to end Zempoalla's line, and to erase "That Blood [which was] shed that [she] had Title in." While Acacis may have "sprang" from "Dread Empress" Zempoalla, he resituates himself as the subject of Montezuma, the future Indian Emperor with his dying

³²⁷ Acacis explains to Montezuma that it was "when false *Traxalla*" was "weary to obey" that the general committed the "dark deed" of "regicide." His representation of the events intimates a way in which agents of fraternal patriarchy can and must write-out maternal power, as Acacis's anguish over the decades-old usurpation seems to focalize on Traxalla's previous crime and continued existence in Zempoalla's court, not only as a consort, but as a co-ruler. "This Traytor," he fumes, "lives and prospers by the ill:/Nor does my Mother seem to reign alone,/But with this Monster shares the guilt and Throne" IQ, II, iii, 23-26, 30-32.

³²⁸ IQ, II, i.

words. In a reversal of the maternal relationship, Montezuma declares “Acacis lives in me.”³²⁹

Ultimately, Acacis’s emotional turmoil marks his mother’s inability to teach him fundamental lessons concerning power and succession, an inability which is produced by his attachment both to the memory of his uncle, and to this commitment to precise virtue and honor. Honor and virtue are distinctly masculine in the plays, and performed through homosocial bonds. When Acacis voices his grief over the fact that “blood made way for [his] succession,” Zempoalla assumes that his angst will pass, associating his passionate speech with “an itch in youthful blood/for doing extravagantly good.”³³⁰ She thus critically misreads his obsession with “honor” as an adolescent phase and as an ideal that does not serve the practical demands of a prince, rather than as a rejection of her sovereign authority. Acacis denies that she has earned this authority “by right of conquest” because he assumes that usurpation is absent from their dynastic history. This assumption recalls Filmer’s argument that sovereign power has always been paternal. Zempoalla, following Hobbesian logic, highlights the violent struggle inherent in rulership when she rejects the “mildness” of her predecessor. “Let dull successive Monarchs mildly sway,” she expounds after Acacis storms out, “Their conquering Fathers did the Laws forsake,/And broke the old e’re they the new cou’d make.”³³¹ The lesson which Zempoalla attempts to give to her son, and the one which he fails to learn, is that at the beginning of every line of succession, of every house of monarchs, there is law-breaking and usurpation. Even if Acacis chooses to revere her deposed brother and

³²⁹ IQ, V, i, 285.

³³⁰ IQ, II, iii, 15, III, i, 96-97.

³³¹ IQ, III, i, 113-115.

detest her, Zempoalla points out, it cannot be because of usurpation itself. For somewhere down the line, one of their “conquering fathers” was also a usurper. This, she maintains, is the history of every crown and every royal house. Acting both as a “*usurping* Indian Queen” and as a figure of original maternal dominion, Zempoalla’s maternal lesson functions as the counterpart to the “rudiments” described by Hobbes in *De Cive*, at once reminding her son and the other male characters of the maternal origin of their own sovereign power, and figuring as the warning that that very power, *libertas*, must be overthrown for civilized society and *imperium* to begin.

The disintegration of Acacis’s loyalty precedes Zempoalla’s first meeting with Montezuma, but it is ultimately her unbidden love for Montezuma which leads to her fall from power. Dryden’s employment of love in the play figures marriage and heterosexual romance as violent conquests. For some female characters, like Orazia and her daughter Cydaria, this is an welcome outcome, but for Zempoalla and her daughter Almeria, it signals the death of both their political and self-sovereignty. The central division between these types of female characters points to their association with paternal or maternal sovereignty. Whereas Orazia and her daughter Cydaria function as consorts and mere transfer points of paternal sovereignty, Zempoalla and her heir Almeria draw their power from the land itself, exercising an aboriginal maternal sovereignty. For Zempoalla, romantic love is the weapon with which she is unseated from her throne; for Almeria, love for her enemy prevents her from retaking her mother’s throne. Zempoalla’s fall from power is achieved through the force of an involuntary love which acts upon her violently. The passion she feels for Montezuma works in direct opposition to her sovereign duty, and significantly, it comes into being in the spatial embodiment of her power: the throne

room. Traxalla attempts to kill the captive Montezuma, and Acacis, adhering to his code of honor, stays his hand. Zempoalla silences them both and asserts her right to decide his fate. It is in this moment that love “strikes” her. Seconds after ordering his death, Zempoalla tells her soldiers to “hold,” asking “must he dye?—why let him Dye?”³³² In a series of rapid questions to herself, she discovers that “strange diversity in [her] resolve” arises from the presence of the “audacious stranger” “whose Sword and Eyes/Where-e’er they strike meet ready Victories.”³³³ Figuring this emotion in terms of physical and political violence, Zempoalla imagines herself Montezuma’s slave, demanding, “Does he command in chains?...is he bound ye Gods, or am I free?” This romantic assault is described in terms of division, suggesting that from its inception, her love of Montezuma has a fragmenting effect on both her soul and her sovereign power. Her “resolve,” historically unified, experiences a “strange diversity,” love “disorders” her mind, and “pride and love tear [her] divided soul.”³³⁴

Zempoalla reads this disorder as a critical attack on her power, and responds to the dangerous emotion by recruiting the supernatural assistance of her priests. Paired with the *Indian Queen*’s opening scene of sacrifice, Zempoalla’s rejoinder to the “Victories” of the “Captive stranger” occasion the supernatural scenes of the play, which occur alternately at her bloody sacrificial altar and a temple within a “Magick cave.”³³⁵ After her unsettling interaction with Montezuma, Zempoalla returns to her temple, where she enlists the aid of Ismeron, described in the *dramatis personae* as “one of their Prophets, A

³³² IQ, III, i, 31.

³³³ IQ, III, i, 33-34, 27, ii, 147-148.

³³⁴ IQ, III, i, 45, 33-34, 37-39.

³³⁵ IQ, III, i, 147-8.

Conjurer,” to “give a Lover rest” by easing “the Passions of the Mind,” or to “force Love into a Scornful Brest”. Zempoalla is unable to obtain the former, and Ismeron insists that both he and the spirits he conjures are unable to “force Love” into “any Brest/That is with other flames before possess’d.”³³⁶ In response, Zempoalla rejects his advice and proceeds by initiating an immense blood sacrifice. “Make him [Montezuma] but burn for me in flames like mine,” she demands, promising blood to the gods in exchange for her request: “victims shall bleed, and feasted Altars shine.”³³⁷ While she prepares the sacrifice, Zempoalla is nevertheless defeated. Once Montezuma’s “Sword and Eyes” have struck her, she struggles to recover her power, but in vain. Her attempts to appease the gods and either remove love from her own breast, or create it in Montezuma’s, are unsuccessful, and ultimately it is clear to Zempoalla that after this initial romantic assault, her defeat is inevitable. After Acacis’s suicide, Zempoalla is powerless against her involuntary love for Montezuma; unable to kill him, she leaves both her throne and her empire open to Peruvian conquest. In a conversation with Traxalla, she reluctantly admits to herself that “Were but this stranger kind, I’d cross [Traxalla’s] Art,/And give my Empire where I gave my heart.”³³⁸

In her final scene, the Indian Queen recapitulates Hobbes’s strategies for the defeat of maternal Lords, listing the reasons she can no longer survive, all the results of conquest by love and by war: “All that cou’d render life desir’d is gone,” she mourns to Montezuma, “*Orazia* has my love, and you my Throne:/and death *Acasis*.”³³⁹ Stripped of

³³⁶ IQ, III, ii, 132-134, 136-8.

³³⁷ IQ, III, ii, 149-150.

³³⁸ IQ, IV, i, 84-5.

³³⁹ IQ, V, i, 388-90.

a seat of power, an heir, and an ability to control her own desire, Zempoalla's has been successfully usurped of her maternal sovereignty. Her last act of agency, then, is to die as a Queen, rather than to live "Captive to a Slave."³⁴⁰ When Montezuma and Orazia, finally given her father's blessing after Montezuma's heritage is revealed, offer Zempoalla life and pardon, she rejects their proposal, denying their attempt to "give life to her that was a Queen." Rejecting Montezuma's pardon, Zempoalla stabs herself with a hidden dagger.

At this point in the play, maternal inheritance still serves an essential purpose in replacing a female sovereign with a male one. Despite Zempoalla's defeat, Montezuma's throne is only acquired by the power he inherits through his own long-exiled mother. Immediately following Acacis's death, the stir of the crowds outside the palace reveals that Amexia, "The banish'd Queen," walks through the streets, accompanied by General Garruca, and "declares [Montezuma] is her Son."³⁴¹ It is the declaration of "*the lawful Indian Queen*," which ensures that the "City rings with [a] new Sovereigns name."³⁴² Amexia's reemergence, however, does not signal the reemergence of a new maternal sovereign, but rather the transition to *paternal* authority. Amexia's only power is to serve as proof of paternal inheritance. While Amexia is a "Queen," she is a Queen consort, and so the only authority she lends to Montezuma is not her own. Rather, she legitimizes his position on the Mexican throne by announcing his paternal heritage. By "declar[ing] that he is her son," Amexia gives him title to paternal, rather than maternal power. Until the appearance of Zempoalla's daughters Almeria and Alibech in *The Indian Emperor*, Queens can now only produce sovereigns, rather than be them.

³⁴⁰ IQ, IV, i, 96.

³⁴¹ IQ, V, i, 193.

³⁴² IQ, V, i, 192.

Despite this usurpation, maternal sovereignty has a spectral afterlife in the second play. The pattern of sacrifice and inheritance reveals that the enduring power of the maternal sovereign lies in her ability to haunt her conquerors. Following these patterns is only possible, however, when both plays are read together, and when the significance of the supernatural elements in the play is acknowledged. It is in the supernatural connections between the two plays that we find the spectral presence of maternal sovereignty. Presumably, Zempoalla's failed blood sacrifice in Act V yields no immediate results because Montezuma's heart is already "possess'd" by a love for Orazia. However, the occult logic outlined in *The Indian Queen* posits blood sacrifice as always productive of power to some degree. In the first scene of Act V, the curtain reveals the golden "Temple of the Sun," populated by priests "in habits of white and red Feathers, attending by a bloody Altar," "ready for sacrifice." The priests prepare the scene with a song which explains that blood-thirsty gods create human "glories" "by sacrifice," a process which determines human "fates below."³⁴³ The scheduled executions of Montezuma, the Inca, and Princess Orazia will ostensibly produce a great deal of power, since their bloods are royal. In an echo of Zempoalla's earlier speech, the priests sing, "Never did yet your Altars shine/Feasted with Blood so nere divine."³⁴⁴ At the end of this final act, the blood that is sacrificed is indeed royal—but it is the Indian Queen's own blood, and the blood of her son, Acacis, rather than that of Montezuma and the Inca. Arguably more potent because the sacrifice is greater, these two deaths do purchase Zempoalla's desire, but it is not realized until the following play, when her daughter

³⁴³ IE, V, i, 2-4.

³⁴⁴ IE, V, i, 5- 6.

Almeria enjoys the spoils of her mother's sacrifice—Montezuma's adoration. Without a throne or an heir, Zempoalla's ability to pass on her power occurs through this occult channel of spirits and small deities.

2.3.1 “‘Twill please our Mother's Ghost”

Performed a year after *The Indian Queen*, in 1665, *The Indian Emperor* begins roughly twenty years after Montezuma's coronation, and follows the story of Zempoalla's three children—Almeria, Alibech, and Orbellan—and Montezuma's—Cydaria, Guyomar, and Odmar, as they navigate the difficulties of love and conquest, beginning with the arrival of Cortes and other Spaniards. As with *The Indian Queen*, *The Indian Emperor* draws dramatic action from problems of inheritance, filial (dis)obedience, and unrequited love. Like Acacis before him, Montezuma is unable to defend his kingdom against invaders—this time, Europeans—because of his own perceived recognition of honor and virtue in his enemy, the Spanish captain, Cortes. Montezuma also experiences an unrequited love, this time for Zempoalla's daughter, Almeria. Tortured and humiliated on the rack by the Spaniards in a particularly infamous scene, Montezuma is ultimately disappointed in love as he watches his empire disintegrate. In a fulfillment of the first play's occult promises, Zempoalla haunts her usurper, her ghost a harbinger of his fall. While she has captured the love of Montezuma, Almeria is nevertheless doomed to suffer her mother's fate; she falls in love with Cortes, the enemy of her people, who is in turn in love with Montezuma's daughter, Cydaria. Almeria, like her mother, rejects a pardon from her enemies and kills herself with a dagger at the end of the play, refusing to be subject to Cortes and his new empire. The

play concludes with Cortes and Cydaria's marriage and the Spaniard's conquest of the New World. The victors watch as the other two remaining natives, Alibech and Guyomar, are exiled north to a barren wasteland.

Whereas the first play performs the usurpation of original maternal dominion by paternal power, the second play associates maternal dominion with native sovereignty and the world of spirits, locating its usurped power in the "dark Dominions" of the underworld.³⁴⁵ Through the figure of Zempoalla's ghost, and through Almeria's actions in the world of the living, maternal sovereignty is positioned as at once a haunting reminder of original usurpation and as a force of resistance against European colonial invasion. Though Zempoalla was defeated in *The Indian Queen*, her sovereign power lives on in Almeria, her true heir in the second play. While Almeria has a sister, Alibech, as well as a brother, Orbellan, Almeria is most dedicated to avenging her late mother by torturing Zempoalla's enemies and ascending to her mother's usurped seat of power. While Orbellan is not as grief-stricken about Zempoalla's fratricide as his older sibling Acacis was, Orbellan is distinct from his two sisters in their continued allegiance to their mother's memory. This traces a weakening of Zempoalla's original maternal dominion over her male subjects, and a distinctly female line of inheritance for maternal sovereignty. Almeria serves the dual function of being the vessel for Zempoalla's delayed spell and the subversion of her enemies, and of associating maternal sovereignty with Indigenous resistance to European colonialism. Though ultimately failing in her endeavor to protect the Mexican empire, Almeria is nevertheless the only character that has the will and desire to vanquish the leader of the enemy, Cortes. Her involuntary love of this

³⁴⁵ IE II, i, 99.

enemy, then, functions as the tool with which to dismantle both maternal and native sovereignty. Read together, it becomes clear that both plays are bookended with scenes of temporal separation, signaling the movement from the state of nature to the time of history. This movement is described in a language of discovery which renders conquest and exploration possible through sexual and technological violence.

The second scene of Act I opens as the final act of *The Indian Queen* closes, with the image of a “bloody sacrifice” on a temple altar.³⁴⁶ The mirroring of these opening and closing scenes ties Zempoalla’s sacrifice to its ultimate product: Montezuma’s love for her daughter Almeria. While the high priest of the first play was unable to create love in Montezuma’s heart because it had been “possess’d” by Orazia, we learn in the “Connexion” that Dryden has done away with this character. “*Orazia*,” he explains, “for whom there was no further use in the story, is lately dead.”³⁴⁷ The magic which would have “force[d] Love” into Montezuma’s heart, while still apparently potent, cannot create a passion for the late Indian Queen. Instead, it directs its force through her incarnation, her daughter Almeria. Alongside Almeria’s ferocity and desire for power, this occult transplantation of power marks Almeria as Zempoalla’s true heir, as it inscribes her with Zempoalla’s maternal sovereignty. When Montezuma selects Almeria from the “beauteous quire” of noble ladies and crowns her as “Queen of all the year,” his actions are driven by the power of Zempoalla’s spell.³⁴⁸ It is at this moment, by the light of the sacrificial altars which “shine” with blood, that Zempoalla’s sacrifice in the previous play

³⁴⁶ IE, I, ii, 4. In this case, however, Montezuma has slain “five hundred Captives” to celebrate his birthday, an act of violence which seems to align him more with Zempoalla than with Acacis, who mourned his mother’s creation of “needless Death,” IQ, I, ii, 5.

³⁴⁷ IE, “Connexion,” 12-13.

³⁴⁸ IE I, ii, 15, 18-20.

comes to fruition.³⁴⁹ Thus in her haunting capacity, Zempoalla achieves her revenge for Montezuma's usurpation through the inheritance she bequeaths to her daughter, Almeria.

Almeria and Alibech differ crucially about how best to avenge Zempoalla, and these differences provide instances in the play in which maternal sovereignty reemerges in the material world, and in which her daughters can debate the power dynamics of the marital contract so often assumed by contract theorists. The more moderate Alibech advocates revenge through politic means—marriage. “’Twill please our Mothers Ghost,” she explains to her sister, “that you succeed/To all the glories of her Rivals [*Orazia*’s] bed.”³⁵⁰ “To prove the lasting torment of his life,” she argues, “You must not be his Mistress, but his Wife.”³⁵¹ However, Almeria is critical of the marriage contract and views matrimony as injurious to rather than constructive of her power. “He, who does now my least commands obey,” she responds to her sister, “Would call me Queen, and take my pow’r away.”³⁵² As Montezuma’s Queen, Almeria would be queen consort. Marriage would effectively negate the claim she inherits through her maternal line because it would dissolve her as an individual, and thus as an inheritor of maternal sovereignty. This division marks Almeria as the figure of original maternal dominion because she recognizes the essential power loss built into the marital contract. Instead, Almeria seeks to use Montezuma’s love to regain the throne: “If he love, I’le force him to obey.”³⁵³ In a shocking and public refusal of Montezuma’s offer which recalls his earlier position as “slave” to Zempoalla, and foreshadows his position as “slave” to the

³⁴⁹ IQ, III, ii, 150.

³⁵⁰ IE, I, ii, 29-32.

³⁵¹ IE, I, ii, 71-72.

³⁵² IE, ii, 49-50.

³⁵³ IE, I, ii, 84.

Spaniards, Almeria assures him that she will only take the throne as a sovereign in her own right: "As for the Crown that you, my slave, possess," she declares, "To share it with you would but make me less."³⁵⁴ Almeria's actions are also informed by communication with an occult network of "shades," or spirits, which may tell her mother of her deeds in the world of the living. "If news be carried to the shades below," she tells Alibech, "The *Indian Queen* will be more pleas'd, to know/ That I his scorns on him, who scorn'd her, pay."³⁵⁵ In other words, for Almeria, "'Twill please [their] Mothers ghost" more if she destroys Montezuma and takes his throne, as he did to Zempoalla.

The haunting force of original maternal dominion is fully realized with the appearance of Zempoalla's ghost in Act II. Though Cortes and his Spanish soldiers have just arrived, threatening war if Montezuma does not submit to the authority of Charles V, Montezuma seeks supernatural wisdom about his prospects in love, rather than in empire. After a series of feminized spirits attempt to warn Montezuma of his empire's fall, the "Ghosts of Traxalla and Acacis arise, stand still, and point at Montezuma." Montezuma, though his "soul is seiz'd with an usual fear" at the sight of the unbidden "Ghastly visions," only mocks their "thin and empty forms."³⁵⁶ It is the vision of Zempoalla who "*rises betwixt the Ghosts with a Dagger in her Breast*," which is "the only form" that has the power to "shake [his] soul."³⁵⁷ This scene, which may have made use of new theatrical machinery, would have been the most spectacular in the play, as it revives the Zempoalla in her famously elaborate headdress, this time stained with her own blood,

³⁵⁴ IE, I, ii, 87-88.

³⁵⁵ IE, I, ii, 33-35.

³⁵⁶ IE, II, i, 76, 79, 82.

³⁵⁷ IE, II, ii, 86.

still carrying the dagger with which she ended her own life. While her appearance is chilling, her message is even more so: “The hopes of thy succesless Love resign,” she commands, “Know, *Montezuma*, thou are only mine; For those who here on Earth their passion show, By death for Love, receive their right below.”³⁵⁸ In this description of a supernatural trade system of life, death, love, and sovereign power, Zempoalla demonstrates that while her crown was taken away from her in the material world, she nevertheless wields a more lasting power in the underworld. The use of Almeria as the vessel of her power on Earth draws a connection between the rejection of male capture via marriage and the preservation of original maternal dominion. Indeed, Zempoalla’s control in this underworld is made evident by the fact that, unlike most “guidless” spirits, she is immune to the “fierce winds” which “o’er dusky Vallies blow, Whose every puff bears empty shades away.”³⁵⁹ Linked to the shadowy landscape of the spirit world, Zempoalla informs the helpless Montezuma that she has “appoint[ed] a meeting place below”: “Just at the entrance of the Fields below,” she instructs him, “Thou shalt behold a tall black Poplar grow, Safe in its hollow trunk I will attend, and seize thy Spirit when thou doest descend.” Zempoalla then disappears to the “dark Dominions,” leaving a resigned Montezuma.³⁶⁰ While he has yet be defeated by the Spanish, the appearance of Zempoalla’s ghost in this scene effectively marks him as her eternal subject. The economy which she describes to Montezuma is repeated later in the play with her daughter Almeria and Cortes, extending the haunting power of maternal sovereignty to the crime of conquest as well as usurpation of maternal dominion.

³⁵⁸ IE, II, ii, 89-91.

³⁵⁹ IE, II, ii, 97-99.

³⁶⁰ IE, II, ii, 96, 100-103, 99.

The overwhelming femininity of the occult landscape is demonstrated in part by the dominion of her ghost, though the other spirits are described as feminine in form and are the first to experience the violence of European invasion. During the above scene, Zempoalla's lingering power is set against the backdrop of the spirit world's reaction to the impending Spanish conquest. While Montezuma is praying for signs of Almeria's love, an "earthly spirit" arises and describes the exodus of Indigenous spirits. "A God more strong," the spirit laments, "Drives us to exile from our Native lands." Thus "The Air swarms thick with wandring Dieties, Which drowsily like humming Beetles rise, From their lov'd Earth, where peacefully they slept."³⁶¹ Out of the chaos of the "wandring dieties," "Kalib," "*ascends in White in the shape of a Woman*" to warn Montezuma of the one moment he will have to regain power and protect his people from the invaders. Examining the "Book of Fate," Kalib discovers "one happy hour" in which Montezuma can save his "sinking State." She goes on: "A day shall come when in thy power/ Thy cruel Foes shall be; /Then shall thy Land be free,/And though in Peace shalt Reign: But take, O take that opportunity, Which once refus'd will never come again."³⁶² In this central scene, then, we see Zempoalla claim Montezuma's eternal obedience, revealing her power over a feminized landscape of the underworld. At the same time, that feminized landscape, which shadows the world above, is under attack by a masculine god which drives spirits from their "Native lands," a nurturing "lov'd Earth" which is threatened by male invasion. The effect of this scene is to associate the pagan spirit world with the feminine, and to demonstrate that conquest rips apart new world both above and

³⁶¹ IE, II, 25-30.

³⁶² IE, II, i, 53-62.

below. While it is Montezuma who is given foreknowledge of the possible moment of resistance, it is in fact Almeria who voices that resistance and who attempts to make use of the “opportunity” Kalib mentions. Almeria’s struggle against the invaders positions Indigenous sovereignty as inherently tied to maternal sovereignty through the feminized landscape of the New World itself.

Almeria’s resistance also predicts the enslavement of indigenous populations, linking that enslavement to the greed of the Spanish for both gold and for female bodies. The dangers she outlines make sexual violence inseparable from colonization and forced labor. When Cortes has offered “Peace” to Montezuma, after attacking and subduing a large part of his army, Almeria critiques the offer:

When Peace is offer’d, ’tis too late to take/ For one poor loss to stoop to terms like those, /Were we o’come what could they worse impose?/Go, go with homage your proud Victors meet,/Go lie like Dogs, beneath your Masters feet./ Go and beget them Slaves to dig their Mines,/And groan for Gold which now in Temples shines,/Your shameful story shall record of me,/ The Men all crouch’d, and left a Woman free.³⁶³

Almeria reveals the conquest, which would be secured by technological superiority (“Our Foes with Lightning and Thunder Fight”), would also mark a sexual and reproductive subjugation both of the land and of Indigenous bodies; while the former produces “Gold” and other riches, the latter produces “Slaves” to harvest these resources, implicitly the product of rape.³⁶⁴ These would be subjects of paternal, rather than maternal, sovereignty, as the nonconsensual reproduction of bodies for enslaved labor marks the overturning of maternal authority and the rupture of kinship systems in general. In Act III, when Cortes is in the power of Montezuma, Almeria explains that the Spanish Captain’s death will

³⁶³ IE, III, i, 62-70.

³⁶⁴ IE, II, iii, 32.

end both the bloody invasion and the devastating famine Montezuma's people experience. She demands that Montezuma "Dispatch the Villain strait," but Montezuma's attachment to Cortes, the mirror of Acacis's homosocial honor-rooted attachment to Montezuma in the previous play, prevents him from doing so, because to kill Cortes would make him "mourn."³⁶⁵ In light of his paralysis, Almeria decides to solve the problem herself: "Give me a Sword," she orders, "and let me take his Head."³⁶⁶ When Montezuma rejects this proposal, Almeria decides to kill Cortes secretly, and thus end the death of her people and destruction of her country.

However, like her mother, Almeria is seized with a violent love for her enemy at the crucial moment of action. Unlike the first play, though, this violent love pairs ensures the conquest of maternal and Indigenous sovereignty. Almeria first imagines her inability to kill the enemy to be the product of "some Charm" or "some Divinity," but she shortly discovers that it is "Love" which prevents her from striking: "I can not strike anywhere,-- but *here*," i.e Cortes's heart. The unwanted and conquering force of love mirrors that experienced by Zempoalla in Almeria's eyes as well, and she describes the discovery as a repetition of Zempoalla's death for love: "In spight of me I love, and see too late/ My Mothers Pride must find my Mothers Fate." Almeria too feels shame for loving her "Country's Foe," and views death as the only way to prevent further defeat: "I shall...pierce my own [heart]."³⁶⁷ Her desire to kill herself is strengthened by the impossibility presented by Cortes's love of Cydaria. This love triangle again replicates

³⁶⁵ IE, III, iv, 66-68.

³⁶⁶ IE, III, iv, 70.

³⁶⁷ IE, IV, i, 18-32.

the dynamic of the earlier play: the daughter of Zempoalla loves the conqueror, who in turn loves the daughter of Orazia.

Yet both deaths make certain an eternal haunting of their usurpers. While Almeria's suicide marks the removal of one of the final obstacles to Spanish conquest as well as her surrender to her rival for Cortes's love (Cydaria), it also ensures that she will rule them both in the afterlife. Cydaria, desiring Almeria's death, tells her to "haunt me with your ghost," and Almeria assents. "Dying for him is due to me alone," Almeria declares to her rival. "Thy weakness shall not boast the Victory, / Now thou shalt live, and dead I'll Conquer thee."³⁶⁸ The trajectory of occult inheritance developed in the two plays intimates that Almeria will come to claim Cortes's soul, repeating the rule by which Zempoalla's soul claims Montezuma's: "For those who here on Earth their passion show,/By death for Love, receive their right below."³⁶⁹ Thus the spectral return of Almeria will be a reminder both of the usurpation of original maternal dominion, and the crime of conquest. Together, Almeria and Zempoalla's ghosts mark the Americas by a vengeful maternity and an absence of, or even reversal of, maternal nurture.

The Indigenous sovereignty represented by the Indian Queen and her daughter are firmly rooted in a pre-historical past because they represent what power must be eschewed in order for conquest to proceed. This temporal positioning is tied to their association with "savagery," with female rule, and with their special relationship to the autochthonous world of spirits. The imagined inauguration of history, which takes place after the conquest of the Spanish, can only occur after the usurpation of maternal power

³⁶⁸ IE, V, ii, 322-325.

³⁶⁹ IE, II, ii, 89-90.

through sexual and technological violence. In this light, the experience of starvation and maternal loss suffered by Montezuma's empire in the second play signals the movement between two temporalities, from maternal savagery to paternal civilization, marked by two central images: that of the bounty of Nature in providing for human want, and of its reversal. The transition between these two temporalities is signaled by the cessation of fertility and narrated through figures of children, in the opening scenes of the *Indian Queen*, and then young adults who are forcefully removed from their nourishing motherland in the closing scenes of *The Indian Emperor*. The opening scene of *The Indian Queen*, positions two children enjoying the fruits of the land, which they do not have to labor to harvest. They are awoken from this timeless period by the sound of the Spaniards, and then the scene shifts to the action of the play, which seems to have no connection with these two. But the sequel's ending mirrors this first scene in that Alibech and Guyomar, the two remaining inheritors of Zempoalla and Montezuma's powers, respectively, are banished to a distinctly infertile land to the North, "beyond the Mountains...Where Rocks Lye cover'd with Eternal Snow."³⁷⁰ The opening and closing scenes of the first and second plays, respectively, describe a shift in time necessary to divide the past from the present, which is accomplished through a symbolic maternal killing and, the taming of feminized *libertas*.

The loss of Nature's bounty and even Nature's abandonment of her (human) children is positioned as the lamentable but inevitable outcome of the coming conquest, which, like Vespucci in Galle's engraving, marks the sexual and technological triumph over naked America. Prior to the invasion, Montezuma's people enjoyed a prelapsarian

³⁷⁰ IE, V, ii, 368-369.

existence and did not store a surplus of food, but rather depended upon “The face of plenty,” and “from the Lake receiv’d [their] daily store.”³⁷¹ Their shock at the famine which “spreads [at] so swift a pace” at once marks their innocence and their cultural inferiority; having “never felt a Siege before,” the “Millions crowded” in Montezuma’s castle are the victims of a famine preventable by the cultivation of the land.³⁷² Without this cultivation, Locke and others argued, the land in question was *terra nullius*.³⁷³ The perceived absence of cultivation functions as a central tool with which Indigenous people were placed in another time.³⁷⁴ Crucially here, the reason for this lack of agricultural surplus is the maternal bounty of the land, which is removed by the invasion. Thus the very presence of unbounded fertility marks the land as temporally distant.

Imbedded in the natural world and naturalized as inevitable, maternal loss is described in a language of grief. While the conquest of the maternal may be rendered inescapable in these plays, the cessation of natural bounty, which is presented as the result of this conquest, nevertheless produces a mournful emotional aesthetic. As Alibech explains, the deadly famine, which Montezuma refused to end by killing Cortes, is

³⁷¹ IE, III, iv, 3-4.

³⁷² IE, III, iv, 2-4.

³⁷³ Andrew Fitzmaurice explains how the idea of occupation was linked to land use. “Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,” he explains, “the idea of occupation was increasingly used—for example, by John Locke and Adam Smith—to explain the historical progress of human societies from a hypothetical state of nature to an agricultural state.” Because of agriculture’s position in this progressive social evolution, occupation “could not simply be a taking of something ‘with the hands,’ as it had been for medieval authors. Rather, they argued that occupation was only achieved by use or, in Locke’s terms, improvement. Thus, occupation introduced an understanding of property in terms of exploitation of nature. This process of exploitation is what drove society from one step in history to the next,” *Sovereignty, Property and Empire, 1500-2000*. (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge UP, 2014) 3.

³⁷⁴ Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 30.

understood through the absence of maternal provider. The soldiers appear as “Callow Birds—/Whose Mother’s kill’d in seeking of the prey/Cry in their Nest, and think her long away.”³⁷⁵ They anticipate her return as “each leaf that stirs,” and at “each blast of wind,” yet the landscape is now a marker of maternal absence rather than nourishment. Thus they “Gape for the Food which they must never find: /So cry the people in their misery.”³⁷⁶ The usurpation of maternal sovereignty and the resulting of loss of fertility is evident in the fact that food does not simply disappear, but rather reverses its nourishing qualities. As Alibech explains, the “swiftly spreading” famine is “so fierce, that what’s deny’d Mans use,” is ingested out of “Wild hunger.” After what is described as the murder of maternal nature, the Indigenous peoples are driven to eat death itself. “Even deadly Plants, and Herbs of pois’nous juice,” Alibech mourns, “Wild hunger seeks; and to prolong our breath/ We greedily devour our certain death.”³⁷⁷ While Cortes’s army and its technologically superior weapons are the harbingers of native defeat, it is the abandonment of maternal nature which ultimately annihilates them. “The souldier in th’assault of Famine falls,” and produces a landscape haunted both by the ghost of murdered nature as maternal sovereign, and the spirits of her starving children. Thus after they have been forced to “devour...death,” “Ghosts, not Men, are watching on the walls” of Montezuma’s fortress.³⁷⁸ When Alibech, the last relative of Zempoalla, and Guyomar, Montezuma’s son, “chuse...Liberty” rather than subjection to the Spanish, they cannot return to a plentiful pre-contact period. Instead, they must live in the desolate Northern

³⁷⁵ IE, IV, ii, 37-39.

³⁷⁶ IE, IV, ii, 40-41, 41-44.

³⁷⁷ IE, IV, ii, 34-36.

³⁷⁸ IE, IV, ii, 36-37.

lands, characterized by its lack of abundance, with “Thin Herbage in the Plains, and Fruitless Fields,” and where the “Sand no Gold, the Mine no Silver yields.”³⁷⁹

2.4 Enchanted Islands: Hippolito/a, Sycorax, and New Political Subjects

Dryden and Davenant’s adaptation of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, to which they added the subtitle *The Enchanted Island*, first premiered in Duke’s Theatre in London’s Lincoln Fields on November 7th, 1667, just two years after *The Indian Emperor*, to enthusiastic audiences. The original text, as many scholars have noted, was shaped by travel literature and tales of shipwreck in unknown lands, and the adaptation builds upon the New World associations of Shakespeare’s play. In so doing, I argue, *The Tempest* engages with questions of sexual desire, gender roles, and modern subjectivity. While aboriginal maternal sovereignty plays a role in *The Tempest*, it is less prominent than in *The Indian Queen* or *The Indian Emperor*. Like Zempoalla in *The Indian Emperor*, maternal authority in Dryden and Davenant’s adaptation appears only in spectral form and through offspring, namely Sycorax and Caliban. *The Tempest* pushes maternal sovereignty to the margins of the text and instead focuses on the role of gender and sexual desire in the creation of both savage and civil subjects. Dryden and Davenant explicitly engage with and participate in natural philosophy in this play, experimenting with Hobbesian conceptions of the passions and the state of nature. On the shores of an exotic island, *The Tempest* performs the social and sexual contracts. First, it by acts out

³⁷⁹ IE, V, ii, 370-71.

the dissolution of the social bonds which form society, and then effects their reconstruction, mainly through marriage.

The multiplication of female roles and the wild popularity of the play demonstrate both the increasing opportunities for female actresses on the stage and the increasing importance of women in dramatic narratives. They also underscore the centrality of gender relations to Dryden and Davenant's reimagining of the state of nature. While there are important structural and thematic changes to the play—Prospero's power is notably diminished, as is the magical nature of the island and the various 'threats' to royal and patriarchal power—the most striking additions are female. Dryden and Davenant add three key female figures. Miranda is given a sister, Dorinda, as is Caliban. Caliban's sister is named after their deceased mother, Sycorax, a figure of aboriginal female sovereignty who haunts the island through her children but whose 'savagery' is more distinctly tied to her racial difference.³⁸⁰ Dorinda and Miranda's curiosity, sexuality, and disobedience amplify Prospero's paternal difficulties. The libidinous insatiability of Sycorax II distresses the sailors whom she endlessly propositions. The last of the female additions is in fact a male character named Hippolito, played by an actress. Both Hippolito and Dorinda underscore the 'natural' aspect of their characters in the sense of their innocence; while Hippolito has never seen a woman, Dorinda has never yet beheld a man. Hippolito's character, with his complex layering of gendered meanings—not the least of which is the Amazonian name—queers the division between cause, effect, civility, savagery, and man and woman, suggesting that the experience of the post-civil war political subject is one of conscious pretending.

³⁸⁰ For the purposes of clarity, I refer to Sycorax's living daughter as Sycorax II.

Scholarship of this play has generally sought to locate it in the context of ideological debates central to the Restoration, namely those over the role of the ruler, the security of civil government, usurpation and civil war, patriarchal authority, colonial ambitions, and shifting roles of women, particularly on the stage. The adaptation “is usually described as an attempt to neutralize various threats to contemporary patriarchal orders,” one “often seen as unsuccessful by modern readers.”³⁸¹ This lack of success is frequently attributed to the unruliness of Prospero’s daughters and the presence of Sycorax, a woman whose racial difference is represented as monstrosity, and who is left behind at the end of the play. Dorinda and Miranda are “sexually eager,” and Hippolito, a male character played by a female actor, is described by Bridget Orr as displaying “untrammeled libidinality.”³⁸² Heidi Hutner argues that the two sisters function “as constrained others who are reminiscent of stereotypical seventeenth-century depictions of Native American women,” and that Sycorax represents “the native woman and all that cannot be entirely destroyed by white male power.”³⁸³ While Sycorax is, in Hutner’s words, “a lecherous idiot,” her sexuality and that of her white counterparts demonstrates the “impossib[ility]” of “repress[ing] female power on the seventeenth-century English stage.”³⁸⁴ Similarly, Michael Dobson suggests that “If Shakespeare’s *Tempest*

³⁸¹ Candy B.K. Schille, ““Man Hungry”: Reconsidering Threats to Colonial and Patriarchal Order in Dryden and Davenant’s *The Tempest*.” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. 48.4 (Winter 2006), 273.

³⁸² Earl Miner, “The Wild Man Through the Looking Glass.” *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*. Ed. Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak. (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1972), 102. Bridget Orr, *Empire on the English Stage*, 195.

³⁸³ *Colonial Women: Race and Culture in Stuart Drama*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), 49, 53.

³⁸⁴ *Colonial Women*, 53, 64.

obsessively expels the matriarchal and polices the female,” Dryden and Davenant’s adaptation, and especially their creation of the queer Hippolito, “stages their revenge.”³⁸⁵

Rather than attempting to assuage the anxieties of patriarchalism and colonialism, however, Dryden and Davenant “aim to problematize the too easy attribution of qualities of savagery and ungovernability to the play’s gallery of ‘others.’”³⁸⁶ While Dryden and Davenant defended the monarchy and the authority of the Stuart king, their exploration of rebellion with the sailors, and patriarchal authority with Prospero also “recognizes that such a license to power may be claimed by misguided or malicious human agents as well as sanctified ones.”³⁸⁷ Instead, she argues, the play locates savagery, or its possibility, inside the characters themselves, as well as in the audience. Here Schille turns to Miner’s work on the “wild man,” or wild *woman*, “within,” a subject of increasing anxiety throughout the seventeenth century. Travel narratives in this period represented “naturalistic savages” both home and abroad, characterized by “dirt and darkness, bestial appearance, sexuality, and especially cannibalism.”³⁸⁸ These descriptions served as a kind of dark mirror: “As if viewing himself in the looking glass of art, a cultivated European...saw in himself the savagery he feared to encounter.”³⁸⁹ Orr expands upon this in her evaluation of exotic drama, noting that in addition to the plethora of social and political problems provoked by colonial expansion, there was a fear and an expectation of

³⁸⁵ *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992) 56.

³⁸⁶ ““Man Hungry,” 273.

³⁸⁷ ““Man Hungry,” 289.

³⁸⁸ “The Wild Man Through the Looking Glass,” 85

³⁸⁹ “The Wild Man Through the Looking Glass,” 107.

“colonials’ tendency to degenerate, far from the centres of civility and in dangerous proximity to unbridled savagery.”³⁹⁰

Drawing out the temporal and gendered registers in the play, I read the idea of the ‘wild (wo)man within’ as a new cultural construction marshalled by the temporalization of difference. Though the image of the ‘wild man’ is ancient, the figure in this play marks a new use: to illustrate an earlier stage of society, and at the same time illustrate a ‘state’ that can be, in Elmer’s terms, “visited upon us if we are not vigilant.”³⁹¹ Orr’s evaluation suggests that seventeenth century readers and theorists saw civilization in geographical terms, and here I want to highlight the fact that this period saw the shift to a combination of temporal and geographical difference. Thus the state of nature appears on the island not only because it is far removed from society, but also because it is removed temporally. In moving away from historied land, the sailors have entered one out of time. The temporal paradox of the state of nature becomes spatial as well: savagery exists in another time and in the present, in another place, but also within. *The Tempest* contains multiple performances of the social and sexual contracts. However, it is the way in which the play constructs gendered subjects vis-à-vis states of nature which mark this text as participating in the project of conjectural history.

The (re)performance of the social and sexual contracts in play serves as a method for delineating a crucial boundary between nature and culture. This boundary constructs a modern understanding of each term: while “mankind [is] the same in all ages, agitated by the same passions, and moved to action by the same interests,” culture, ever-changing,

³⁹⁰ *Empire on the English Stage*, 190.

³⁹¹ Jonathan Elmer, *On Lingering and Being Last: Race and Sovereignty in the New World*, 11.

shapes mankind and forms it for political and social life.³⁹² Like his former fellow members of the Royal Society, and like Hobbes, Dryden operated upon the assumption that humans shared the same physiological capacity for emotion, rendered here as ‘passions,’ and thus his exploration of characters in a pre- or post-social environment was an experiment in cultural vs. natural separation. By assuming what the passions of certain humans would be, one could theorize the historical and cultural effect of the natural cause. In this sense, *The Tempest* is an experimental reversal of *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*. Whereas the latter two plays take historical events as the known effects of “actions” and “passions” to theorize the actions and passions themselves, the former begins with a space free of history. Outside of time and outside of, or beyond, the known world, the island is enchanted as much from its supposed magical elements, which are downplayed in Dryden and Davenant’s version, as for its ultimate temporal and geographical inaccessibility as the state of nature.

While all characters experience a variety of passions throughout the play, the conjectural history that *The Tempest* genders passions as female because of their atemporal association; they are the most fundamental of pre-contract human characteristics. Part of the play’s conjectural history demonstrates a narrative of progress in which the feminized passions are acted upon by male culture; history is thus a masculinizing process in which the raw materials of nature are formed for social organization. These passions, which include a variety of emotions but also first impressions, cognitions which cannot be expressed with the limited vocabulary of the play’s ‘natural’ characters, undergo a process of cultural and linguistic modeling and

³⁹² Dryden, “Life of Plutarch,” 59.

translation. In the first instance of this process, Dorinda, the younger and thus more ignorant of the sisters, struggles to describe the sight of a ship to Miranda. “Oh, sister!” Dorinda cries, “what have I beheld?” Her half question, half exclamation underscores both the desire to gain knowledge about this foreign object and the awe it inspires. She continues to depict a wild scene in which the “whistling winds” seem to battle with the “roar[ing] waves,” in the midst of which she descried “a huge great Creature.” When Miranda explains that she “mean[s] a ship,” Dorinda insists that “it seem’d alive”:

This floating Ram did bear his horns above,
All ty’d with Ribbands, ruffling in the Wind;
Sometimes he nodded down his Head a while,
and then the Waves did heave him to the Moon;
He clambring to the Top of all the Billows,
And then again he curtsi’d down so low,
I could not see him; till at last, all side-long,
With a great Crack his Belly burst in pieces.³⁹³

Dorinda’s representation of the ship(wreck) as a man is underscored by Miranda’s following assertion that she has “stranger News to tell...in this great Creature, there were other Creatures,/and shortly we may chance to see that thing,/Which you have heard my Father call, a Man.”³⁹⁴ In John Shanahan’s reading of this scene, Dorinda’s “epistemological naiveté stages literally a puzzle occupying the new science’s experimentalists and philosophers, namely, how humans accommodate new objects and experiences mentally and to what extent an ideational medium has access to and shapes our reception of the true nature of the world.”³⁹⁵ The gendered dimension of these

³⁹³ John Dryden and Sir William Davenant, *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*. 1667. I.ii.13.

³⁹⁴ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*. I.ii.13.

³⁹⁵ “The Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*, Wonder Production, and the State of Natural Philosophy in 1667,” 100. The similar scenes in which characters struggle to articulate

puzzles is key to understanding the narrative of social progress which the play performs. The acquisition of new vocabulary and the production of new knowledge that Dorinda commences is inextricable from the learning of gender, a lesson which builds upon the natural ‘passions’ of desire and curiosity but which will ultimately end in her incorporation into masculinized history and her binding to the social and sexual contract. The significance of language learning for the characters looks forward to the eighteenth-century interests in language, suggesting that dramatic staging of these scenes began the work of deciphering the relationship between language, social progress, and political order.³⁹⁶

Significantly, Dorinda’s first vision of ‘Man’ comes through synecdochical abstraction. The “huge great creature” contains many more of the same, but smaller, “Creatures,” thus the ship’s ubiquitous association with the Commonwealth and government more broadly is strongly reminiscent of the image of Hobbes’s Leviathan. Dorinda’s first vision of civil society appears in the form of both ship-as-government and a distinctly sexual figure of man, himself constructed of other male subjects. Her comment points out entirely masculine image of the political body and makes vivid Dorinda’s exclusion from it. At the same time, this first encounter works as the foundation of both Dorinda and Miranda’s civilizing process, one which will end in marriage to Hippolito and Ferdinand, respectively. The linkage between the atemporal

new emotions or depict new objects, he suggests, anticipates Locke’s doctrine of *tabula rasa*.

³⁹⁶ Smith’s *Considerations on the first formation of languages* was first published in the 1767 edition of *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Locke discusses the relationship between language and ideas extensively in *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), as does Rousseau in *A Discourse on Inequality* (1755).

female visions of the historied masculine ship-as-civil-society is amplified by its distinct echoing of a scene just before first contact in *The Indian Emperor*, when Guyomar, overcome with awe at the sight of Spanish ships, is incapable of portraying them to Montezuma. The “floating palaces” he describes are replaced here by “the floating Ram,” and the ‘innocence’ of Indigenous Guyomar with that of the female Dorinda. Each sighting and subsequent struggle with language with which to describe these new objects heralds gendered conquests. The echo is augmented by the misunderstanding that follows Dorinda’s description of the ship. When Miranda explains that she had heard Prospero say that “we Women were made for [Man],” Dorinda assumes she means as food. “What, that he should eat us, Sister?” she questions. The appearance of the specter of cannibalism, even if for a moment, highlights the island’s New World associations.

The next step of the process in which feminized pre-culture passions are given form by language occurs when Hippolito comes to recognize his feelings for Dorinda as ‘love.’ In a previous scene which similarly poses the “puzzle” of which Shanahan speaks, Hippolito and Dorinda both experience desire for one another, but do not know how to communicate the experience to other characters. It is only after hearing Ferdinand speak of his love for Miranda that Hippolito realizes, by analogy, his natural passion is an object called ‘love.’³⁹⁷ After the natural passion has been translated and shaped into the cultural construction ‘love,’ Hippolito can proceed to court Dorinda. The courtship of the

³⁹⁷ When Hippolito observes that Ferdinand “seem[s] not hurt [by Miranda],” Ferdinand confesses that he has been “wounded” by “her bright eyes,” and that he “take[s] no rest,” as the wound “festers in her absence.” In short, he “loves her.” After a series of affirmative answers to his questions (“Are you not grown unquiet since you saw her?” “Do you not wish you not know for what?” “Do you desire she may always be with you?”), Hippolito pronounces himself in love: “[this is] just my condition!” III, ii, 49.

sisters demonstrates the natural passions of love and lust experienced by male and female characters alike. It also highlights Prospero's weak paternal control over. While he claims that he has planned the matches between Ferdinand and Miranda and Hippolito and Dorinda well in advance of the events of the play, Prospero is unable to keep the couples separate. Instead, his prohibitions to his daughters only increase their "long[ing] to see a Man."³⁹⁸ Prospero's paternal instruction does demonstrate, however, the foundational importance of power in courtship, i.e. the initiation of the sexual contract, to civil society. He warns his daughters not to be "too kind" to Ferdinand or Hippolito and instead to "use [them] ill, and [they'll] be forever yours," worrying privately that "too easy/Wining makes the prize light."³⁹⁹ The fact that Sycorax II is unable to learn this lesson, and that Trincalo insists to her that "fair Maids must not be too forward," further aligns this paternal injunction with civility rather than savagery.⁴⁰⁰ While Prospero's cautioning is commonplace, in the context of the island and its state of nature associations, this lesson presents itself as a counterpart to Hobbes's "rudiments"; the sexual contract is secured when female participants pretend to 'lose' a battle in order to 'win' (a marriage).

The play's comic representation of the sexual contract here, like its contract theory counterparts, elides the more basic question of why women would seek unions in which they were fundamentally disadvantaged, and, in this case, transformed from free persons into inferior subjects. Whereas in *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*, submission to the sexual contract is either accepted as a means of survival by female characters who do not wield inherited maternal sovereignty (e.g. Orazia and Cydaria), or

³⁹⁸ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*. I.ii.38.

³⁹⁹ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, III. ii, vi.

⁴⁰⁰ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, III. ii, vi.

resisted until death by those who do (Zempoalla, Almeria, and to some extent, Alibech), Dryden and Davenant's play avoids answering this lingering ideological question. The two sisters' sexual and romantic desires seem to be satisfied through marriages they willingly enter, and this aligns them with Cydaria and Orazia. However, neither sister is aware of the inferior position effected by marriage, and thus neither enters the contract with full knowledge of what it entails. Indeed, much of the comedy is generated by their ignorance. More fundamentally, neither Dorinda nor Miranda have fully learned 'gender' or 'sex,' and the same is true of their counterpart, Hippolito. To a different and perhaps greater degree than *The Indian Queen* or *The Indian Emperor*, whose respective worlds contain basic monarchy, the world of *The Enchanted Island* is a state of nature; without cultural and linguistic context with which to learn and to perform gender, the sisters, even at the end of the play, are not entirely gendered creatures. Hippolito's character crystallizes the way Dryden and Davenant posit gender as a cultural construction, founded upon a sexual contract which is itself a performance.

Even more so than Dorinda or Miranda, Sycorax fails to learn and to perform womanhood in the state of nature, and thus is abandoned on the island at the end of play. The text suggests that Sycorax has sexual relationships not only with Trincalo and Stephano, but also with her own brother, Caliban. Her insatiable sexual appetite and, even more importantly, her inability to pretend that appetite does not exist, demonstrates that unlike her white counterparts, she cannot learn the paternal lesson Prospero teaches to his daughters (to avoid making the "prize" of their bodies "too light"). While Zempoalla's desire for her enemy and for power marked her as less alluring than her more peaceful counterparts, her body itself was not described as monstrous. For Sycorax,

however, whose mother, the original owner of the island, was washed ashore from Algiers, her blackness is tied both to her sexual appetite and to her “monstrous” form. Indeed, her own brother describes her as an animal, “clambring up a hollow Oak,/And plucking thence the dropping Honey-combs,” and she is referred to as “Madam Monster” by the sailors.⁴⁰¹ While Sycorax’s mother is African, her racial difference is more ambiguous, as her monstrous form is presented as a product of her mother’s magical powers. For this reason, many scholars have read Sycorax and Caliban’s characters, and their enslavement to Prospero, as relevant to colonialism in the Americas as well as in Africa. Indeed, the striking similarity between the island and the lands represented by travel narratives from the Americas suggests an even stronger affiliation with the New World.⁴⁰²

Maternal sovereignty is pushed to the margins of the play, but it nevertheless haunts those margins. Of Dorinda and Miranda’s mother, we only know that she assured Prospero of his paternity before her death, (“Thy Mother was all Vertue, and she said, thou wast my Daughter, and thy sister too”), and Caliban and Sycorax’s mother, as in the original play, is dead. The late Sycorax’s power, we are told, was vast. Speaking of Caliban and Sycorax II, Prospero explains to Gonzalo that “Their Mother was a Witch,

⁴⁰¹ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, II.iii.203-204.

⁴⁰² Along these lines, Heidi Hutner reads Caliban and Sycorax as “merely the stand-in for the absent “original” owners of the island, the Native Americans,” *Colonial Women*, 53. Maximillian Novak views Sycorax as not only representative of indigenous American or African populations, but instead as “made to embody all the sensuality that Western man had imagined to be characteristic of women of dark-skinned races,” an imagining shaped by the “polygamous, polyandrous, and even incestuous societies...discovered by voyagers” by the time of the play’s publication. “Commentary to *The Tempest*.” *The Works of John Dryden*. Ed. Maximillian Novak et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 355.

and one so strong, /She would control the moon, make Flows/ And Ebbs, and deal in her Command without/her power.”⁴⁰³ Tied to lunar and terrestrial movements, Sycorax’s power emanates from the land itself. And while Prospero’s magic was a key element in the original text, in *The Enchanted Island*, the only magic that remains are the remnants of Sycorax’s army of spirits, inherited by her children, and reminiscent of the “wand’ring shades” which occupy the Americas in *The Indian Emperor*. Though named after her formidable mother, Sycorax II is a “buffoon”-like character more than a figure of Amazonian resistance. However, both Caliban and his sister resist Prospero’s control by asserting their original claim to the island through their mother. “This Islands mine by Sycorax my Mother,” Caliban asserts, “which thou took’st from me.” When the boatswain Trincalo seeks to overthrow his shipmates claims to power, he does so through marriage to Sycorax. “I’ll lay claim to this Island by alliance,” he announces.⁴⁰⁴ His assertion is built on Hobbesian logic; while he already has power over Caliban—Caliban has agreed to be his subject, rather than Prospero’s—he still is unable to lay claim to the island. Only through Sycorax, whom he calls “Heir of all this Isle,” can Trincalo become sovereign of the island. Tied to the alliance is Sycorax’s maternal inheritance: the ethereal army of spirits. Caliban explains to his new brother-in-law, and new “Lord,” “my Mother left us in her Will a hundred Spirits to attend us, Devils of all sorts, some great roaring Devils, and some little singing sprights.” When Trincalo “accepts...our Mother-in-law’s Legacy,” Sycorax calls the spirits and they commence a feast.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰³ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, V.ii, 81.

⁴⁰⁴ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, I, 11, II, 24.

⁴⁰⁵ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, IV.ii, 61.

Like Dorinda and Miranda, Sycorax only offers one possible answer to the question of why women in the state of nature would accept a matrimonial agreement which disadvantages them: sexual desire, and, perhaps, romantic love. While the *Indian Queen* and *Indian Emperor* stress the latter, *The Tempest* highlights the female characters' sexuality. The central difference here is that while Dorinda and Miranda's sexuality is ostensibly harnessed by their marriages at the end of the play, Sycorax's marriage to Trincalo is exposed as a hoax, and annulled by separation. The seduction and subsequent abandonment of Sycorax is mediated by her sexual appetite, which, according to the logic of the play, nullifies Trincalo's responsibility to her. This appetite marks her as undesirable both because it undermines the logic of Prospero's paternal "lesson" in performed female virtue and because it is tied to her embodiment of racialized savagery. Eschewed alongside Sycorax is the maternal authority which manifested itself as original sovereign power through the land and the spirits which reside in it. As compared to Dryden's earlier two plays, maternal sovereignty has an even more tenuous afterlife; while it visits the landscape of the enchanted island, it does not have a single conqueror to haunt. Instead, it lingers in the atemporal, geographically indeterminate space of the state of nature, a location necessary for the performance of the social contract and formation of the post-civil war civil order. Sycorax's reproductive capacity is stripped of her mother's great power, but still presents complex problems for the sailors' descendants.⁴⁰⁶

While Sycorax is abandoned rather than defeated, maternal sovereignty is vanquished by another means in the play—through the death of Hippolito. The layering

⁴⁰⁶ *Colonial Women*, 54.

of gendered and temporal meanings on Hippolito's body constructs him as a queer subject, one whose character traces the conscious pretending required by the post-civil war subject. This pretending includes the acknowledgement of female desire and of the social construction of gender, and, I argue, of the political fable that is female submission in the state of nature, in other words, the fable of the sexual contract. To begin, the queer nature of the character is manifest both in the cross-dressing of the actor and in the physical transformations undergone by the young Duke himself. Due to a "dearth of youths," the speaker explains in the prologue, they are "forc'd t'employ one of our Women to present a boy," a "transformation...exceeding all the Magick in the Play." In the remainder of the speech, the audience is cautioned against expecting a revelation of Hippolito's sex, and at the same time invited to imagine Hippolito (as a woman) "a-bed."⁴⁰⁷

The lines "between savage and civilized are ambiguous" as well, as "Hippolito is a former wild man who was raised in a cave on an island, yet he is also a European Duke."⁴⁰⁸ Before Hippolito can take up the political power he is the rightful heir to, he must first learn what "men" and "women" are, and what "savage" and "civil" mean, a process of knowledge production in which social progress and gender difference are entangled. His gender education comes largely through his revelation of sexual desire for Dorinda, which, in a gesture that underscores the danger of unconstrained 'natural' passions, leads him to desire *all* women, and to claim them all as his wives. Like Dorinda

⁴⁰⁷ Schille observes that the announcement itself "is, of course, a kind of unmasking, or rather no real masking has occurred to begin with since no one in the audience...would have seriously believed the actress playing Hippolito was male," "Man Hungry," 280.

⁴⁰⁸ *Colonial Women*, 52.

as she sees the unmistakably male ship, Hippolito must manage unfamiliar objects and ideas and render them effable through a new vocabulary. The latter claim, of course, ultimately leads to his “death”; in a fight over Miranda, whom Hippolito has laid claim to along with the rest of womankind, Ferdinand mortally wounds him. Just before their duel, Ferdinand must educate Hippolito about the latter’s “sword,” thus multiplying the sexual meanings of the scene. When Hippolito is stabbed and killed by Ferdinand, control of both Dorinda and Miranda’s sexuality via matrimony is called into question, as Prospero claims he must execute Ferdinand for his crime.

The murder of Hippolito also marks the annihilation of female sovereignty, here represented not as the racial other Sycorax, but instead as Hippolito’s namesake, *Hippolita*, Queen of the Amazons, who is a key figure of female resistance in Fletcher and Massinger’s earlier version of the play, *The Sea Voyage*. While the death of the Amazon Queen’s namesake functions symbolically as her martial defeat, Hippolito is revived through methods distinctly gendered female. Firstly, the army of spirits, inherited by Sycorax and Caliban from their mother, initiates Hippolito’s revival. The spirit Ariel explains to Prospero that Hippolito’s “Soul was but retir’d, and not sally’d out.” To resuscitate him, Ariel “collect[s] the best of Simples underneath the Moon, the best of Balms, and to the wound apply’d the healing juice of vulnerary Herbs. His danger only,” Ariel assures Prospero, “was his loss of bloud.”⁴⁰⁹ Both the “body” and the “bloud” here are of ambiguous sex; aside from the lunar references, Barbara Murray reveals that the blend of “garlic, myrrh and valerian” was used to “procure woman’s courses,” and one of the herbs, moly, was “given by Hermes to Odysseus as an antidote to the poisonous

⁴⁰⁹ *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*, V, 74.

enchantment of Circe.”⁴¹⁰ For Murray, these uses reassure the audience that “However closely she may approximate to manliness, she will remain, and can be medicined to remain, subject to the volatile emotions and to the distressing monthly liability” of the female body. Thus, she contends, “the herbal mixture offers an orthodox reassurance [of] the gendered status quo.”⁴¹¹

It is in this chaotic period, after the defeat of Hippolito/a, that the modern civil subject is born, or rather, reborn, a performance which mirrors, but precedes, that of the social contract because it involves both the subject’s social state (civil/savage) and sexual identity. Rather than simply reifying the sexual status quo, the murder of Hippolito accomplishes two goals: first, it strips his character of the vestiges of maternal sovereignty. Maternal sovereignty, then, ends with both the symbolic death of *Hippolita* and the (re)birth of *Hippolito* and the abandonment of Sycorax. Secondly, it prepares Hippolito to take on the mantle of Duke of Mantua, his rightful seat of power. Rather than reading this scene solely as an example of “colonial power...reaffirmed” and the “European tam[ing] of the white man gone native,” the death and revival manages the gendered forms of power which Hippolito has thus far embodied.⁴¹² Returning to Schille’s assertion that the play seeks to locate savagery in its audience as well as in its European characters, we can read Hippolito’s reborn self as symbolic of the new political subject required by the “embattled civil, domestic, and metaphysical” world of the 1660s and beyond. While Charles II had been restored to the throne, sovereign authority was

⁴¹⁰ Murray, “Transgressing Nature’s Law: Representations of Women and the Adapted Version of *The Tempest*, 1667.” *Literature and History* 12.1 (2003), 32.

⁴¹¹ Murray, “Transgressing Nature’s Law,” 32, 31.

⁴¹² *Colonial Women*, 52.

irrevocably altered, and the patriarchal doctrine was represented as “increasingly nostalgic” and “father-kings” as “anachronistic.”⁴¹³ Hippolito cannot rule the Dukedom as his forebears did. Instead, he must at once be aware of the fractured nature of sovereignty while performing his power absolutely; power is no longer absolute, but performance must be. The garments of the new political subject, Dryden and Davenant suggest, modify human ‘political’ nature just as Hippolito’s masculine garments clothe his female body. The queer division of Hippolito’s character suggests that the operation of modern government requires a subject who possesses a paradoxical acknowledgement of simulation and acceptance of simulation as reality best represented as a cross-dressed body which can wield power and yet cannot “pass.” Hippolito, or maternal sovereignty in breeches, dead, revived, and newly committed to monogamy, embodies this queer political experience more than it does a reification of the status quo. The implication is that while the political ruler’s maleness will not be questioned, his femaleness is also unquestionably present. As the bearer of an Amazonian name and the beneficiary of aboriginal female spiritual revivification, Hippolito’s hidden femaleness stands in for the sexual contract, and in so doing, embodies the story of the aboriginal maternal sovereign displaced by male usurpers, and the (white) female subject bound by matrimony.

⁴¹³ Katherine Eisaman Maus writes, for example, that “as the century wore on, patriarchalism seemed increasingly nostalgic—an attempt to recover the lost monarchical privilege enjoyed by the early Stuarts.” “Arcadia Lost: Politics and Revision in the Restoration *Tempest*” ed. Mary Beth Rose, *Renaissance Drama as Cultural History: Essays from Renaissance Drama 1977-1987*. Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1990. 202.

These plays perform theatrical interventions in scenes of social contract, reflecting the anxieties concerning political dissolution and restoration, and the epistemological upheavals in the wake of colonial expansion. Figuring the theater as a space of experimentation, Dryden employs the conjectural mechanism of the prospective glass to(re)imagine states of nature. Dramatic manifestations of maternal sovereignty on the Restoration stage offer examples of how this state serves as a space for theorizing gender relations. *The Indian Queen*, *The Indian Emperor*, and *The Tempest* animate gendered contradictions of contract theory and sovereign power, epitomized in the figure of the aboriginal maternal sovereign in the state of nature. In *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor*, contract takes the form of pristine Euro-Indigenous contact. Rooting maternal sovereignty in the Americas, *The Indian Queen* and *Indian Emperor* position the aboriginal sovereign as the obstacle which the force of “history” must overcome. First contact is thus reimagined as sexual contract and disguised as romantic conquest. In *The Tempest*, aboriginal female sovereignty is bound to mythical time through the Amazonian invocation of Hippolito’s name, but the setting of the play situates the action in an indeterminate temporality. Here, the characters illustrate the gendered and political performances necessary in light of fractured, post-civil war sovereignty. Exercising a haunting capacity which reminds of the usurpation of maternal dominion, Zempoalla, Almeria, and Sycorax draw their power from the land itself, including its underworld.

These plays also illustrate important lines of fiction in the temporalization of difference. In the centering of the “Discovery and Conquest of the New World” as history’s catalyzing event, *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperor* place the New

World and its people—complex civilization or no—in another time.⁴¹⁴ Similarly, Sycorax and Caliban are placed on an island of indeterminate spatial and temporal location. However, Sycorax's racialization constructs her as an irreducibly libidinous character, whose lust is not for power, but for sex. The prospect of capitalizing on Sycorax's inherited power presents itself to one of the European characters, but ultimately Sycorax's monstrosity ensures her abandonment on the island. While the European characters, who, like Sycorax, have lived on the island in isolation, are reincorporated into the social body, Sycorax and Caliban are excluded, left behind in a space on the margins of society. Together, these plays trace emergent racial systems which mark Indigeneity by temporal displacement and blackness by spatial exclusion. Connected to these systems is the shift in maternal and racial inheritance.

⁴¹⁴ "Dedication," *The Works of John Dryden*. Vol. Volume XI, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966) 25.

Chapter 3: “I Gaz’d my Liberty Away”: Maternity, Indigeneity, and Racial Inheritance in
Inkle and Yarico

“By right of nature the conqueror is Lord of the conquered: by right therefore of nature, the dominion over the infant first belongs to him who hath him in his power; but it’s manifest that he who is newly born is in the mother’s power before any others, insomuch as she may rightly, and at her own will, either breed him up, or adventure him to fortune...Neither do their husbands dispose of their children, but themselves; which in truth they do by the right of nature; soasmuch as they have the supreme power, are not tyed at all...to civil lawes. Adde also that in the state of nature it cannot be known who is the Father, but by the testimony of the Mother; the child therefore is his whose the Mother will have it, and therefore hers; And thus in the state of nature, every woman who bears children becomes both a mother, and a Lord...Wherefore original dominion over children belongs to the mother, and among men no less than other creatures: *the birth follows the belly*.”⁴¹⁵

“Originale igitur in liberos Dominium, matris est; & apud homines non minus quam cætera animantia, *partus ventrem sequitur*.”⁴¹⁶

“Whereas some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishman upon a negro woman shall be slave or free, Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present grand assembly, that all children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother—*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*.”⁴¹⁷

This chapter begins by juxtaposing the phrase *partus sequitur ventrem* in Thomas Hobbes 1642 *De Cive* and the Virginia House of Burgesses decision in 1662. Hobbes employs this term, and the logic it implies, to explain original maternal dominion in the state of nature. To follow the mother’s condition means to be in her power. As my second chapter argued, this powerful articulation of female sovereignty is extricable from the political production of subjects and the geography of the Americas. The exceptional

⁴¹⁵ Thomas Hobbes, *Philosophicall Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. (London, Printed by J.G. for R. Royston, at the Angel in Ivie-lane: 1651), 136-137. My emphasis.

⁴¹⁶ Thomas Hobbes, *Elementa Philosophica de Cive*. (Amsterdam, 1657), 149. My emphasis.

⁴¹⁷ Laws of Virginia, 1662 Act XII; Latin added by William Hening, *The Statutes at Large*, 1819.

nature of this space in Hobbes' theory (the Americas as the state of nature) offers a maternal sovereign implicitly raced as Indigenous. Twenty years later, Virginia issued the first legal articulation of heritable slavery which explained that the child of an enslaved woman would "follow the condition of the mother." While the logic of this ruling would not be paired with the Latin phrase until the early nineteenth century, it was nevertheless referred to as *partus sequitur ventrem* or *partus* in short. The House of Burgesses use the same phrase not to underscore mother's dominion over her children, but rather to turn that bond inside out. The logic of *partus* reproduces kinlessness through the assembly of heritable racial slavery. Whereas Hobbes's maternal sovereign is only implicitly raced, the House of Burgesses use "slave" and "negro" interchangeably. While race was an emergent and fluid concept rather than a fixed biological category, the House of Burgess's ruling demonstrates that political concepts turned legal rulings were anchored in a racialized maternity that was at least partially mobilized in the mid- seventeenth century.⁴¹⁸ Though its expression here is legal, it depends upon literary and travel texts, including images, for its enduring power.

As I argue in the previous chapter, late seventeenth-century English audiences were fascinated by scenes in which aboriginal maternal sovereigns, animated by original maternal dominion, were overthrown by their conquerors. The eighteenth-century was equally or more enamored of the story of the Englishman who betrays his lover, the "Indian maid" who saved his life. The most famous of these was undoubtedly Inkle and Yarico. Originally drawn from travel narratives and later transformed into periodical

⁴¹⁸ See Roxann Wheeler, *Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

anecdote, poetic epistle, play, engraving, and painting, *Inkle and Yarico* spans a variety of genres as well as decades. It traces the rise of periodical culture, the cult of sensibility, and the literary dimension of the abolitionist movement. With its combination of shipwreck, cannibalism, intercultural love, betrayal, and enslavement, *Inkle and Yarico* assembles many, if not all, of the most widely consumed Atlantic tropes in the period. It is no wonder that the tale “was one of the most often repeated and most popular narratives of the eighteenth century,” both in “its country of origin, Great Britain, as well as elsewhere across Europe and North America.”⁴¹⁹ While the details of the tale alter, most follow this basic outline: an Englishman is either shipwrecked or lands in distress on the coast of South America. In danger of either deprivation, violent attack, or both, he is rescued by a young Indigenous woman who falls in love with him. She feeds and cares for him, leads him to fresh water, and in some cases hunts for him. When his ship departs, the Englishman either abandons Yarico, or enslaves her and their unborn child at the Barbadian market.

In his *English Trader, Indian Maid*, a compilation of *Inkle and Yarico*, Frank Felsenstein, explains that even “a conservative estimate indicates that, drawing upon the century from 1711 to 1810 and the resources of at least ten European languages, well over sixty discrete versions and a sizeable number of translations of the tale have been preserved in print.”⁴²⁰ Nearly all of the post-1711 versions are “to greater or lesser extent indebted to Richard Steele’s imaginative reclamation of the tale in number 11 of the *The*

⁴¹⁹ Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*, (London: Methuen, 1986), 227; Frank Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World: An Inkle and Yarico Reader*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 1-2.

⁴²⁰ Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 1-2.

Spectator (13 March 1711).”⁴²¹ Inkle and Yarico is a uniquely eighteenth-century story, for while it was enormously popular during this period, it faded away almost completely by the second decade of the nineteenth. But like the long eighteenth century itself, Inkle and Yarico refuses to stay firmly put, and threads in tangible and intangible ways into future periods and especially into the past. While revised and popularized by Steele’s iteration in *The Spectator*, the tale has its roots in a short passage in Richard Ligon’s 1657 *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. Both Steele’s and Ligon’s versions echo a tale published in Jean Mocquet’s 1616 *Travels and Voyages* (translated into English 1696). In North America, the similar Pocahontas myth captured the attention of American audiences for the following century and beyond. As Peter Hulme and Edward Said have shown, Inkle and Yarico was a recurrent phrase in eighteenth century colonial discourse. Like the discovery scenes detailed in *Nova Reperta*, and the islands in *The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe*, Inkle and Yarico function as “inaugural figures,” characters in one of the fables “that stand guard over the imagination of the New World.”⁴²²

This chapter argues that a key effect of Inkle and Yarico’s contribution to colonial discourse is to reproduce a temporally-crafted narrative of aboriginal absence. This narrative is interwoven with the development of a racial classification system, one which erases Indigenous presence and presents blackness as all-consuming and contaminating. While European shipwreck and Indigenous female succor are repeated throughout versions of the story, Yarico’s race and maternity change, as does the fate of her child.

⁴²¹ Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 2.

⁴²² Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*. (New York: Knopf, 1993), 212.

Maternity and racial inheritance are thus the central generative sites in these texts. Continually tied to the inaugural space of the Caribbean and the timelessness of the state of nature, Inkle and Yarico reproduce both a conception of female indigeneity inextricable from care and relief, abandonment and reproduction, and the translation of New World knowledge, and a concept of female blackness through which racial inheritance is passed, and whose womb produces kinlessness rather than kin.⁴²³ Their encounter, often obscured by the presence of romantic love, writes a gendered history in which “savage” women are helpless in the face of “civilized” men. Inkle and Yarico constructs a temporal architecture out of repeated colonial referents (shipwreck, succor, rescue, abandonment, enslavement) that mobilize a conjectural history. This history renders Yarico’s enslavement as natural both because of her physical overdetermined vulnerability—her maternity—and her location in “the beginning of time” in the Americas.

This chapter builds on the arguments of the previous two. As I argued in chapter one, the native woman in Jean Mocquet’s 1616 *Travels and Voyages* operates as an item in a curiosity cabinet, as both object of curiosity and symbolic decoder of new world knowledge. Her maternal savagery is made vivid in the early ethnographic images of De Bry, Harriot, and others and her function as a guide is another facet of the maternal nurture associated with the New World. In my reading of Mocquet’s native woman and Ligon’s Yarico, I draw out the function of nurture and trace the native woman’s

⁴²³ Through various legislative interventions and by “rendering childbearing as an activity made manifest in the marketplace, early modern “English-Atlantic subjects defined hereditary racial slavery through the irony of a kinlessness born in a woman’s womb,” Jennifer Morgan, “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*,” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 22, no. 1 (2018): 14, 15.

trajectory from cabinet curiosity to conjectural history. While the functioning of race and maternal inheritance change throughout the Inkle and Yarico archive, the story of succor, in which a native woman shields a European man from death, gives birth to their child, and then is either abandoned or enslaved, recurs throughout. I consider the settings in which this succor occurs to themselves have temporal registers—the shipwreck, the island coast, the cave, the wild forest—and follow Melanie Newton’s line of thinking when she argues that in “colonial narrations of history, colonized places enter the historical record when they become useful to colonizing interests. Before that moment, the colonized and their lands are outside the march of history, waiting to be discovered and put to marketable use.”⁴²⁴ Expanding upon Newton’s claim, I also consider the way spaces are construed as “outside the march of history” to be “useful” for colonizing discourses.

Inkle and Yarico employs key concepts of conjectural histories and anticipates stadial theory in its depiction of race, gender, maternity, and power. In its theorization of “human” history, I argue, the story manufactures categories of gender and race, but covers over that very manufacture in order to present such categories as self-evident. Following Sylvia Wynter, I read gender and race as “genres of humanity,” versions of the implicitly white, male, and universal “Man.”⁴²⁵ Conjectural history tells the story of Man, not of humanity, and in so doing gives whiteness a special purchase not only on the

⁴²⁴ Melanie J. Newton, “Returns to a Native Land: Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Anglophone Caribbean.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*. 17, no. 241 (2013): 108-22. 109

⁴²⁵ Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument.” *Cr: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 288.

present, but on the future(s) of the human as Man. In this way, time functions as a technology of race. Considering gender as genre of humanity rather than “as a category independent of other axes of subjugation” necessitates reading race and gender together.⁴²⁶ This chapter takes this approach while also demonstrating how temporality is key to genre-making. I read the manifestation of commercialism in temporal terms. Commerce is not simply an action, but also a time, and later, a stage, in human social progression.⁴²⁷ When Inkle, an English trader, washes up on the shores of a Caribbean island or the coast of South America, he brings with him commercial time. This time melts away as the temporal disrupter of shipwreck, along trope of cannibalism, activate the time-scape of the state of nature. Their encounter is not only a meeting of two individuals from different cultures and “races” but from different times. Such a meeting generates its own conjectural history.

The first section of this chapter situates Inkle and Yarico in two contexts: the reproduction of enslavement, and conjectural history. Following Jennifer Morgan on the reproduction of heritable slavery and Melanie Newton on the narrative of aboriginal Caribbean absence, I attend to the mobilization of *partus sequitur ventrem* for the purposes of racial slavery. I foreground the maternal narrative found in my readings of Inkle and Yarico by first attending to the legal developments surrounding maternal inheritance in Virginia and Barbados. Here I consider the way temporality and maternity construct racial meaning and delineate nascent racial categories. Barbados holds special significance, as it is the subject of Ligon’s generative text, and a location which Steele

⁴²⁶ Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 24.

⁴²⁷ Adam Smith describes these stages as “ages”: the age of hunting (“savagery”), the age of pasture, the age of agriculture, and the age of commerce.

kept in his revision. Even when the beginning of the story takes place in indeterminate new world landscapes (“barbarous coast,” “*An American forest*”), poetic versions following Steele always end in the Barbadian slave market.⁴²⁸ Reading temporality as palimpsestic requires that we attend to the meanings of place; reading Barbados as a simultaneously revelatory and obfuscating colonial referent is key to considering the power dynamics which conjectural history animates.

After locating Inkle and Yarico in the contexts of conjectural history and enslavement, I turn first to Jean Mocquet’s *Travels and Voyages* and Ligon’s *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. Here I approach the English trader-Indian maid narrative against the work of the larger texts themselves. I then turn to Richard Steele’s *The Spectator* 11, considering Steele’s own investment in Barbados and his key revisions of the chronology of the story. Lastly, I examine several poetic iterations, focusing on their theorizations of gender and race and their mobilization of temporal tropes and technologies. By drawing out the temporal registers in Inkle and Yarico and by attending to the shifting valences of raced maternity, I identify the ways the tale theorizes the origins of gendered power. Like the Indian Queens of Dryden’s plays, Yarico loses her freedom by falling in love with her undoer. However, the lines of alliance, which are so clear in Dryden’s works, are blurrier in these tales, and indeed, not apparent to Yarico at all. Ultimately, it is not love itself so much as her racialized body that condemns her not to death, per se, but to enslavement.

⁴²⁸ Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” 1734, Felsenstein 102; George Coleman the Younger, “Inkle and Yarico,” 1787, Felsenstein 174.

Yarico's partial transformation from "Indian maid" to "negroe virgin" over the course of the century is generally read as a symptom the period's ambiguous understanding of race and as yet inchoate racial categories. For example, Felicity Nussbaum argues that Yarico "turns seamlessly from an Indian maiden to a Negro," and that "her designation as Negro signals her blackness rather than indicating any particular racial type."⁴²⁹ However, my aim here is to reveal the seams in this transformation and to undo them to an extent. I argue that there are important temporal and spatial markers which identify Yarico as either Indigenous or African, often in the same text. These racial shifts, far from being seamless, reveal the central problem-space of racialized inheritance and maternity in the state of nature. The gendered history theorized in iterations of Inkle and Yarico depends upon and constructs hierarchized racial meaning. While conjectural histories of the second half of the century, in their explorations of prehistory and social development, focus on the figure of the savage man and civilizing woman, Inkle and Yarico reverses this race-gender order.⁴³⁰ Placed in indeterminate location and time—the shipwreck produces both—linked to a historical text and yet apocryphal, Inkle and Yarico intervenes, in various ways, into the conjectural histories who narrate the move from the inexplicable loss of maternal sovereignty, to the maternal inheritance of race, enslaved status, and maternity as a condition of ultimate vulnerability.

Considered together as early iterations of the Inkle and Yarico archive, Mocquet's, Ligon's, and Steele's texts offer a geography of colonial referents which

⁴²⁹ Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 152.

⁴³⁰ See Sylvana Tomaselli, "The Enlightenment Debate on Women." *History Workshop*. 20 (Autumn 1985), 101-124.

stretches from “the Main” of South America, sometimes specifically the coast of present day Venezuela, to Barbados, St. John, and other less specifically identified Caribbean islands.⁴³¹ In addition to mapping a shifting time-space of Spanish, French, and English colonization and production in the Caribbean and South America, these referents trace the movement of Yarico and in so doing reveal a palimpsest of Indigenous displacement, environmental destruction, and genocide in the sixteenth century, which is constructed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Indigenous absence. As Ligon explains, Indigenous peoples who were enslaved by the English were not native to Barbados, but instead were “fetched from other countries; some from the neighboring islands, some from the Main.”⁴³² In Ligon’s text, this need to import Indigenous peoples implicitly produces an image of an uninhabited Barbados, ripe for the cultivation and exploration of English settlers, and more generally echoes representations of the Americas as an uninhabited wilderness. The absence of human habitation, however, was itself the product of earlier colonization. Indigenous peoples originating from Guiana had indeed lived on what would later be named Barbados for several centuries, but were forced to escape to “more mountainous and defensible islands” after “the Spanish began raids to capture and enslave” them.⁴³³ Because of the island’s situation (it was difficult to locate and, once missed, even more difficult to return to) it did not become a European settlement until the early 17th century.⁴³⁴ Not only was the island the English encountered

⁴³¹ For example, Mocquet specifically mentions Cumaná, a coastal city in present-day Venezuela; present day Surinam, Colombia, Guyana, and French Guiana are possible referents as well.

⁴³² Ligon, *True & Exact History*, 54.

⁴³³ Karen Ordhal Kupperman, “Introduction” to Ligon’s *True & Exact History*, 12.

⁴³⁴ Kupperman, “Introduction,” 13.

already depopulated by Spanish displacement, but it was also radically changed by the introduction of Spanish livestock, which were deposited on the island as a kind of future cache. Without natural predators, these animals irrevocably changed the landscape of the island, and their “descendants...fed the first English colonists.”⁴³⁵ Thus the apparently uninhabited land was already scarred with the violence of colonization and environmental damage.

Steele’s changes to Ligon’s anecdote shift the colonial referents found in Ligon’s text. These shifts alter the racial meanings and racialized maternity in the text and also obscure the colonial history of Indigenous enslavement. Steele’s *Inkle and Yarico* uses colonial referents to hide the very history they signal. This camouflage situates the earlier travel narratives as key sources for the narrative and material history obscured and transformed by later versions. Examining Mocquet’s, Ligon’s, and Steele’s texts together brings these conceptual changes into light. That a central difference between their texts revolves around the native woman’s maternity brings into focus the central place that the representation of maternity occupied in travel literature and in the conjectural histories which implicitly depended upon travel literature for images of non-European peoples. The ways African and Indigenous female bodies and their reproductive capacities were

⁴³⁵ Kupperman writes, “A century before the English settled on the island, a Spanish ship had deposited some hogs on Barbados. The Spanish followed this practice wherever they landed; in the absence of natural enemies, pigs multiplied rapidly all over the Americas, thus creating a ready food supply for later mariners who might find their way to the islands...In 1647 John Marbaroe wrote to John Ferrar in England that there were “numberless” goats and hogs; Ferrar rendered it as ‘great Store of Goats Infinite abundance of Swine,’” “Introduction,” 20. The fact that Robinson Crusoe encounters goats on his island in the early 18th century illustrates the long history of environmental change and destruction which accompanied colonialism and the cultural memory of these practices.

located in either a distinctly public *space* or a distinctly different *time* over the course of the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century helps illuminate the significance of Yarico's shift from Indigenous woman to African woman. This shift evidences conjectural thinking which reified as it constructed racial hierarchies dependent upon gendered historical understandings of inequality and social development.

3.1 *Partus Sequitur Ventrem*: Maternal Sovereignty and Enslaved Matrilineality

Virginia and Barbados play key roles in the seventeenth-century history of gender, race, and enslavement, and “the connection between the English Caribbean and the Southern colonies of North America is starkly illustrated in the symmetry of Barbados's and Virginia's seventeenth-century slave codes.”⁴³⁶ While Barbados became the first colony to construct a comprehensive slave code in 1661, Virginia became the first colony to provide an explicit legal definition of heritable enslavement a year later. Both developments are important moments in the use of legal measures to secure slavery as a reliable economic practice and colonial tool, and while each marks a unique moment in legal history—both are ‘firsts’ of sorts—they also make explicit the practices of enslavement and inheritance which up until these points had already functioned implicitly in the colonial social and political frameworks of both colonies. At the same time, the institution of these laws appears to mark an end to various paths to autonomy available to people of African and Indigenous descent. In the case of the Virginia statutes, they represent the House of Burgesses's response to “doubts” about the status of the children of free, indentured, or enslaved women of African descent. These doubts are illustrated

⁴³⁶ Jennifer Morgan, “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 22, no. 1 (2018): 2.

by the 1656 suit brought by Elizabeth Keye concerning her own and her son's freedom. Keye's suit serves as a powerful, if unique, example of the fact that "enslaved women dealt with racial inheritance before these codes were put into writing."⁴³⁷ It also reveals the extent to which the 1662 law sought to preclude similar future suits. For, in addition to her own access to resources, to her and her son's baptism, and her marriage to the lawyer William Grinstead, Keye won her case by drawing upon English common law, which dictated that children's social status follow that of their father rather than that of their mother. Maternal authority and inheritance were at the crux of both Keye's suit, and the subsequent Acts of the House of Burgesses.

The contradiction between English common law and the practices of heritable slavery is the obvious target of the House's legislation, as they identify fears concerning maternal inheritance explicitly: "Whereas some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishman upon a negro woman shall be slave or free, Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present grand assembly, that all children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother—*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*."⁴³⁸ While the 1661 Barbados code sought to regulate the enslaved population, it did *not*, as the Virginia Act does, provide a "legal definition of who—what category of person—was enslaved."⁴³⁹ Virginia was thus "the first colony to regulate maternal descent," a regulatory move without a clear precedent in English traditions.⁴⁴⁰ The "material substitution of a thing for a child: no white man's *child* could be enslaved,

⁴³⁷ Morgan, "*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*," 3.

⁴³⁸ Laws of Virginia, 1662 Act XII; Latin added by William Hening, *The Statutes at Large*, 1819.

⁴³⁹ Morgan, "*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*," 2.

⁴⁴⁰ Morgan, "*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*," 2.

while all black women's *issue* could" appears in the act "as though it were common sense."⁴⁴¹ However, this turn *to* matrilineal descent and turn *from* patrilineal descent as a structure for heritable slavery and property transfer represents a major inversion of European systems of inheritance. Maternity thus "became a vehicle through which racial meaning was concretized" in the English colonies.⁴⁴²

The abiding power of *partus* does not indicate a coherent revision of inheritance law or development in understandings of gendered reproduction as much as it marks a series of ruptures and contradictions which, if nothing else, serve as testament to the overwhelming cultural, economic, and political commitment to representing human beings as exchangeable goods, of transforming children and parents from kin into commodities. While constructing enslavability out of captive or alien status did not present serious legal difficulties for English colonial officials and enslavers, the project of "convey[ing] lineagelessness through the maternal line was another problem entirely," one that required "a range of ideological maneuvers."⁴⁴³ Though Virginia legislators codified the already-operating assumptions about racial inheritance (these would exert influence for the next two centuries, particularly in the American South) their legal articulation still did not provide a rationale for the implementation of maternal descent.

⁴⁴⁴ The refusal and/or failure to explain the adoption of matrilineality, the status of *partus sequitur ventrem* as at once silent axiom and as an insupportable contradiction is

⁴⁴¹ Morgan, "Partus Sequitur Ventrem," 5.

⁴⁴² Morgan, "Partus Sequitur Ventrem," 12

⁴⁴³ Morgan, "Partus Sequitur Ventrem," 14.

⁴⁴⁴ See Bonnie Martin, "Slavery's Invisible Engine: Mortgaging Human Property." *The Journal of Southern History*, 76, no. 4 (2010): 817-66; Caitlin Rosenthal, "Human Capital." *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018). 121-156.

exemplified by the later abolitionist mobilization of the Latin phrase in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁴⁴⁵ While the 1662 Act clearly draws from the logic of *partus* in its reference to “the condition of the mother,” the Latin phrase itself was added to the Act in 1819 by historian William Hening.⁴⁴⁶ The addition of the Latin “served to connect English slave law to Roman antecedents,” a connection used by abolitionists to make the legal argument that legal arguments for slavery were alien to English legal tradition, that “it was only through Roman law that English slaveowners claimed the right to children born into slavery ‘like cattle.’”⁴⁴⁷ The potential legitimacy from imperial Roman law in the seventeenth century transforms into a legal weak point at the end of the eighteenth, one that abolitionists used to advocate their cause and to separate English national identity from the project of slavery itself.

Despite the palpable stability of interlocking legal traditions upon which it was based, the logic of enslavability which supported *partus sequitur ventrem* remained obscure well into the eighteenth and nineteenth. The unsettled distinction Morgan and Newton identify marks the unresolved “anthropological uncertainty about whether slaves were fully human,” an uncertainty that authorized both the newly concretized distinction by the early nineteenth century between Africans and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas *and* the recurrent construction of that “special kind of property—that is, property in persons.”⁴⁴⁸ Morgan demonstrates how the mobilization of livestock property

⁴⁴⁵ Dorsey, 166. Morgan, “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*,” 15.

⁴⁴⁶ Hening, William. *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature, in the year 1619*, 13 vols. Richmond, 1819. 2:170.

⁴⁴⁷ Morgan, “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*,” 4. Hening, 2:170, quoted in Morgan.

⁴⁴⁸ Goveia, Elsa V, and C. J Bartlett. *The West Indian Slave Laws of the 18th Century*. Chapters in Caribbean History, 2. (Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press, 1970), 21.

law for the purposes of applying *partus* to human beings is ideologically linked to the frequency with which African and Indigenous women were represented as female animals, particularly in their savagery and their freedom from the pains of childbirth. However, these comparisons, while they may have similar roots and even similar structures, no longer served the same ideological function, since people of African descent, free or otherwise, were “*uniquely* exposed to the claim that they could be enslaved because they were not human.”⁴⁴⁹ Since that non-humanity was produced through the womb of the enslaved African woman, the constructive mechanisms of this distinction are crucial to understanding emergent racial categories, and to identifying the colonial myths and conjectural histories which present themselves as timeless, as the product of scientific discovery and colonial exploration, and as coherent narratives of *human* social evolution. This distinction is a product of the racial taxonomies developed over the course of the 18th century, which fueled the continual erasure of aboriginal peoples, particularly in the Caribbean. As Newton notes, “According to late-eighteenth-century racist orthodoxy, the child of a black and an aboriginal American could not produce an aboriginal person.”⁴⁵⁰ In the Caribbean example, one of the region’s “foundational imperial myths” is the “narrative of aboriginal disappearance” or absence.⁴⁵¹ Maternal inheritance, or lack thereof, was crucial to these emergent

⁴⁴⁹ Newton, “Returns to a Native Land,” 116. My emphasis.

⁴⁵⁰ Newton, “Returns to a Native Land,” 121. Patrick Wolfe ties the absence and logic of elimination central to settler colonialism to “different racial regimes” which “encode and reproduce the unequal relationships into which Europeans coerced” various colonized populations. “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 387.

⁴⁵¹ Newton, “Returns to a Native Land,” 108. Newton shows that the constructed absence of aboriginal peoples in the Caribbean presents itself as “unique” both in colonial narratives and in the adoption of the narrative of absence by diasporic peoples

classifications. While kinlessness was reproduced in the enslaved African woman's womb, the very presence of children of Indigenous peoples somehow marked their absence. Taxonomies worked in conjunction with cultural narratives to achieve this erasure, one that placed them in a time before history, before modernity.⁴⁵² Thus the extent to which African and Amerindian women came to occupy different "genres of humanity" depends upon conceptions of maternity and specifically maternal authority and inheritance.⁴⁵³

Following Morgan, I outline three central ideological maneuvers that make the application of *partus* to enslaved African women possible: the maternity of enslaved African women and women of African descent was represented as *reproductive possibility* and then *moved* to or placed in a public space so that childbearing became "an activity made manifest in the marketplace."⁴⁵⁴ These two ideological maneuvers are clearly spatial ones. Maternity must be recast as production and moved into public, economic spaces in order to be regulated, exchanged, and exploited. The ideological maneuvers used to represent Indigenous women, however, are tied to temporality as much as they are tied to space. Figures of Indigenous women of the Americas became "absences" in the present moment because they were occupants of another time. They are "absent" precisely because they occupied a premodern, precolonial time, and had long

themselves, the theme of aboriginal absence or disappearance is integral to colonial texts from a variety of regions in the Americas.

⁴⁵² Newton finds the narrative of aboriginal disappearance at work even in the radical critiques of C.L.R. James and others, imbedded in the argumentation which presents the plantation as the first modern industrial institution and enslaved African peoples as the first proletariat.

⁴⁵³ Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument," 288.

⁴⁵⁴ Morgan, "*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*," 14.

since “disappeare[ed] in a blind, wild forest of blood” even when they were present in palpable, rather than obscure, ways.⁴⁵⁵ Insofar as Newton ties the “disappearance” of aboriginal people in the Caribbean to eighteenth-century racial taxonomies, maternal inheritance is also linked to the *erasure* of indigeneity via the racist classifications which subsumed Indigenous heritage under the umbrella of blackness. Thus the narrative that Newton identifies produces aboriginal absence through reproduction at the same time as it erases aboriginal presence. Morgan’s third ideological maneuver highlights how racial categories emerged with maternity at their crux: the representation of African women free of the pains of childbirth. It is important to note that descriptions of African women in this manner drew from and were shaped by earlier New World travel narratives which represented Indigenous women as promiscuous, physically hardy, monstrous, enticing, fertile, and insatiable. Both the trope of the lustful female cannibal and the pain-free childbearing woman appear in the earliest New World travel accounts.

In identifying this tropological trio—the recasting of African women’s maternity as reproduction and its relocation to the public space of exchange, the relocation of Indigenous women to another time to produce a present absence, and the representation of painless childbirth—we can untangle sexual and reproductive representations of Indigenous women which were later used to describe African women. While the pain-free childbirth and lust for human flesh, both in a sexual and an anthropophagus sense, continued to be tied to visual and textual representations of Indigenous women, the metaphor of livestock reproduction was increasingly the provenance of African women

⁴⁵⁵ George Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 13.

and their descendants. Crucially, the bodies of enslaved African women (Ligon's famous description of an enslaved woman in Barbados is a key illustration of this) were marked by their reproduction, with breasts that were "hanging" or could stretch so far as to feed their children over their shoulders.⁴⁵⁶ If by the seventeenth century, to invoke the "sexually and reproductively bound savagery" of African and Indigenous women was to "conjure up a gendered and racialized figure who marked the boundaries of English civility," then representations of maternal inheritance constructed emergent "genres of Man."⁴⁵⁷ The racially determined spatial or temporal ideological maneuvers above shaped the nascent conjectural histories of humanity which simultaneously depended upon and produced gendered conceptions of the body.

The corpus of Inkle and Yarico provides a rich space to examine these entanglements. Yarico shifts over the course of the eighteenth century from Indigenous woman to African woman—a shift that often occurs *within* individual texts themselves. While the representation of African women as animals and the location of maternity in the public space of the market illuminates the ways that "maternity became a vehicle" for racial meaning, the representation of Indigenous women's maternity and maternal inheritance as it was figured in "states of nature" closely or explicitly aligned with the Americas may clarify the other ways maternity concretized racial meanings.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770," 167.

⁴⁵⁷ Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle,'" 192; Wynter, Sylvia, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument," *Cr: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257-337 and "1492: A new world view," *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*. Ed. Hyatt, Vera Lawrence, Rex M. Nettleford, and Smithsonian Institution. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 5-57.

⁴⁵⁸ Morgan, "*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*," 12.

3.2 From “The Strange and Cruel Actions of an Indian Woman” to “Poor Yarico”: Jean Mocquet’s *Travels and Voyages* and Ligon’s *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*

Placed together, Mocquet’s 1616 *Travels and Voyages* and Ligon’s 1657 *True & Exact History* signal the joint commercial, scientific, and colonial interests and apparatuses which developed over the course of the seventeenth century and laid the foundation for future expansion. They also trace the move from the epistemological systems of “curiosity cabinets” (Mocquet’s title page announces he is the “keeper of a Cabinet of Rarities for the King of France”) to the colonial application of scientific systems of thought, the “illustrated...Map of the Island” with precise “proportion” and description of sugar cane technology (“the Ingenio that makes the Sugar”) which mark Ligon’s text. Their inset narratives enjoy a certain authority while also producing the affective pleasure of more explicitly literary texts.⁴⁵⁹ Both texts participate in the cataloguing and construction of “Man.” In *Travels and Voyages*, Mocquet gathers his observations for the purposes of aiding the “more exact Research and Knowledge,” but the majority of books one through five describes non-European people and their customs.⁴⁶⁰ Ligon’s text presents itself as a guide to understanding the geography and agricultural utility of Barbados, combining the description of the landscape with the description of enslaved Indigenous peoples and Africans for the purpose of colonial

⁴⁵⁹ The Royal Society valued Ligon’s text very highly, especially as a “model” for future works. Kupperman, “Introduction,” vi.

⁴⁶⁰ Mocquet, Preface, *Travels and Voyages into Africa, Asia, and America, the East and West-Indies, Syria, Jerusalem, and the Holy-Land: Performed by Mr. John Mocquet: Divided into Six Books, and Enriched with Sculptures*. (London: Printed for William Newton, Joseph Shelton, and William Chandler, 1696). 3, 1.

production. While *Travels and Voyages* is explicitly interested in exploration as a scientific and imperial endeavor, the process of collecting information, including the cataloguing of different peoples, Ligon's *True & Exactly History* is significantly smaller in scope, tackling one Caribbean island rather than several continents. Whereas Mocquet's *Travels* is presented within the epistemology of the curiosity cabinet, Ligon's is framed by a dual interest in the verdant aesthetics and borders of the island ("the Principall Trees and Plants...set forth in their due proportion and shapes") and the architecture of the sugar plantation ("the Ingenio that makes the Sugar, with the Plots of several Houses, Roomes, and other places, that are used in the whole process of sugar-making").

While tales of shipwreck and rescue in travel literature are often linked to identifiable historical events, they frequently appear as second-hand stories with cloudier referents, as is the case of shipwrecks in both Ligon and Mocquet's texts. Wrecks and their attendant rescues evidence a history of colonization just as they participate in the erasure of that history and in the superimposition of colonial myths. One of the mechanisms for this dual process is the temporality of the second-hand story, specifically as it functions in travel narratives which participate in early scientific, colonial, and commercial projects. While other scholars consider the structure of Mocquet's text fundamentally different than Ligon's and thus incomparable in any meaningful sense, I demonstrate how both Ligon and Mocquet employ a similarly structured second-hand account to narrate the Englishman and Indigenous woman's encounter.⁴⁶¹ Like Ligon,

⁴⁶¹ Keith Sandiford argues that "Ligon's account differs radically from its antecedent [Mocquet], in that Ligon offers his as an authentic historical narrative, with the historian himself as eyewitness...and the Indian woman and her familiars as informants."

Mocquet tells the story of a silent figure whom he sees with his own eyes, but who does not speak.⁴⁶² The ambiguous textual positions of the inset narratives enhances, rather than diminishes, their generative power vis-à-vis colonial myth making.

The indeterminacy of the shipwreck's location and time, of its authenticity, is a slipway for the temporal trajectory of what follows. Out of this indeterminacy the second-hand story moves the characters—literally, figuratively, temporally—into the undefined oceanic space of the Atlantic imaginary. While the locations of the wrecks are more specific in the travel writing of Mocquet and Ligon, this is not the case of later iterations, which name the coast of South America and Africa alongside Barbados, or refer to the vaguer still “barb'rous coast” of an unnamed land.⁴⁶³ However, rather than distinguishing the travel writing from the literature because of the former's commitment to “Description” of natural phenomena and events, these locations highlight the similar work performed by temporal and spatial ambiguity. The second-hand account already begins to function as and to capitalize on the meaning-making processes of narrative through the temporal and spatial ambiguities of shipwreck and wilderness. The repetition of the Englishman landing on the coast of either an island or uncharted landmass in the Americas activates a series of gendered tropes and myths associated with first contact.

However, he assumes here that because Ligon describes Yarico's history that she was in fact the one who told him her story. However, not only does Ligon never allow Yarico to speak, but he also uses her synecdochally for all Indigenous women in the text. “Inkle and Yarico: The Construction of Alterity,” 115.

⁴⁶² Peter Hulme suggests that this is “a particular narrative genre, a specialized version of ‘the anecdote’ with a precise axial arrangement whereby the silent figure is established by the third party's report a subject of fascination, whether of horror or pity,” *Colonial Encounters*, 257.

⁴⁶³ Frances Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico.” c. 1725. Felsenstein, Frank. *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 91.

This activation itself engenders the temporality out of which conjectural history emerges, as it conjures a moment of first contact and thus can narrate a history which (re)theorizes the relationship between European powers and Indigenous peoples, increasingly in terms of and under the guise of the cultural and economic progress of ‘Man.’ It is in this way that despite their textual variants, the shipwrecks which land the Englishman on a “barb’rous coast” perform the same destabilizing function, which is to remove the Englishman from the time of history by evoking and sometimes naming spatial referents of colonial geography.

On a textual level, Mocquet’s narrative shares some resemblance with Richard Steele’s 1711 adaptation which Steele’s does not share with Ligon’s, namely that in Mocquet’s and Steele’s texts, Yarico’s child is fathered by the same man who betrays her. Juxtaposing Mocquet’s narrative alongside Ligon’s highlights the fact that the changes between Mocquet’s, Ligon’s, and Steele’s texts revolve around the native woman’s maternity and race. Set against the backdrop of *partus sequitur ventrem*, these two conceptual shifts demarcate the possibilities for Yarico, dually conditioned by her racialization and her maternity, and for her child. Constructing the archive in this way identifies racialized reproduction as a critical conceptual point of change. It also puts into relief the persistence of certain tropes. Scholars note that there are four scenes that appear in most versions, Inkle’s shipwreck, his rescue and succor by Yarico, their rescue by English forces, and Inkle’s selling of Yarico into slavery.⁴⁶⁴ Yet there is a fifth element that recurs as the generative source of both horror and sentiment and that shapes the racial context of the story—Yarico’s maternity. These scenes are moments; they operate

⁴⁶⁴ *Colonial Encounters*, 227.

as key plot points but they also possess important temporal registers. The shipwreck, the succor, the rescue, the reproduction, and the enslavement as narrating movements first from the indeterminate time of second-hand account, to the pre-historied time of the American shore, the cave, and the succor, and the commercial time of rescue and enslavement. In each of these cases, the spatial character of the text co-constructs the temporal register. The shipwreck is not, of course, uniquely tied to tales of gendered history, but rather functions as the mechanism for this temporal shift. As with Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest*, the wreck of the ship also signals the wrecks of time and space, and the crew is taken out of the historied time of civilization and positioned, however momentarily, in a state of nature. The moment of succor, however, is particularly important in considering the construction of indigeneity and gender, and it is precisely the elision of the temporal movement to the time-space of the marketplace which makes the story, in its various iterations, a powerful myth-making tool in its mobilization of a conjectural history.

While the second-hand accounts of shipwreck narrated in travel texts occupy and draw their narrative force from a similar space of temporal ambiguity as do literary texts, they are uniquely able to identify strategic colonial referents which aid the process of uncovering colonial history whose erasure makes possible colonial myths. In the case of Ligon and Mocquet, each flesh out two key moments which are repeated throughout the Inkle and Yarico archive: the scenes of savage attack following shipwreck, and the scenes of succor. By examining Yarico in Ligon and considering her alongside the unnamed woman in Mocquet's text, we see the way the knowledge which Indigenous women possess in these texts is a crucial resource for colonial agents. Yet, the process by which

that knowledge is accessed is obscured by a romance narrative. Both Ligon's Yarico and Mocquet's unnamed woman function as decoders of New World knowledge, knowledge about plants, animals, social custom, language, and geography. While the texts acknowledge in partial or obfuscated ways that such knowledge is a matter of life and death, they bury said acknowledgement in the care and relief which is allegedly the Indigenous woman's natural response to his arrival. Furthermore, this figure appears to perform the work of obscuring, even as it identifies, the failure of European technologies and knowledge systems to apprehend the realities of the New World.

Mocquet's tale appears in the second book of his *Travels*, when he and his fellow travelers encountered English and Flemish ships off the coast of Cumaná.⁴⁶⁵ The story turns directly to the English ship and its pilot, who, several years earlier, had been shipwrecked on the coast of South America on the way to St. John. An Indigenous woman finds him on the shore, in distress, and after they are married by contractual "signs and promises," she guides him for hundreds of miles, feeding him, translating for him, and eventually giving birth to their child.⁴⁶⁶ When the pilot encounters an English ship, however, he abandons her, "pretending she was savage," and in her rage and despair, the woman tears their child into two pieces, "cast[ing] the one half towards him, as if she would say, that belonged to him, and was his part of it; and the other she carried away with her."⁴⁶⁷ This anecdote, published in 1616 but allegedly describing events from a few years earlier, touches several important moments in the development of the colonial imaginary. The woman's "savagery," at once so evident in her simple belief of his

⁴⁶⁵ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*. Book II. 124.

⁴⁶⁶ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 125.

⁴⁶⁷ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 127.

promises and yet something the English pilot must “pretend” in front of his countryman, rests on the spatially determined emptiness, invalidity, or at least ambiguous status of their marriage. Her savagery, the wilderness of the surroundings, and his separation from legal frameworks which would perhaps hold him accountable construct these “signs and promises” as always already invalid. As an embodiment of their marriage agreement, the child is conceptually tied to the “signs and promises” the pilot makes when he first meets the Indigenous woman. However, while those “signs and promises” stand in as marriage contract, on either side of this contract they also indicate his desire for the woman and signify larger agreements between English and Indigenous peoples. The pilot makes such promises, after all, because he is “enamoured” of her, and while his behaviors are condemned by his crewmates, the identification of love and desire naturalizes them. His abandonment of the woman and his child dissolves their marriage, but his turn to the representation of “savagery” as he enters the time-space of the ship positions that dissolution along indigenous-European agreements more broadly. The “signs and promises” made to the Indigenous woman are erased both by the temporal rift between ship and shore, and by dismemberment of the child. As “his part of it” falls into the water, the ocean itself seems to participate in the erasure.⁴⁶⁸ While the English “side” of the proof of their violated contract sinks into the sea, the other, her part, returns to the wilderness, a bloody remainder/reminder that haunts the margins of the rest of the text.

Unlike Steele’s Inkle, the English pilot does not receive praise for his financial savviness, but rather condemnation for his heartlessness, and the woman’s enslavement is not presented as a possibility. However, while their child has not undergone the shift

⁴⁶⁸ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 126.

Morgan outlines (from white man's "child" to black woman's "issue") the Englishman does *not* consider the child in terms of paternal inheritance, which situates this story as intermediary moment in the development of the logic of racial inheritance. It also points to the way Indigenous racialization is imbedded in temporal constructs. The woman reads his pretense of her savageness precisely in this way, and her dismemberment of the child, torn in half, is a response to such a denial. Rather than becoming enslaveable "issue," the child of abandoned Indigenous woman and the English pilot produces an absence which performs a series of ideological moves. The pilot's shift into historied time transforms the woman's preservation into wifely care rather than acts of knowledge giving and decoding. The hailing of the English ship, a counter movement to the preceding wreck, repositions the pilot temporally, and as he ascends over the water to the deck, he returns to the historied time from whence he came. Mocquet's contact with the pilot illustrates the generative quality of the second-hand story, whose ambiguity is productive of colonial knowledge in its circulation among the crew. While Mocquet sees the pilot, he does not speak with him; instead, it is the trumpeter of his own ship who tells him the pilot's "adventures."

Like Mocquet, Ligon is invested in the project of cataloguing "Man," but this takes the less readily identifiable form of describing the types of people who participate (voluntarily or forcibly) in the machinations of sugar production: "The island is divided into three sorts of men," he writes, "Masters, Servants, and slaves."⁴⁶⁹ As he describes these categories in more detail, however, he provides racial and cultural difference only in the last. Indentured servants, though he claims they receive the worst treatment, do not

⁴⁶⁹ *True & Exactly History*, 43.

receive the same attention to their corporeal aesthetics, language, intelligence, culture, and so on, as do the two categories of enslaved peoples Ligon describes: “Negroes” and “Indians.”⁴⁷⁰ Thus a *True & Exact* history organizes the human inhabitants of Barbados into four, rather than three categories: Negroes, Indians, Servants, and Masters. Despite their divergent positions in the island’s hierarchy, both “servants” and “masters” are unattached to racial markers and as a result their implicit whiteness functions as a signifier of their full occupation of the category of human. Ligon’s attention to labor categories obscures the way his text participates in racial classification and the conjectural mode which aids such classification. The nexus of this obscurity is his story of Yarico. While Ligon discusses the enslaved African peoples who performed most of the labor on the Island at length, his treatment of Indigenous peoples is considerably shorter, and Yarico’s story occupies the bulk of the section which describes the Indigenous portion of “the number and nature of the inhabitants” on Barbados. While Steele’s use of Ligon is allegedly confined to the section which depicts the Englishman’s betrayal, the ideological work this story performs is embedded in both of her appearances in the text. These appearances make visible the relationships obscured by later versions of Inkle and Yarico.

While the wreck which precipitates the meeting between the Englishman and the Indigenous woman is similarly second hand in a *True & Exact History*, Ligon never meets the Englishman but instead meets Yarico, an Indigenous woman from mainland South America.⁴⁷¹ Like her counterpart in Mocquet’s *Travels*, Yarico’s encounter with

⁴⁷⁰ *True & Exactly History*, 43.

⁴⁷¹ The ship itself, unlike most other versions of the story, is still largely intact; instead it is the crew who is “in distresse” because of a lack of water and other provisions. While

the Englishman (this time a “youth” rather than a pilot) is precipitated by her “dwelling neer the Sea-coast, upon the Main” where she can easily see the English ship’s “distresse.”⁴⁷² This “distresse” first refers to their lack of “victuals or water,” but is later magnified when “the Indians...intercepted them...and fell upon them, chasing them into a Wood, and being dispersed there, some were taken, and some kill’d.”⁴⁷³ Yarico’s rescue of the English youth is thus a rescue from deprivation, but also from the violence of her relatives. The first rescue is obscured by the second: “But a young man amongst them stragling from the rest,” Ligon writes, “was met by this Indian Maid, who upon the first sight fell in love with him.” This spontaneous affect leads to their isolation, as Yarico “hid him close from her Countrymen (the Indians) in a Cave, and there fed him, till they could safely go down to the shoar, where the ship lay at anchor, expecting the return of their friends.”⁴⁷⁴ Here there is a strange appearance of *they* and *their* to describe Yarico and the Englishman’s relationship to the rest of his crewmates: *their* friends, who, “at last, seeing *them* upon the shoar, sent the long-Boat for them, took them aboard, and brought them away.” But when he “came ashoar in the *Barbadoes*,” the youth “forgot the kindness of the poor maid, that had ventured his life for his safety, and sold her for a slave, who was as free born as he: And so Yarico for her love, lost her liberty.”⁴⁷⁵

the landing of the distressed ship on the shore signals a similar temporal movement to Mocquet’s text, it also evokes a special problem of sea voyages, where the time of travel stretches farther than provisions: too much time, too little food, too many bodies. *True & Exactly History*, 55.

⁴⁷² *True & Exactly History*, 55.

⁴⁷³ *True & Exact History*, 55.

⁴⁷⁴ *True & Exact History*, 55.

⁴⁷⁵ *True & Exact History*, 55.

Ligon's tale offers two critical and repeated transformations: Yarico, while attached to sexualized language, does not demonstrate violence or a desire for it. Instead, this violence is placed on her "Countrymen," presumably her male kin or members of her nation who form the military party which attacks the English crew. Secondly, Yarico's rescue of the Englishman is driven by her spontaneous love for him. Whereas the relationship described by Mocquet produces a child and lasts for two or three years, in this iteration it appears that Yarico only cares for the Englishman long enough to feed him in the cave and to wait until they can return to his ship. In this way, his rescue from deprivation—from hunger, from thirst, from wandering—is overshadowed by the rescue from her hostile kin. The time spent in the cave becomes a space of secluded succor. Yarico's care is the expression of her affection for the Englishman, rather than a transfer of the vital knowledge she possesses. When the Englishman enslaves her, it is a lapse of memory—he "forgot the kindnesse of the poor maid"—rather than an exploitative and violent act in which he seizes her knowledge of the environment and geography. This sleight of hand is repeated in later versions of Inkle and Yarico, but Ligon's text offers a space to remediate this move and to consider how it is joined to the conjectural histories which co-construct racialized maternity. To do so, we must consider Yarico's position in Ligon's human categories, the separation between Yarico's pregnancy and betrayal, as well as Yarico's brief, rarely discussed second appearance in a *True & Exact History*.

Ligon introduces Yarico in the context of her reproduction, her sexual appeal, and her knowledge of the island's natural environment, especially its plant and insect life. "Yarico," Ligon informs us, was "a slave in the house, who was of excellent shape and colour, for it was a pure bright bay; small brests, with the nipls of a porphyrie colour, this

woman would not be woo'd by any means to weare Clothes."⁴⁷⁶ These sexualized aesthetic details characterize his approach to enslaved Africans and Indigenous peoples as a whole.⁴⁷⁷ While consideration of Ligon's admiration of and reading of Albrecht Dürer, his investment in land improvement, and his tastes for topiary might suggest that his description of non-European peoples adheres to an overarching interest in aesthetic details, like color and contrast, it is important to remember here that neither "Masters" nor "servants" receive such visual attention. Several moments in the text demonstrate a visual lens which perceives elements of the landscape (natural or improved) as entangled with or indistinguishable from enslaved Africans, suggesting that Ligon viewed enslaved bodies too as raw material.⁴⁷⁸ Ligon's passage on "Indians" in the larger section which describes "the nature and number of the inhabitants" reflects this as well, moving seamlessly from the labor use of Indigenous men and women to their comparative "colors" as if to do so was common sense. Ligon places a different aesthetic value on Indigenous bodies than on African bodies, which shifts into racial value inscribed by differences in "nature" and "number," labor and knowledge:

⁴⁷⁶ *True & Exact History*, 54.

⁴⁷⁷ While Ligon describes enslaved African women as aesthetically pleasing, he also describes them in bestial terms, highlighting the monstrosity and animality of their reproductively marked bodies. Morgan discusses this at length in "'Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770."

⁴⁷⁸ Morgan argues that "When Ligon arrived in Barbados and settled on a 500-acre sugar plantation with one hundred slaves, African beauty—if it ever really existed—dissolved in the face of racial slavery. He saw African men and women carrying bunches of plantains: 'Tis a lovely sight to see a hundred handsom Negroes, men and women, with every one a grasse-green bunch of these fruits on their heads . . . the black and green so well becoming one another.' African people became comparable to vegetation and only passively and abstractly beautiful as blocks of color," "'Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder,'" 191.

As for the Indians, we have but few, and those fetcht from other Countries; some from neighboring Islands, some from the Maine, which we make slaves: the women who are better verst in ordering the Cassavie and making bread, then the *Negroes*, we imploye for that purpose, as also for making Mobbie: the men we use for footmen and for killing of fish which they are good at... with their own bowes and arrows they will go out; and in a dayes time, kill as much fish as will serve a family of a dozen persons, two or three daies, if you can keep the fish so long. They are very active men, and apt to learne anything, sooner then the *Negroes* and as different from them in shape, almost as in colour; the men very broad shoulder'd, deep breasted...their skins some of them brown, some a bright Bay, they are much craftier, and subtiler than the *Negroes*; and in their nature falsier; but in their bodies more active, their women have very small breasts, and have more the shape of *Europeans* then the *Negroes*, their haire black and long, a great part whereof hangs downe upon their backs, as low as their hanches, with a large lock hanging over either brest, which seldome or never curls: clothes they scorne to wear, especially if they are well-shap't; a girdle they use of tape, covered with little smooth shels of fishes, white, and from their flanke of one side, to their flank on the other side, a string of blew Bugle, which hangs so low as to cover their privities.⁴⁷⁹

The construction of indigeneity in this and other sections of Ligon's text depends upon a constant comparison with enslaved Africans insofar as one approximates European beauty more than the other. This construction is entangled with the description of labor which in turn is tied to the varied relationships enslaved Africans and Indigenous people have with the landscape of Barbados.

The labor assigned to Indigenous men identifies their "activity" and skill at fishing, and it also is described in more detail that the work of Indigenous women. Ligon nevertheless puts women's labor in terms of knowledge: they are "better *verst* in ordering the Cassavie."⁴⁸⁰ The brevity of this description is telling, as it obscures the significance of food production to the survival of the colonists and also the special knowledge necessary to produce this food. Many traditional European crops did not grow well in the

⁴⁷⁹ *True & Exact History*, 54.

⁴⁸⁰ *True & Exact History*, 54. My emphasis.

Barbadian climate, and as a result, Cassava was especially important to food production in Barbados; it “was a major item of diet for the Amerindians throughout the Caribbean—roughly speaking the equivalent of maize in Mexico.”⁴⁸¹ Cassava requires complex processing, because in its raw form, it contains dangerous levels of hydrogen cyanide. To be made into bread it was either soaked, ground into a flour, baked, and dried, or to be made into an alcoholic beverage, it was masticated and spit into water. Indigenous women whose food cultures had long depended upon cassava were key to its planting but especially its processing. While Ligon downplays the role of this knowledge, he nonetheless locates it within Indigenous female bodies. In describing the processing of Cassava to make “*Perino*,” “a drink which the Indians make for their own drinking...made of *Cassava*,” Ligon explains that women are responsible for extracting its “strong poison”: “they cause their old wives, who have a small remainder of teeth, to chew and spit it out into water, for the better of breaking and macerating of the root. The juice in three or four hours will work, and purge itself of the poisonous quality.”⁴⁸² The nature of this knowledge is, for Ligon, bone deep; it is “the poison of the old women’s breath and teeth,” which “are such opposites of the *Cassava*, as they bend their forces so vehemently one against another, as they both spend their poisonous qualities in that conflict; and so the relict of them both, becomes less unwholesome.”⁴⁸³ The entanglement of fertility, femininity, and death is epitomized by *Cassava*, as Ligon also claims that

⁴⁸¹ John Gilmore, footnote 42, quoted in Felsenstein, *English Trader; Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World*, 72-73.

⁴⁸² *True & Exact History*, 32.

⁴⁸³ *True & Exact History*, 32.

“’tis said to be one of those poisons, wherewith the Indian Cannibals envenom their Arrows.”⁴⁸⁴

While Ligon does briefly describe the “mixt sort of bread...made of the flower of *Mays* and *Cassavie*” as well “*Perino*,” Ligon’s “throwaway line” about Indigenous women’s knowledge of cassava “disguises the important fact that the early English colonists found it hard to support life because they found most European staples would not grow satisfactorily in Barbados.”⁴⁸⁵ Furthermore, need for this particular knowledge *motivated* raids along the coast of mainland South America. Barbadian agents “accordingly fetched Indians ‘from the Main’ for the express purpose of showing them how to grow Indigenous food crops.”⁴⁸⁶ According to John Gilmore, enslavement of Indigenous peoples was a process in deception, rather than overt capture. “The Indians went to Barbados voluntarily,” he explains, “but were later enslaved.”⁴⁸⁷ While the tale of Yarico’s betrayal is set off from the earlier section concerning her maternity and appearance, seemingly separate and ambiguous when it comes to time and location, this history illuminates the narrative in crucial ways. Ligon’s description of the English youth’s shipmates as “*their* friends,” who were expressly were waiting for “them” and who “sent a long-Boat for *them*” is intelligible if we consider the possibility of a gap in

⁴⁸⁴ *True & Exact History*, 32. In Aphra Behn’s 1688 *Oroonoko*, Imoinda shoots Governor Byam with a “venomed arrow,” but he is saved from death by “his Indian mistress,” who “healed [him] by sucking the wound,” *Oroonoko, The Rover and Other Works*. Ed. Janet Todd. (Penguin, New York: 2003), 132.

⁴⁸⁵ John Gilmore, footnote 42, quoted in Felsenstein, *English Trader; Indian Maid*, 72-73. Kupperman also explains that Indigenous people from mainland South America were “valued for their ability to prepare foods like cassava by extracting the poisonous juices from it,” *Introduction*, 11.

⁴⁸⁶ Gilmore, footnote 42, quoted in Felsenstein, *English Trader; Indian Maid*, 72-73.

⁴⁸⁷ Gilmore, footnote 42, quoted in Felsenstein, *English Trader; Indian Maid*, 72-73.

narrative, in which Yarico agrees to travel with the Englishmen and teach them how to grow Cassava and other important crops.⁴⁸⁸ The turn to the plural pronoun is less clear without such an unnarrated scene, since he is explicit in the fact that the “Indian Maid” comes upon the Englishman “stragling from the rest.”⁴⁸⁹ Alternately, if she did not travel with them voluntarily, her resistance may be subsumed or concealed by the violent struggle between the Englishman and her kin. The spontaneous love she feels for the English youth “at first sight” works to obscure the larger colonial power dynamics as well as the role of Indigenous female knowledge. Instead of being represented as either the product of deception or of forcible removal, the transfer of gendered New World food knowledge is at once minimized and rendered the result of a naturalized “love”: “this Indian Maid, who upon first sight fell in love with him...hid him close from her Countrymen...in a Cave, and there fed him.”⁴⁹⁰

The presence of food in so short a space of time points to these central power dynamics and transfers of natural knowledge. That Yarico “fed” him could just as well suggest a contract or agreement for assistance in the processing of cassava or another plant. Instead, feeding is a result of a spontaneous affection. This naturalized emotion, inscribed into her sexed body, removes her inborn freedom: “And so poor *Yarico*, for her love, lost her liberty.”⁴⁹¹ Whereas for Zempoalla and Almeria in Dryden’s plays, an involuntary love abrogated their aboriginal maternal sovereignty and lead to the conquest of their peoples by Europeans, Yarico’s spontaneous love results in her enslavement.

⁴⁸⁸ *True & Exact History*, 55. My emphasis.

⁴⁸⁹ *True & Exact History*, 55.

⁴⁹⁰ *True & Exact History*, 55.

⁴⁹¹ *True & Exact History*, 55.

Significantly in Ligon's text, Yarico is not the daughter of a queen, king, or chief.

However, the comparison of these two New World texts reveals that the conflict between the desire for political sovereignty and self-sovereignty—so vivid in Almeria's resistance to Cortez's violent gaze—is erased here and replaced with an emotion which, spontaneous, springs out of timelessness itself. Ligon's anecdote not only makes invisible material relations which expose the exploitation of Indigenous knowledge for the purposes of colonial expansion and development, but also rewrites that erasure as a romance set in a pre-social landscape.

3.2.1 "The most unfortunate *Yarico*": Naturalizing Yarico's Enslavement

Literary scholars know Ligon's text mostly for its generation of this intercultural romance, and so Yarico's second mention in a *True & Exact History* is largely ignored. On the surface, it has little to do with the Englishman who sold her into slavery—"the most unfortunate *Yarico*" removes parasites from Ligon's feet. However, the bulk of Ligon's section which explicitly describes Indigenous peoples is taken up with Yarico's story, and thus her appearance signals important cultural work and, I suggest, also marks the constructed invisibility exemplified by the tie between Yarico's enslavement and her potential knowledge of cassava and other key plants. While cassava was a staple for the English colonizers in Barbados, its equal potential for sustaining life or inviting death was a familiar paradigm through which they described all unfamiliar or unsettling plant or animal life, one that drew its axiomatic character from the long-standing gendered association between fecundity, desire, and deception. Plants and animals which disrupted English conceptions of nature were particularly villainized (and coveted) through this

language. Such a dynamic extended beyond individual species to the landscape itself. The fear of being unable to distinguish between poisonous and benign, insect and flesh, blossom and seed, animates the entirety of the text.

The speed at which plants grew, blossomed, produced fruit, and decayed unsettled Ligon and other European inhabitants of Barbados, particularly since this fecundity was also tied to rapidity with which stores rotted or were destroyed by insects. As Kupperman explains, “The lavish fruitfulness of Barbados stemmed from the island’s hot, humid environment, and the trade-off was that all in that environment was subject to mold, mildew, and decay...Not only did everything the planters brought with them to enhance their lives rot, but the insects and reptiles native to the land invaded everything.”⁴⁹² The insects plagued the colonists, and despite the “complicated schemes planters devised to foil the ingenuity of these small Barbadians,” their attempts to resist the heat, humidity, and insect invasion were generally futile.⁴⁹³ Insects actively disrupt Ligon’s images of manicured, spherical trees and bushes, undermine his plans for land improvement, and threaten the sugar machinery with corrosion. He presents an image of an island teeming with destructive insect life which operates on its own time. “If I should say, they are here or there, I should do them wrong,” he writes, “for they are everywhere, under ground, where any hollow or loose earth is, amongst the roots of trees, upon the bodies, branches, leaves, and fruit of all trees, in all places.”⁴⁹⁴ This “all places” extends both “without the houses and within,” revealing an alien porosity of manmade structures, a sense that any manmade space will always be shared and perhaps dismantled by the “harmful animals”

⁴⁹² Kupperman, “Introduction,” 10-11.

⁴⁹³ What Rochester would call its “too muchness” in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

⁴⁹⁴ *True & Exact History*, 63.

of the island. Insects are “upon the sides, walls, windows, and roofs without; and on the floors, sidewalls, ceilings, and windows within; tables, cupboards, beds, stools, are covered with them, so that they are a kind of Ubiquitaries.”⁴⁹⁵

Yarico’s second appearance positions her and her knowledge of the island as a bulwark against such destruction, when Ligon describes the creatures most troubling to him personally, the almost invisible *chegoes*, parasitic tropical fleas which burrowed under the skin, often causing infection and disability. Like the ants, these creatures were ubiquitous and unsettling because their small size belied their ability to destroy. “One sort more of these harmful Animals there are, which we call Chegoes,” he writes, “and these are so little that you would hardly think them able to do any harm at all, and yet these will do more mischief than the Ants, and if they were as numerous as harmful, there were no enduring of them. They are of a shape,” he continues,

not much unlike a Louse, but no bigger than a mite that breeds in cheese, his color blueish: an *Indian* has laid one of them, on a sheet of white paper, and with my spectacles on I could hardly discern him; yet this very little Enemy, can and will do much mischief to mankind. This vermin will get through your Socking, and in a pore of your skin, in some part of your feet, commonly under the nail of your toes, and there make a habitation to lay his offspring, as big as a small Tare,⁴⁹⁶ or the bag of a Bee,⁴⁹⁷ which will cause you to go very lame, and put you to much smarting paine.⁴⁹⁸

Ligon misgenders the insect, explaining that the flea burrows under the skin “to lay *his* offspring”; nevertheless the act of reproduction, framed as it is by a destructive and feminized nature and compared to both a seed (“tare”) and “the bag of the a Bee” locates

⁴⁹⁵ *True & Exact History*, 63.

⁴⁹⁶ Tare: “The seed of a vetch: usually in reference to its small size. (Probably familiar in early times, as too frequently present in seed-corn),” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

⁴⁹⁷ The collection of pollen on a bee’s hind leg receptacle, *corbicula*, also known as the pollen basket.

⁴⁹⁸ *True & Exact History*, 65.

the egg-laying in the context of the gendered landscape.⁴⁹⁹ Ligon's gaze, both scientific and colonial, reveals the gendering at the heart of such observation; in the hidden folds of this gendering is the failure of his "spectacles," similar to the ambiguous value of Mocquet's "little Sea-compass." Ligon is unable to detect such creatures even with his European visual aid until an "*Indian*" places it on a white paper—here reminiscent of a collector's background, or a blank page, turning the flea into a letter of sorts—to point out its size, shape, and color. At the same time this passage seeks to do the work of cataloguing natural phenomena, it also participates in the project of cataloguing human nature in its turn to Yarico and to skin:

The *Indian* women have the best skill to take them out, which they do by putting in a small pointed pin or Needle, at the hole where he came in, and winding the point about the bag, loosen him from the flesh, and so take him out. His of a bluish color, and is seen through the skin, but the *Negroes* whose skins are of that color (or near it) are in ill case, for they cannot find where they are; by which means they are many of them very lame: some of these *Chegoes* are poisonous, and after they are taken out, the Orifice in which they lay, will fester and rankle for a fortnight after they are gone. I have had ten taken out of my feet in a morning, by the most unfortunate *Yarico*, an *Indian* woman.⁵⁰⁰

Once again when Ligon turns to "*Indian* women" as a category of humans in his text, he also turns to Yarico. Whereas in her first appearance is tied to her sexual allure, her reproduction, and her knowledge of plant life, the second underscores her knowledge of animal life and medical treatment, here she appears as a voluntary agent against the feminized onslaught of Barbadian wildlife.

⁴⁹⁹ Ligon's interest in the chegoes, especially his comparison to cheese mites, anticipates Hooke's famous attention to similar items in his 1665 *Micrographia* and demonstrates the dovetailing of scientific and colonial work. Since the chegoe is indeed a kind of flea, this anticipation is especially vivid.

⁵⁰⁰ *True & Exact History*, 65.

Ligon also situates blackness as foreign to the land of Barbados by highlighting the parasite's invisibility on dark skin.⁵⁰¹ Just as the passage constructs female indigeneity as the voluntary giver of relief and care, blackness is constructed as strangeness manifested through the skin, a strangeness which also marks enslaved Africans as extraterritorial to Barbados. In this substantial passage on chegoes, Yarico's labor is but a sentence; this familiar disproportion misrepresents both Yarico's labor and knowledge and the cultural work she performs as an example of "an *Indian* woman." While contemporaneous and modern readers alike can agree that to be burdened with the task above is indeed disagreeable, this is not why Ligon labels her as "unfortunate." Rather, she is "poor *Yarico*," "the unfortunate *Yarico*," because the English youth "sold her for a slave, who was as free born as he," and that she "for her love, lost her liberty."⁵⁰² Her misfortune of being deceived into giving crucial plant knowledge or forced to do so, her misfortune of being within reach of the slave economy of Barbados, her misfortune of being enslaved are subsumed within her abandonment by the English youth, an abandonment that, given the text itself, is already suspect.

If the Englishman washing ashore in distress and encountering an "Indian maid" activates a series of tropes in the American imaginaries and reproduces a site in which first contact and social contract are collapsed, then Yarico's capture and submission to

⁵⁰¹ Chegoes ("ciegoes") appear on the skin and function as a tool of racialization in Griffith Hughes 1750 *The natural history of Barbados*. Hughes' text goes beyond Ligon's here in that the insects signify more than epidermal difference and foreignness: "As to Ciegoes, they will appear to the naked Eye like a small Flea: These are the continual Companions of Filth and Laziness, troublesome chiefly to Negroes, and particularly to such new Negroes as are brought hither from Guiney, whose Despondency, and careless Regard for Life...makes life, at this juncture, irksome to them," 42.

⁵⁰² *True & Exact History*, 65, 55.

the English is rendered the result of an emotion which allegedly justified the sexual contract itself. When 18th-century conjectural histories wondered if savage men could feel love at all, the Englishman's ability to inspire it so quickly is a signpost of the time from which he hails.⁵⁰³ While the English youth's behavior isn't celebrated by Ligon, he aptly conceives it as an act of forgetting, a process which describes Ligon's composition of the anecdote itself and its misrepresentation of the criticality of Indigenous female labor, knowledge, and the exploitation which through which they were obtained.

Unlike in Mocquet's tale, or in Steele's revision of Ligon, Yarico's pregnancy and the birth of her child are not directly linked to the story of her abandonment by an Englishman, except insofar as that abandonment produced her enslaved status. Instead, Yarico's child is fathered by a Christian servant also laboring in Barbados. Textually, Yarico's reproduction directly precedes her encounter with the English youth, and yet chronologically follows her enslavement. Yarico's pregnancy and delivery are an extension first of Ligon's introduction of "Indians" as a category of human being, second by his misleadingly brief description of Indigenous female knowledge and labor vis-à-vis cassava production, and finally by his sexualized depiction of Yarico's body ("of excellent shape and colour") which foregrounds his description of the birth of her child:

Shee chanc't to be with Child, by a Christian servant, and lodging in the Indian house, amongst other women, women of her own Country, where the Christian servants, both men and women came; and being very great, and that her time was

⁵⁰³ Stadial theorists, including Adam Smith, Lord Kames, and William Robertson agreed that in the first stage of human social development, the "savage" or "hunting" stage, "the sexual appetite" which produced romantic love "was weak and unfocused." The complex ideas of love present in commercial societies, they argued, were the result of the refinement and development of "the original savage condition," a condition once again attributed to the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. Pat Moloney, "Savages in the Scottish Enlightenment's History of Desire." *Journal of the History of Sexuality*. 14.3 (July 2005), 237.

come to be delivered, loath to fall in labour before the men, walk'd down to a Wood, in which was a Pond of water, and there by the side of the Pond, brought her selfe a bed; and presently washing her Child in some of the water of the Pond, lap'd it up in such rags as she had begg'd of the Christians; and in three hours time came home with her Childe in her armes, a lusty boy, frolick and lively.⁵⁰⁴

This passage holds competing temporalities which simultaneously reveal the time of the marketplace, the linguistic and temporal entanglement of the construction of race through bodily markers, and the raced and gendered prelapsarian landscape where childbirth causes no pain. The passage dips in and out of these times, making it difficult to distinguish them or indeed to detect them at all, and this indiscernibility is a mechanism for the conjectural history it mobilizes.

Temporal markers and conceptions of progressive time co-construct race and gender in Yarico's appearances. It is for this reason that readings which try to separate gender from race often end up erasing one genre or misinterpreting their relation.⁵⁰⁵ While bounded by the time of the marketplace and framed by the language of emergent racial assemblage, Yarico's delivery conjures a familiar image of the Americas that is also Edenic. While the mythic time of the state of nature is certainly present in the birth scene, it deepens, rather than minimizes, the gendered work of Yarico's maternity. The racial and gendered meaning of Yarico's body is dependent upon temporality. When she

⁵⁰⁴ *True and Exact History*, 54-55.

⁵⁰⁵ For example, Sandiford misreads Yarico's painless delivery as "a female image of a primitive heroic value who bravely chooses to suffer the throes of childbirth in solitude and without assistance of any kind, returning triumphantly after three hours." According to Sandiford, Ligon illustrates "two markedly different narrative strategies" in the scenes of birth and betrayal. Whereas the description of the Englishman's betrayal is a "terse philosophical summation, the above passage is "highly sentimentalized," displaying a "rhetoric of myth ennobles Yarico, minimizing the values attached to gender difference," "Inkle and Yarico: The Construction of Alterity from History to Literature," *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids/New West Indian Guide* 64, no. 3-4 (1990): 117-118, 120.

enters the “Wood,” she also enters a timeless landscape detached from the Barbadian sugar enterprise. While her easy delivery indicates a time before Eve’s curse, the painlessness of birth isn’t biblical, but rather conjectural. Though the biblical echo serves as a mechanism by which primordality is mobilized, here the ease of birth is, as Morgan has shown, deeply entangled with and generative of racial meaning. As I suggested earlier, following Morgan, pain-free childbirth is increasingly associated with enslaved African, rather indigenous, women in the 17th century, but here we see Yarico mark a node from which multiple racial meanings radiate. The spatial and temporal settings of Yarico’s quick and painless childbirth, accomplished without assistance, are conjoined to the temporality of America as state of nature. This scene, which depicts the joint timelessness and fertility of the landscape, appears to illustrate aboriginal maternal sovereignty more than her value as a reproducer of enslaved labor. Both the tropes of the “Wood” and the “water” appear in Yarico’s birthing scene, recalling Poulain’s comparison of African and Indigenous women: “They give birth in the middle of the woods and fields; afterwards they wash themselves and the baby in the nearest water source, leave the baby at home unswaddled, and re-turn to their regular work, with greater freedom than before.”⁵⁰⁶ This wood and water combination is at least as old as

⁵⁰⁶ François Poulain de La Barre, *Three Cartesian Feminist Treatises: The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 302.

Vespucci's *Voyages*⁵⁰⁷ and repeated throughout the 18th century in travel literature and in conjectural histories.⁵⁰⁸

This primordial scene and the aboriginal maternity it invokes is bounded by the architecture of Barbadian sugar production. Yarico enters the wood after leaving the “Indian house,” the structure built to contain Indigenous people, including other “women of her own Country” perhaps similarly captured and enslaved for their knowledge of New World environments. The traffic of “Christian servants” to this space suggests a complex community of enslaved Africans and Indigenous peoples, and indentured servants, an architectural blueprint of Ligon’s categories of humans. As Yarico leaves the wood, her child’s body is clothed in the temporality of the plantation and of the slave market—“lap’d...up in such rags as she had begg’d of the Christians”—in such a way that both makes visible Yarico’s dispossession and her clocked absence from other labor, as she “in three hours time came home with her Childe in her armes, a lusty boy, frolick and lively.” The descriptor “frolick,” “lively,” and especially “lusty” were key to the linguistic construction of race, increasingly attached to the bodies of enslaved Africans and their descendants.⁵⁰⁹ Here they signify the ambiguous status of Yarico’s child. The

⁵⁰⁷ “They are very prolific in bearing children and...are delivered with very little pain, - so true is this that on the very next day they are completely recovered and move about everywhere with perfect ease. In fact, immediately after the delivery they go to some stream to wash, and then come out of the water as whole and as clean as fishes.” *First Voyage*. 1504. 96.

⁵⁰⁸ In his 1756 *The History of Paraguay*, Charlevoix describes women of southern modern-day Paraguay in terms of reproduction: “The women of Chaco...are very robust; bring forth with great ease; and, as soon as delivered, bathe themselves and their children in the next lake or river,” Vol. 1, 199. Both volumes were translated into English in 1769.

⁵⁰⁹ For an examination of these terms in periodicals and especially in run-away notices, see “Shaping Bodies in Print: Labor and Health,” in Sharon Block’s *Colonial Complexions: Race and Bodies in Eighteenth-Century America*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 44-48.

son of an enslaved but “freeborn” Indigenous woman and a white indentured servant, Yarico’s infant’s present or future status is unclear.

Ligon left Barbados in 1650, eleven years before the publication of Barbados’s first slave code and twelve years before Virginia codified heritable racial slavery through *partus sequitur ventrem*. While, as Morgan notes, “both enslaved and free black women grappled immediately with the dangers attendant to racial inheritance” prior to 1661/1662, there was no legally codified apparatus through which to determine the status of Yarico’s child.⁵¹⁰ Though the mechanisms of heritable slavery were already at work, these did not function in a uniform manner, and were complicated by the still lingering problem of enslaving Christians, since conversion to Christianity had been a path to freedom for some enslaved Indigenous people and enslaved Africans. Ligon’s history is poised just before the eschewing of such concerns.⁵¹¹ Similarly, the uneven distribution of the logic of *partus*, particularly on the body of an Indigenous woman, suggests that the child may, according to English common law, follow the condition of the father, rather than the mother, in which case Yarico’s child may either be freeborn, enslaved until his father’s release from indenture, or, unacknowledged, perhaps enslaved for life. Though Yarico’s child is more firmly held by the nexus of racialized labor in the emergent English Caribbean, the uncertainty of his status and the total silence on that account echoes the child in Mocquet’s *Travels* who, a symbol of violated contract, is split in two, one part sinking into the sea, and other carried into the wood.

⁵¹⁰ Jennifer Morgan, “*Partus Sequitur Ventrem*,” 2.

⁵¹¹ Ligon explains that Barbadian enslavers “will deny [the enslaved] the benefit and blessing of being Christians” in order to prevent “lo[sing] the hold they have of them as slaves,” 82.

3.3 “I gaz’d my liberty away”: *The Spectator* and its Progeny⁵¹²

The move from Ligon’s version of Inkle and Yarico to Steele’s is often a cursory one. However, I want to pause in the space between these two rather than move quickly over it. In the gap between Ligon’s version and Steele’s, we find not only several decades, but also the time of Steele’s reading, both the time which it took for Steele to read Ligon’s text, and the temporal reordering of Ligon’s nonchronological presentation of Yarico into a sequence of continuous events. Why did Steele read Ligon? What was his relationship to Ligon’s work? His act of reading a *True & Exact History* is not particularly strange, as travel literature was widely consumed. However, Steele had a special tie to Ligon’s text and the material conditions which produced it. Seven years prior to the publication of the eleventh *Spectator*, Steele married into one of the wealthiest and largest land-owning families of Barbados. His wife, Margaret Stretch, née Ford, was the daughter of “John Ford, Esq.^r, the possessor 280 acres.”⁵¹³ As “the largest landowner but one in the parish,” Ford owned multiple plantations, and, in addition to employing “4 men-servants,” he enslaved 120 people on his property.⁵¹⁴ When his wife died, Steele inherited from Ford’s estate to the effect of “eight hundred and fifty pounds per annum.”⁵¹⁵ While he may have sold this holding shortly thereafter, his reading of

⁵¹² Frances Seymour, Countess of Hertford, “An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle, after He Had Sold Her for a Slave,” *From A New Miscellany: Being a Collection of Pieces of Poetry from Bath, Turnbridge, Oxford, Epsom, and Other Places, in the Year 1725*. London, 1726?, 38-41.

⁵¹³ George Atherton Aitken, *The Life of Richard Steele*. (New York: Haskell House, 1968), 126-129.

⁵¹⁴ Aitken, *The Life of Richard Steele*, 128.

⁵¹⁵ In a 1707 letter to his second wife’s mother. Steele wrote: “My late wife had so extreme a value for me that she, by fine, conveyed to me her whole estate situate in Barbados, which, with the stock and slaves (proper securities being given for the payment of the rent), is let for eight hundred and fifty pounds per annum, at half-yearly payments;

Ligon's *True & Exact History* is the reading performed by someone with family ties to the Barbados, its sugar plantations, and the economic and racial systems of enslavement upon which they depended. When we consider *The Spectator*'s, and especially Steele's, alleged concern about the effects of "English expansion," the "power and reach of the new merchant classes, and...the colonialist project attendant on empire-formation," we must consider this interest and how it delimits that concern and shapes his revisions of Ligon's text.⁵¹⁶

In his famous rewriting of Ligon's anecdote, Steele makes key revisions to the narrative, but the most of crucial these is his conjoining of the logic of *partus sequitur ventrem* to the temporality of the marketplace. Yarico's pregnancy by Inkle is not an added detail, but rather a radical revision of the earlier scene of birth, which, while bordered by the landscape of the Barbadian plantation, evoked aboriginal maternity and the temporality of the state of nature rather than the logic of *partus*. Of course, Steele is not creating this logic, but rather following key developments in heritable enslavement which occurred in the decades after the publication of Ligon's *True & Exact History*. In Steele's text and thereafter, maternity becomes a site of vulnerability. This combination of the shift in maternity and the indeterminate time-space, always on the edges and coasts of the Americas, is central to tracing the conjectural work of Inkle and Yarico. The form of Steele's iteration, with its presentation of anecdote as an object for the study of human nature, demonstrates how Inkle and Yarico is anticipatory of stadial schemas. It is

that is to say, 425 each first of May, and 425 each first of December." Quoted in Aiken, *The Life of Richard Steele*, 134.

⁵¹⁶ Nicole Horejsi, "'a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron': Steele's 'Inkle and Yarico' and a Feminist Critique of the Classics." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*. 39, no. 2 (2006), 206.

Steele's reproductive revision and concretizing categories of race which enable Yarico's shift from Indigenous woman of the Americas to enslaved African, a shift which also reinscribes the myth of aboriginal disappearance.

While Steele draws from Ligon and echoes Mocquet, he develops new themes which are amplified in later versions. These tropes place the narrative in the temporal space of the state of nature while/because they cling to the edges of American geographies.⁵¹⁷ The American landscape mobilizes the generative force which places emergent racial categories in temporal (hierarchical, evolutionary, progressive) frameworks. Several poetic versions of the story followed Steele's in the 1720s and 1730s. These largely fell into two categories: the first "employs third-person narration, allowing the poet to invest in and sometimes amplify the traditional tale that stems from *The Spectator*," and the second "is personalized into the form of heroic epistle" in Yarico's voice.⁵¹⁸ Both poetic categories were "publicly initiated" by Frances Seymour, Countess of Herford, with "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, Taken out of the Eleventh *Spectator*," and "an Epistle from Yarico to Inkle, after He Had Sold Her for a Slave."⁵¹⁹ In Seymour's third-person narration, Yarico is a "negroe virgin" in one section of the poem but an "*Indian* maid" in another, and the introduction of an African identity was taken up by the majority of poets after her.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁷ Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument," 288.

⁵¹⁸ Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 89.

⁵¹⁹ Published in the 1726 *New Miscellany*, these poems were circulated earlier in manuscript form.

⁵²⁰ Seymour, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, Taken out of the Eleventh *Spectator*," lines 24, 86.

The framing of Steele's version of Inkle and Yarico makes vivid its participation in the project of cataloging humanity. Yarico is transformed from a collectable curiosity into an anecdote with scientific value. Mr. Spectator, while visiting "Arietta," witnesses the lady's exchange with a "Common-Place Talker" who offers the well-known story of the Ephesian Matron as evidence of women's "[in]constancy in love."⁵²¹ While this framework falls away in later versions of Inkle and Yarico, it reveals one of the key functions of the story: to serve as evidence of human nature, but especially the nature of women and of gender difference. Following Shapin and Schaffer, James Wood argues that "In *The Spectator*, the anecdote became... a "literary technology" for generating knowledge of human nature and delivering this knowledge to readers."⁵²² Key to *The Spectator's* project was idea that there was a universal human nature, constant throughout time, which could be studied; this was a foundational assumption upon which conjectural theorists depended. According to the logic of the eleventh *Spectator*, this study was not to be conducted by examining dusty classics (as Arietta comments to the "Common-Place Talker": "Sir, When I consider, how perfectly new all you have said on this subject is, and that the story you have given is not quite two thousand years old...") but rather by considering the incidents of daily life, or, "Facts from plain People."⁵²³ Many of these incidents, however, allow Addison and Steele to comment specifically on the behavior

⁵²¹ Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 40.

⁵²² Wood, "Mr. Spectator's Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature." *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 38, no. 1 (2014): 65.

⁵²³ In the first two decades the 18th century, Wood argues, anecdotes represented newness and their (and *The Spectator's*) popularity reflects the anecdote's portability as a novel "method of reasoning from which singular events in human life" illustrated "the operative laws guiding the human world," its facility for "revis[ing] received ideas about the natures of men and women," Wood, 83; Steele, Richard. *The Spectator*, No. 11, 41.

and nature of women; as No. 11 illustrates, “for all Mr. Spectator’s talk of a general “human nature,” he frequently claims that men and women have quite different natures.”⁵²⁴ Inkle and Yarico is an example of the material this “new” method allegedly gathers but actually creates.

This “presumptively universal nature cloven by gender” appears contradictory, but in effect illustrates “the central role that gender plays in the very methodology of *The Spectator*” which is to reproduce the “division between a feminized nature and the masculine subject who studies it in experimental philosophy.”⁵²⁵ For Wood, the reproduction of this division is tied to Addison and Steele’s association of “their essayist project with the experimental ethos of the new science.”⁵²⁶ Vital to this gendered methodology, however, is the way that “universal human nature” comes to implicitly define human as white, male, European, etc. *and* temporally situated in the present. The experimental methodology of positing “female behavior” as the object of study facilitates this move but is tied to a broader nexus of human categories including race. For Addison and Steele, anecdotes functioned as “key evidence for the science of man,” but “man” here is more akin to Wynter’s “Man.”⁵²⁷ The gendered positionality and demarcation of observer and observed object/subject is characteristic to the development of early science, but is also intimately entangled both with the “history of the expansion of the West” and the history Wynter describes in which “Man and its human Others—that is, Indians,

⁵²⁴ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 82.

⁵²⁵ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 82.

⁵²⁶ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 65.

⁵²⁷ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 65.

Negroes, Natives—are first invented.”⁵²⁸ Inkle and Yarico epitomizes *The Spectator*’s anecdotal ability “to revise received ideas about the natures of men and women” because it identifies, even as it obscures, the genres of race and the genre of gender.⁵²⁹ Here gender works as an alibi for race and vice versa. The easy collapse of Indigenous woman as “natural” (woman in the state of nature) is mirrored by the collapse between women’s “[in]constancy in Love” and the larger “Question between the Sexes” in Arietta’s exchange.⁵³⁰ Inkle and Yarico, in its narration of a Euro-Indigenous romance, is revelatory of both collapses.

Previous readings of Arietta as feminist historiographer who “uses history to combat the fop’s misogynist anecdote as she retells and reinvents the story ... of Yarico, a free woman whom an Englishman sells into slavery” illustrates the way reading for gender rather than genre obscures the conjectural work of the story.⁵³¹ For Horesji, the American setting is incidental, rather than central, because “the frame narrative occurs in a polite London drawing room, under the auspices of the Englishwoman, Arietta, an agreeable acquaintance of Mr. Spectator.”⁵³² The frame narrative marks this anecdote as one of the present, English moment. However, this reading reproduces the colonial

⁵²⁸ David Scott, “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter,” 198.

⁵²⁹ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 83.

⁵³⁰ Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 40, 41.

⁵³¹ Horesji, ““a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron’: Steele’s “Inkle and Yarico” and a Feminist Critique of the Classics,” 205-206. Arietta’s use of “history” and her citation practice (she notes the page in Ligon’s history) indicates her attention to the requirements of this new form of evidence. Many poetic versions take up this citation practice in their inclusion of *The Spectator* in their titles—several even include the specific volume and date.

⁵³² Horesji, ““a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron’: Steele’s “Inkle and Yarico” and a Feminist Critique of the Classics,” 205.

dynamic in which the Americas are used as raw material for English projects, and does not consider how the American setting activates layered temporalities. Alongside the temporality of the slave market and of transatlantic commerce is the primordial, pre-civil society timelessness which works palimpsestically and is amplified by the temporal disruptors of shipwrecks, cannibals, wild woods, and secluded caves. Despite its material ties to the commercial world of the Atlantic, *Inkle and Yarico* is not simply a “present” text, but rather illustrates the “anecdote’s ability to produce...a sense of a past moment pressing upon the present.”⁵³³ Horesji’s conception of Arietta as (English, white) feminist historiographer is built on the elision of the other “genre” which is constructed by the narrative, the genre of race, even as it depends on that genre through the construction of indigeneity for its intelligibility. Since Inkle profits from his relationship with Yarico and (in most versions) suffers no ill consequences as a result of her enslavement, we must also question the idea that the story narrates “the failure of English values abroad,” rather than a successful deployment of values, both capital and conjectural.⁵³⁴

On a textual level, Steele makes several changes to Ligon’s anecdote that go beyond the fleshing out of a “bare” text. The English youth, nameless in Ligon, is given the name “Mr. *Thomas Inkle*,” as well as an age and a city of origin, “of *London*, aged Twenty years.”⁵³⁵ Inkle is meticulously situated in the social and economic system of primogeniture and global trade. “The third Son of an eminent Citizen,” Inkle must earn his own living and is raised to do so through “Trade and Merchandize.”⁵³⁶ Steele likewise

⁵³³ Wood, “Mr. Spectator’s Anecdotes and the Science of Human Nature,” 64.

⁵³⁴ Horesji, “‘a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron’: Steele’s “*Inkle and Yarico*” and a Feminist Critique of the Classics,” 205.

⁵³⁵ Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 42.

⁵³⁶ Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 42.

adds the particulars of Inkle's transatlantic movement, beginning with his departure from London, "he embarked in the *Downs* on the good Ship the *Achilles* bound for the *West-Indies*, on the 6th of *June* 1647," to the ship's arrival "in some distress" at "a Creek on the Main of *America*." Significantly, the temporal and spatial details of the landing are absent, a blurriness suggestive of the temporal haze which surrounds shipwrecks in the Atlantic world. The most fundamental temporal effect of these details is that they alter the chronology Ligon presents in a *True & Exact History*. Ligon's departure date is now Inkle's. Here Steele wrecks the *Achilles* (the name of Ligon's ship as well) rather than land it at the Barbadian port. This alteration appears to be at odds with the specific page citation given by Arietta. If Inkle left on the same ship as Ligon, then Ligon would have also been stranded (or dead) on mainland South America and would have also had to find a different ship to take him to Barbados. The lack of concern about these details, which could be verified if one had a copy of Ligon's text, is reflective of the blurriness referenced above. In some ways, Steele's revision suggests, what matters is not when Inkle arrived in the Americas—or even, indeed, exactly *where*—but that he was shipwrecked somewhere upon the "barbarous coast."⁵³⁷

Furthermore, the contradiction between Ligon and Steele's account completes the erasure of Indigenous enslavement which Ligon's tale of Yarico's "love" for the English youth began. Because the purpose of the English youth's ship as it combed the coast of mainland South America was most likely to enslave or entrap Indigenous peoples, and in particular women, and transport them to Barbados, replacing the youth's ship with one

⁵³⁷ Anonymous, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*" (1734), line 16, Felsenstein. 102.

hailing from London erases such material history. While Ligon's ship is itself imbricated in transatlantic commerce (he explains that the *Achilles* stopped at "St. Jago, one of the Islands of *Cape Verde*...to trade for *Negroes*, Horses, and Cattle; which we were to sell at the *Barbados*") this particular nexus of commercial relations and its tie to African enslavement rubs away the Barbadian enslavement of Indigenous people for the purpose of exploiting their food, medical, and geographical knowledge.⁵³⁸ The dependence on and indeed the existence of Indigenous epistemologies is quietly deleted in the service of constructing an image of the Americas and its people as without knowledge, culture, government, or agriculture.

Steele's alteration of the circumstances of Inkle and Yarico's rescue by an English ship also works to erase this history. While in Ligon's text, the unaccountable shift to the plural pronoun "them/they" functions as a remnant through which Indigenous enslavement can be excavated, in Steele's it is Yarico who, "instructed by her Lover, discovered a Vessel on the Coast to which she made Signals."⁵³⁹ Poetic versions dramatize this sighting and even erase the "instruction" from Inkle, instead laying the motive on Yarico's "desir[e] more to please": Yarico "from a craggy cliff survey'd the seas;/a bark...spy'd, and did by signs implore,/That they would touch upon the sandy shore."⁵⁴⁰ In Duck's "Avaro and Amanda," this sighting first appears to Amanda in a dream which she recounts to Avaro: "The watchful dame beheld a floating ship?/She

⁵³⁸ *True & Exact History*, 41-2.

⁵³⁹ Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43.

⁵⁴⁰ Anonymous, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*" (1734), lines 100-103, Felsenstein. 105.

call'd, and beckon'd to it from the shore."⁵⁴¹ In the dream, Amanda brings Avaro "the grateful tidings" while also struggling to describe the shape of the European ship with her 'primitive' vocabulary. "I something see," Amanda explains, "like wingèd trees,/(Strange to behold!) fly swiftly o'er the seas;/Their bulky roots upon the billows float."⁵⁴² Here Amanda echoes both Guyomar in *The Indian Emperor* and Dorinda in Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest*.⁵⁴³ This reference reveals the way the European ship, spotted by an Indigenous person on the shore, invokes the arrival of "history," situating their rescue as another performance of first cont(r)act. Steele's citation of Ligon, his addition of voyage particulars, and his alteration in *who* first locates the ship effaces an earlier history and then overlays a European image of the state of nature. This erasure in turn writes "the narrative of aboriginal disappearance."⁵⁴⁴

Following this erasure is the textual and cultural estrangement between Yarico and her kin which later writers use as a focal point of horror and savagery. While Mocquet suggested a physical separation between the Indigenous woman and "her Country and Friends" in his *Travels*, Ligon heightened the division and separated Yarico's behavior from that of her relatives.⁵⁴⁵ Steele's version and those that follow do this to an even greater degree. Yarico is connected to and yet divisible from the "Party of

⁵⁴¹ "Avaro and Amanda: A Poem in Four Canto's, Taken from "The Spectator," Vol. 1 No. XI," *Poems on several occasions*. London: printed for the author, 1736. 118.

⁵⁴² Duck, "Avaro and Amanda," 118.

⁵⁴³ Guyomar reports to Montezuma that at "the utmost limits of the land:/To that sea-shore where no more world is found" he saw "dreadful shapes": "tall straight trees, which on the waters flew;/Wings on their sides, instead of leaves, did grow,/Which gathered all the breath the winds could blow:/And at their roots grew floating palaces,/Whose outblowed bellies cut the yielding seas," *The Indian Emperor*, I:ii.

⁵⁴⁴ Newton, "Returns to a Native Land," 108.

⁵⁴⁵ Mocquet, *Travels and Voyages*, 126.

Indians, who hid themselves in the Woods,” waiting for the vulnerable crew to “marc[h] a great distance from the shore.”⁵⁴⁶ While Yarico “conveyed him to a Cave,” she travels between her people and Inkle’s sanctuary, arriving “every Day...in a different Dress,” which Inkle takes as evidence that she was “a Person of Distinction.”⁵⁴⁷ In Seymour’s third-person narration, the physical separation between Yarico and the “cruel natives” who attack Inkle’s party is unexplained, but she amplifies their violence by invoking trope of cannibalism. Inkle alone escapes from the “cruel natives [who] thirsted for blood,/And issu’d furious from a neighboring wood./His friends...Their flesh the horrid cannibals devoured.”⁵⁴⁸ Yarico remains “lovely” and “tender,” but her kin are aligned with Satan and denied humanity; Inkle receives divine intervention in the form of “mercurial speed” because “Immortal *Jove*...griev[ed]” that “a form so like his own shou’d die.”⁵⁴⁹

These anthropophagus scenes recall the abundant claims of cannibalism in the Americas recorded in travel narratives and illustrated in engravings like those analyzed in the first chapter, claims which focalized on the Carib/Kalinago peoples of the Caribbean islands and mainland South America. Yarico does not appear like the woman in Moquet’s narrative who offered the French general a roasted arm but is instead distinct from the bloodshed on the beach. In first-person poetic narrations, cannibalism is mentioned more obliquely, but because of the narrative mode, Yarico is even more clearly distinguished

⁵⁴⁶ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43.

⁵⁴⁷ Steele, 42-43. Duck similarly refers to Amanda as “an *Indian Princess*,” 96.

⁵⁴⁸ Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico, lines 15-18, Felsenstein 91.

⁵⁴⁹ Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the *Eleventh Spectator*.” *London Magazine*, May 1734. 257-258.

from “her relentless countrymen.”⁵⁵⁰ In Seymour’s first-person narration, Yarico’s first reaction to Inkle’s is to protect him from such an end. “How did I tremble, lest thy bloom of life,” Yarico exclaims, “Shou’d fall pretty to some barbarian’s knife!”⁵⁵¹ In “Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle,” even after being betrayed by Inkle, Yarico worries that he may again be “lost” “on some barbarous shore like mine” and “pursu’d by Savage people, greedy for [his] blood.”⁵⁵² Winstanley’s 1751 “Yarico’s Epistle to Inkle” suggests that this separation was even more firmly defined by mid-century. Yarico must actively negotiate for Inkle’s safety with “a swarthy Crowd/In Quest of Prey [who] came rustling thro the Wood.” Because it relies on “Cries,” Yarico’s effective performance of “Beauty in Tears” leaves her linguistic and cultural connection to the “swarthy crowd” ambiguous. “I interpos’d, and with loud Cries implor’d,” Yarico recalls, “The eager Crew to spare my sleeping Lord:/Beauty in Tears their rav’nous Breasts could move.”⁵⁵³

The growing separation between Yarico’s tenderness for Inkle and the violence of the other natives exemplifies the gendered savagery which informed conjectural histories in the mid to late century. Women were everywhere oppressed, but none so terribly as outside of Europe. In these formulations the category “Women” implicitly becomes “white” and “Savage” becomes masculine. When Indigenous women do appear, it is to illustrate female oppression in “savage” societies, “where they are regarded as Slaves.”⁵⁵⁴ This oppression was itself evidence for their “savagery,” their backwardness, their

⁵⁵⁰ Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*.” *London Magazine*, May 1734. 257-258.

⁵⁵¹ Seymour, “An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle” lines 17-19 Felsenstein 96.

⁵⁵² Anonymous, *Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle*. London: Printed for Lawton Gilliver, 1736.

⁵⁵³ John Winstanley, *Poems written occasionally by the late John Winstanley*, Vol. 2. Dublin: printed by S. Powell, for the editor, 1751. 12.

⁵⁵⁴ François Poulain la Barre, *The woman as good as the man*, 9.

association with an earlier time and their estrangement from modernity itself, characterized by its “better” conditions for (white) women. Yarico’s separation from her kin “greedy for blood” simultaneously construct this racialized framework while also naturalizing female oppression, thus making possible a hierarchy of social evolution which, through its use of race and gender, in effect erases both. While pleading for Inkle is presented as a special circumstance, it stands in for other such supplications which would be the everyday course for women in the “savage” state, whose husbands “only considered them as the loveliest part of their Booty.”⁵⁵⁵

If the first temporal move is to increasingly distinguish Yarico from other Indigenous peoples through a framework of gendered savagery, the second is Yarico’s attraction to Inkle, one which leads, as if inevitably, to her care of him. While others have read Yarico’s attraction to Inkle as evidence of her savage appetite, I argue that this attraction is a product of Inkle’s temporality, commercial time, which is inflected with the gendered framework constructed by Yarico’s separation from the “the horrid cannibals” who may or may not be her relatives.⁵⁵⁶ The shipwreck instantiates a move to a temporally fluid location and the presence of cannibals outlines the spatial indeterminacy of the wreck. By having the English crew, participating in commercial activities of exploration of the Orinoco river, searching for Indigenous people to enslave, or seeking to buy/sell goods in system of transatlantic trade, set upon by the “savage race” who devours flesh, these texts place a man from the commercial present into the pre-civil society past, one which was allegedly without government, laws, arts, or

⁵⁵⁵ *The woman as good as the man*, 16.

⁵⁵⁶ Peter Craft, ““The Doves Are Censured While the Crows Are Spared,”” 13. Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein 91.

sciences.⁵⁵⁷ Inkle and Yarico's anticipation of stadial theory, in which the most evolved state of human society, "commerce," could be seen in commercial Europe, and the least, the "hunting" or savage states best exemplified by Indigenous peoples of the New World, is evidence by this temporal collision. However, it requires the romantic encounter for its legibility. The savagery of the male natives, which only increases throughout the century, and Inkle's comparative charms outline a gendered history, a flattened time-scape where female 'nature' remains the same, waiting for male savagery to subside (or be interrupted) so that it can enjoy domestic bliss and romantic love. Inkle's beauty, generally signaled by his youth, his fair skin, and his curls, facilitates this attraction and serves as a differentiating set of characteristics to set him apart from the "cruel [male] natives" on the beach. Whereas the "swarthy crowd" lusts for blood and only acknowledges Yarico when she supplicates in tears, Inkle presents novel male beauty. Yarico, "With his complexion, and gay dress amaz'd," was "Charm'd with his features and alluring grace,/His flowing locks and captivating face."⁵⁵⁸ Yarico's admiration always turns both to Inkle's complexion and to the materials of his "dress." Thus while it is easy to read her spontaneous love of him as a well-worn trope, we must consider how Inkle's clothing, manufactured by a specific mode of subsistence, is always woven into their romantic encounter. Inkle's beauty and apparent difference from the "cruel natives" theorize the interaction of commercial man with savage, "natural" woman. By gazing upon Inkle, Yarico enjoys the destiny of future Woman or white (English) women in the present; free from savagery, she can care for and love Inkle. While this romance is

⁵⁵⁷ Anonymous, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*." *London Magazine*, May 1734. 257-258.

⁵⁵⁸ Seymour, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico," Felsenstein 91.

enabled by Inkle's physical beauty, it is also possible because he is clothed in the fabric of another time.

Both Yarico's attempt to describe the European ship and the pair's communication despite a lack of mutual language also situate their romantic relationship in a temporally generative space which imagines early social encounters. Yarico's struggle to describe objects she has never seen speaks to larger 18th century debates about the origins of language itself.⁵⁵⁹ Inkle and Yarico construct their own language out of a need to communicate their affections ("a language soon they form'd which might express/Their pleasing cares and growing tenderness").⁵⁶⁰ Their story theorizes the origins of human language through romantic relations. In some iterations, Inkle and Yarico's lack of mutual language is signaled by their visual, rather than verbal, communication, as it is their eyes that communicate (with "speaking eyes" and "speaking looks").⁵⁶¹ A key subject for the pair, however communicated, is Inkle's promise to take Yarico with him to England. Here he paints a picture of the unfamiliar city as the site of marvelous technology and luxury, and he makes that luxury palpable to Yarico by promising her fine silks. Frequently the identification of their language formation is in proximity to the discussion of silks. "In this manner did the Lovers pass away their Time," Steele writes, "till they had learned a language of their own, in which the Voyager communicated to his Mistress, how happy he should be to have her in his Country, where

⁵⁵⁹ For example, Étienne Bonnot de Condillac's 1746 *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* argued against the conception of language as something that simply expressed inborn ideas, but rather structured knowledge itself.

⁵⁶⁰ Seymour, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico," Felsenstein 91.

⁵⁶¹ Anonymous, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*" (1734), Felsenstein 102; Anonymous, "Yarico to Inkle, an Epistle," (1736), Felsenstein 114.

she should be cloathed in such Silks as his Wastecoast was made of, and be carried Houses drawn by Horses, without begin exposed to Wind or Weather.”⁵⁶² While Yarico’s use of language is characterized by expressions of love and care, Inkle uses language to make promises which he will later fail to keep. “His pervasive tongue” assures Yarico that the coarseness of her current surroundings will be replaced by the “softest silks” and his unending devotion.⁵⁶³ Crucially, these promises mobilize technologies which Europeans imagined made them superior to the “naked” American (the carriage, the silk) while erasing the presence of houses and other constructions in the Americas themselves. All shelters implicitly become the “secret cave” adorned with the skins of wild beasts. His pledges also “indicate his identification of Yarico with purchasable goods.”⁵⁶⁴

Textiles and dress thus work as an important objects in iterations of Inkle and Yarico, serving as key material for their romantic conversation, as emblems of European technology and luxury, and as indications of a progressive development from the skins of “flea’d Beasts” to “silks of curious art.”⁵⁶⁵ Yarico’s simultaneous care for appearing “every day...in a different dress” and “And every morning, with the nicest care,/Adorn[ing] her well-turn’d neck and shining hair,/With all the glittering shells and painted flowers,/That serve to deck the *Indian* virgin’s bowers” and her nakedness illustrate the temporal and gendered tensions at work.⁵⁶⁶ Yarico’s positionality as “the

⁵⁶² Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43.

⁵⁶³ Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 92.

⁵⁶⁴ Horesji, “‘a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron’: Steele’s “Inkle and Yarico” and a Feminist Critique of the Classics,” 216.

⁵⁶⁵ *The woman as good as the man*, 16; Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico, from the Eleventh *Spectator*” (1734), Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 102.

⁵⁶⁶ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43, Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 91.

naked *American*” speaks more to place-in-time than to her nudity. When Yarico opens Inkle’s shirt, she “laugh[s] at him for covering” himself because she is unaccustomed to such attitudes.⁵⁶⁷ Placed beside her elaborate dress of “the most beautiful Shells, Bugles, and Bredes,” this laugh also suggests that for Yarico, clothing is specifically gendered in relation to her ‘savage’ male kin.⁵⁶⁸ Her simultaneous attention to her own dress and confusion at Inkle’s concern for his own clothing recalls Poulain’s theorization about the rise of fashion and ornament.⁵⁶⁹ Poulain argues that women demonstrate their “Prudence, and Skill” rather than their frivolity in their attention to dress, and are responsible for the evolution of clothing from the rude materials of the “Skins” of “flea’d Beasts” to elegant gowns and suits because they learned that such material changes superlatively altered the brutality of the men around them. While Yarico’s ‘nakedness’ marks her temporal place in the state of nature, her attention to dress and ornament theorizes the gendered dynamics of such a state. Yarico’s transformation of the material resources of the

⁵⁶⁷ Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein 91. Peter Craft reads this scene as evidence of Yarico’s sexual aggression and example how she “mocks what appears to be a gesture of modesty in Inkle.” However, such an interpretation misses the temporal meaning created by the American setting. Yarico’s laugh is not one of derision, but of innocence; here she demonstrates a prelapsarian lack of shame. The association between Indigenous female bodies and sexual availability is certainly present, but her attitude to dress in this regard situates her as “an artless nymph” rather than a temptress. Craft, “The Doves Are Censured While the Crows Are Spared,” 13.

⁵⁶⁸ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43.

⁵⁶⁹ “If we observe how Modes and Fashions creep into use, and how they are daily imbelished, we may judge, That (in the beginning of the World) People took no great care of their Dress: All was then simple and plain, nothing minded but necessity. Men flea’d Beasts; and fastening their Skins together, framed to themselves Habits. But afterwards, Commodiousness began to be devised; and every one accowtering themselves according to their fancy,” *The woman as good as the man*, 22-23.

Americas into ornament functions as another instance of supplication to the “swarthy crowd.”⁵⁷⁰

Yarico uses such skins of “flea’d Beasts” to decorate their cave, a material contrast to the silks which Inkle promises her.⁵⁷¹ Like the ship sighting and cannibalism, the trope of the decorated cave is repeated in the majority of the poems following Steele’s. Kathryn Shevelow reads both Yarico’s desire to furnish their home and her interest in the luxurious European fabrics as a mark of her similitude with English women, as they signal both Yarico’s naturalized affinity for dress and accessories and an “impulse toward domestication that is innately female.”⁵⁷² Yarico, she argues, “behaves very much like the virtuous and domestic middle class wife whose husband’s needs and comforts are her primary study.”⁵⁷³ While her desire for Inkle’s comfort does naturalize her affection and attention for him, but the space is decidedly different from a “polite London drawing room” in its abilities to theorize the sexual contract and a gendered and racialized history.⁵⁷⁴ Alongside the animal skins, several versions also include vibrant feathers, objects with distinct American resonances. Seymour describes how Yarico “With tigers speckled skins...deck’d his bed,/O’er which the gayest plumes of birds she

⁵⁷⁰ Winstanely, “Yarico’s Epistle to Inkle,” 12.

⁵⁷¹ In Coleman’s *Inkle and Yarico*, the cave becomes Yarico’s collection of “white wonders.” “Yarico—first seen as a possible consumer of white collectibles like her compatriots,” Nandini Bhattacharya writes, “rapidly becomes a collectible object herself,” “Family Jewels: George Colman’s *Inkle and Yarico* and *Connoisseurship*.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 208.

⁵⁷² Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical*. (London: Routledge, 1989), 144.

⁵⁷³ Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture*, 144.

⁵⁷⁴ Horesji, “a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron’: Steele’s “*Inkle and Yarico*” and a Feminist Critique of the Classics,” 205.

spread.”⁵⁷⁵ Steele’s Yarico “brought him a great many Spoils, which other Lovers had presented to her,” and as a result “his Cave was richly adorned with all the spotted Skins of Beasts, and most Party-coloured Feathers of Fowls, which that World afforded.”⁵⁷⁶ While it is clear that Yarico has sex with Inkle, Steele’s use of “Lovers” is modified by the general description of Yarico as a virgin. Whether or not this virginity is supposed to mark an absence of sexual experience, it suggests that we are to read her as a pure, rather than corrupted figure. Rather, her preference for Inkle above “other Lovers” illuminates the workings of a conjectural hierarchy. Yarico’s preference for Inkle, a man from commercial time with an allegedly different set of gender relations, inscribes those relations as natural. These are paired with the fairness of his skin so that the association between commercial time and whiteness appears self-evident.

As Craft and Shevelow illustrate, scholars have tended to read love and gender in Inkle and Yarico in terms of deviance from or adherence to (European) gender norms of the period. Shevelow’s argument for the similitude between Yarico and “the virtuous and domestic middle class wife” suggests that Yarico’s indigeneity is generally insignificant, and in this reading, the setting of the ambiguous island or coast, the secluded cave, and the population of cannibals are incidental, rather than formative, for the gendered meanings of the text.⁵⁷⁷ Alternately, Horesji reads Yarico’s care of Inkle as indicative of

⁵⁷⁵ Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 91.

⁵⁷⁶ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43. Craft reads this line as evidence that Yarico is “unlike the dainty white virginal figures who abound in eighteenth-century sentimental fiction,” because she “has premarital sex with him and perhaps some of her countrymen,” 13.

⁵⁷⁷ Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical*, 144.

his effeminacy. "Inkle is more damsel in distress," she argues, "than hero."⁵⁷⁸ Craft approaches Inkle similarly, arguing that one can only view Yarico as an English middle class wife "by neglecting....her sexual advances toward Inkle and her ability to physical carry him around like a child."⁵⁷⁹ Yarico, Craft contends, "appropriates roles traditionally held by men: she obtains food and earns commodities while Inkle stays "at home," she protects him from other men, and she physically carries this grown man over an apparently considerable distance. Yarico therefore acts as both an exotic temptress and a mother-figure to a man who seems as helpless as a child."⁵⁸⁰ While Craft rightly notes that Yarico is a "complex amalgam," there is a confusing slippage in his argument between masculine roles and maternal care; Yarico's care for Inkle is both maternal nurture and masculine provision.⁵⁸¹ Such a slippage is tied to the fact that, aside from the term "exotic temptress," the racial dimension of this dynamic is left unexamined beyond the point that non-European women were represented as "a cross between objects of desire and exotic beasts."⁵⁸² Yarico's care for Inkle is thus read through the lens of gender alone, either in her occupation of the "temptress" category or in her deviant "masculinity."

⁵⁷⁸ Horesji, "'a Counterpart to the Ephesian Matron': Steele's 'Inkle and Yarico' and a Feminist Critique of the Classics." 216.

⁵⁷⁹ Craft, "'The Doves Are Censured While the Crows Are Spared,'" 10.

⁵⁸⁰ Craft's attribution of anomalous strength to Yarico depends up on his reading of the verb "to carry" as to physically carry, rather than to bring, or to lead to: "To make his Confinement more tolerable, she would carry him in the Dusk of the Evening, or by the Favour of Moon-light, to unfrequented Groves and Solitudes, and shew him where to lye down in Safety," Steele, 43.

⁵⁸¹ Craft, "'The Doves Are Censured While the Crows Are Spared,'" 13.

⁵⁸² Craft, "'The Doves Are Censured While the Crows Are Spared,'" 5.

However, if we consider Yarico's emergent race as key to these early versions of the story, and the repetition of this tale of succor which extends well beyond the corpus of Inkle and Yarcio, then Yarico's provision appears as a focal point in the European construction of female indigeneity. Her care of Inkle certainly has a maternal register, but this is palpably tied to the wealth of maternal imagery associated with the Americas. While early representations of America-as-woman linked maternal nurture, fecundity, and violence, Yarico demonstrates a separation of these along gendered and racial lines; it is her male (kin) on the beach who are the "horrid cannibals," while she provides shelter to the lost European. This entanglement of romantic love and maternal care recalls the embattled maternal sovereignty staged in *The Indian Queen*, *The Indian Emperor*, and *The Tempest*. However, Yarico loses both her maternal authority and self-sovereignty through a collapse of romantic and maternal love focalized in the same subject—Inkle. Even though the epistles rebuke Inkle for his cruelty, Yarico's betrayal and enslavement are rendered in the language of romantic, rather than political, loss. Ligon's concluding line, that "Yarico, for her love, lost her liberty," is a recurrent logic in the poetic versions. Yarico's enslavement is displaced by the moment she meets Inkle and loses her liberty for love: "I well remember that unhappy day," she mourns, "In which I gaz'd my liberty away."⁵⁸³ Yarico's love for Inkle is constructed as unfortunate but inevitable, and his abandonment of her is conflated with enslavement.

By couching it in the love story, these texts also stage Yarico's presentation of New World products as gifts she willingly, happily, even, bestows upon the stranger as demonstrations of involuntary gendered care. Despite their variations, in all iterations of

⁵⁸³ "An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle," Felsenstein 96.

the texts, Yarico gives Inkle crucial New World knowledge: navigation of the surroundings, the location of fresh water sources, the location of fruit and plant foods, the knowledge of which foods are good to eat—i.e. not poisonous, and the location of a refuge from the “Party of *Indians*” who seek Inkle’s blood.⁵⁸⁴ The transfer of this knowledge is a reaction inspired by an almost maternal, spontaneous love: “His safety, now, became her only care,/A secret cave she knew, and hid him there.”⁵⁸⁵ While the cave alternately appears as “secret,” “mossy,” “vaulted,” it is consistently tied to her individual knowledge and described as secluded, a spatial twist which creates a new dimension of distance between Yarico and her kin.⁵⁸⁶ Similarly, their escape to the cave is followed by a scene in which Yarico gathers fruits for Inkle and leads him to fresh water. In Steele’s version, Yarico brings Inkle “a delicious Repast of Fruits, and led him to a Stream to slake his Thirst.”⁵⁸⁷ In Seymour’s third-person poem, Yarico seeks “choicest fruits, the isle produc’d...to allay his hunger,” and “when his thirst requir’d, in search of drink,/She led him to some chrystal fountain’s brink.”⁵⁸⁸ Still others describe “crystal streams,” an “ambrosial feast,” and “a rich repast...of ripen’d fruits, and waters from the spring.”⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁴ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 43.

⁵⁸⁵ Anonymous “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein 104.

⁵⁸⁶ Seymour, “An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle,” Felsenstein 96; Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico” Felsenstein, 91.

⁵⁸⁷ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 42.

⁵⁸⁸ “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 91.

⁵⁸⁹ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 98-99; Edward Jerningham, “Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle” London, 1766, Felsenstein 156; Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 104. Jerningham’s version strengthens the tie to the Americas, including “The fig,” “palm-juice,” (coconut milk), and “th’Anâna” in the feast.

Yarico's labor of gathering fruits is uniquely paired with hunting in Duck's poem, where Duck recalls allegorical images of America carrying a bow, a weapon which firmly situates Yarico and her kin in the most 'savage' of states. "She, with her bow," he writes, "explores the wood;/Pierc'd with her shaft, the fowl resigns his blood./Then back she hastens to her cool retreat,/And for Avaro dress'd the grateful meat."⁵⁹⁰ Though her prowess as a hunter may seem to justify Craft's reading of Yarico as appropriating masculine roles, hunting here is a logical complement to the gathering of abundant fruits, which Yarico can simply pluck from the generous trees around her. "Hunting" is also one of the labels stadial theorists gave to the "savage" state.⁵⁹¹ Her feeding of Inkle also echoes prelapsarian images of the Americas as lands which produced food continually, whose inhabitants did not have the need for or ability to create agriculture. The coast upon which Inkle is wrecked is "Possesst by men who thirst for human blood,/Who live in caves, or thickets of the wood" and are "Untaught to plant (yet corn and fruits abound,/And fragrant flours enamel all the ground)."⁵⁹² The charge of non-cultivation, ironically paired with a staple crop of numerous Indigenous peoples, corn, is designed to dispossess, as it casts the landscape as *terra nullius*.⁵⁹³ Like the history of Indigenous capture for enslavement which haunts the margins of Ligon's text, the relevance of Yarico's information to colonial projects is obscured by the love story.

⁵⁹⁰ Duck, "Avaro and Amanda," 98-99.

⁵⁹¹ In "Smith's hunting stage," Chris Nyland explains, "life is sustained by the gathering of fruits of nature, with the dominant activities presumed to be hunting and fishing," "Adam Smith, Stage Theory, and the Status of Women," *The History of Political Economy*. 25.4 (1993): 621.

⁵⁹² Anonymous, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico," Felsenstein, 102-103.

⁵⁹³ Yogi Hale Hendlin, "From *Terra Nullius* to *Terra Communis*: Reconsidering Wild Land in an Era of Conservation and Indigenous Rights." *Environmental Philosophy*. 11, no. 2 (2014): 141-74.

These iterations of Inkle and Yarico construct a specific form of female indigeneity which is invoked each time the tale travels the well-worn paths that make up the “repeated geographical process” of England to the Americas, of shipwreck on a wild yet commercially significant coast, of Barbados to mainland South American and back again.⁵⁹⁴ In each invocation, the history of enslavement, the theft of Indigenous knowledge, the denial of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and the ecological violence of colonization is obscured even as they provide material details for the story. Yarico willingly and even lovingly provides Inkle with key New World knowledge and resources. Iterations of Inkle and Yarico write the narrative of aboriginal absence by constructing a female indigeneity which vanishes as it rescues. This concept of indigeneity also depends upon, even as it assembles, a conjectural history which anticipates the hierarchy of stadial theory, and the romantic encounter not only reveals the relationships between emergent race and the hierarchy of ‘savage’/‘hunting’ and ‘commerce’ modes of subsistence, but makes such hierarchy possible. Themes of temporal divergence are mobilized through images of the savage *male* cannibal and the beautiful “*Indian* maid” and the crucial distinction between them.

3.3.1 Inheriting the time of “trade and merchandize”

By altering the chronology of Inkle’s shipwreck and rescue, Steele and those who follow him expand the time which Inkle and Yarico spend together. This temporal dilation helps to obscure Indigenous enslavement and the violence of colonization and makes Yarico’s pregnancy by Inkle possible. Though Yarico’s pregnancy in Ligon’s

⁵⁹⁴ Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 44.

narrative was unrelated to the perfidious Englishman except insofar as he instigated the enslavement which would lead her to meet her child's father, the Christian servant, Steele's enduring change pairs enslavement with maternity. Inkle's heartlessness and commitment to "Trade and Merchanize" is demonstrated by the fact that he not only can sell his lover into slavery, but that, upon hearing she is with child, "only made use of that Information, to rise in his Demands upon the Purchaser."⁵⁹⁵ This pathetic scene is what allegedly lends Inkle and Yarico its abolitionist purchase in the last quarter of the century, producing the image of an abject Yarico, begging for her child's life, if not for her own. In visual representations of these scenes, Yarico is no longer an "*Indian* maid," but rather an enslaved African woman.

Yarico's racial ambiguity ("*Indian* princess," "naked *American*," "Nubian dame," "*negroe* virgin," and "Moor,") is usually attributed to fluid racial discourse of the 18th century. All non-European people, and even European working-class people, this approach suggests, were described in terms of blackness.⁵⁹⁶ Yarico's "racial transmutation" is simply another example of such discourses.⁵⁹⁷ Though it is indisputable that the narrative possessed a growing association with the transatlantic slave trade and with the abolition movement over the course of the 18th century, the move between Indigenous woman and African woman has important temporal registers which have not been examined. Yarico does not move inexorably from "naked *American*" to "negro virgin"; rather, these descriptive changes are tied to her textual movement toward the slave market in Barbados. While Seymour's version does inaugurate a Yarico who is

⁵⁹⁵ Steele, *The Spectator*, No. 11, 42, 44.

⁵⁹⁶ Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*, 151.

⁵⁹⁷ Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*, 152.

described as “negroe virgin,” this is only partially adopted by later iterations. Yarico’s move between Indigenous and African woman occurs between but also within texts. It not only reflects the contradictory conceptions of emergent race, but also the key spatial and temporal settings of Inkle and Yarico, which invoke the temporality of the state of nature as well as that of the marketplace, the latter of which is inevitably yoked to *partus sequitur ventrem*. Race has a temporal register in these texts. It is entangled with the conjectural histories mobilized by the landscape Inkle and Yarico invokes. The logic of *partus*, still uncertain when Ligon published a *True & Exactly History* in 1657, is pervasive by the time *Spectator* 11 appeared in 1711. Its apparent indelibility in later versions is manifested through the assumption that Yarico’s child will also be enslaved and the omnipresent lash between saleability and blackness.

While Yarico is increasingly described as African, the setting of the story retains and sometimes emphasizes its American resonances. In addition to the narrative of shipwreck, the trope of cannibalism, and the recurrence of the secluded cave and fertile landscape, authors label the land explicitly as belonging to the “Indies.” In Duck’s “Avaro and Amanda,” a poem which draws directly upon the logic of *partus sequitur ventrem* for its pathos, Inkle and his ill-fated crew are wrecked upon a “Savage Land” which is a part of an “Indian Isle.”⁵⁹⁸ Duck situates Inkle’s voyage not only in the context of transatlantic commerce and profit, but also in the framework of “discovery” and colonialism. Describing Inkle’s preparation for departure, Duck explains Inkle’s desirous gaze as it imagines not only gold, but possession of “both Indies.” “Then Maps and Models of our Globe Prepares,” he writes, “And carefully inspects both Hemispheres;/

⁵⁹⁸ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 90.

From East to West he views the spacious Round,/Pleas'd with the modern World
Columbus found:/In Hope elate, the Youth impatient stands,/And seems to grasp both
Indies in his Hands.”⁵⁹⁹

When Yarico signals the “*European vessel*” which she struggles to describe, she reenacts the moment of first contact and thus inaugurates the coming of the time of history.⁶⁰⁰ As the pair boards the “*British bark...to Barbados bound*,” they are repositioned in the space of the colonial Caribbean, pulled into the commercial time of Atlantic trade.⁶⁰¹ For Inkle, this activates a strain of melancholic reflection which recalls the image of his avaricious father. Almost mechanical in its workings, this reflection casts Inkle’s mind as a set of scales more attuned to the weighing of coin than to the symbolic measure of justice. “As when two scales, which equal loads suspend,/Sway to and fro,” Duck writes, “alternate both descend,/Till undeclining each aloft abides,/Nor this, nor that, the doubtful weight decides.”⁶⁰² In Seymour’s third-person narration, Inkle (re)calculates his time spent with Yarico in financial terms, signaling the shift to the temporality of commerce. Mourning “the int’rest he had lost,” Inkle asks “Was it for this,” (said he) “I cross’d the main,/Only a doting virgin’s heart to gain?”⁶⁰³ Duck repeats Seymour’s line, but with a key substitution and somewhat more indignation: “Was it for this I learn’d the Merchant’s Art?” he cries, “Only to gain a doating *Negro’s Heart!*”⁶⁰⁴ “Trade and Merchandize,” the moving parts of commerce, overlay the history of

⁵⁹⁹ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 88-90.

⁶⁰⁰ Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 92.

⁶⁰¹ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 120.

⁶⁰² Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 120-121.

⁶⁰³ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 120; Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 92.

⁶⁰⁴ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 122

“discovery” as the exploratory motion of crossing the main is replaced with learning the “Merchant’s Art,” which carries with it the accompanying shift from “virgin” to “negro.”

Duck’s language indicates the link between saleability and blackness. Inkle’s scales are tipped from “gratitude” to “frugal thoughts” by the sounds of the Barbadian market, and specifically the queries of the “planters,” who “crowd the key,” and ask “for what the *negro* may be sold.”⁶⁰⁵ As the century wears on, Yarico’s indigeneity becomes less and less legible in the context of the Barbadian market. The narrative of aboriginal disappearance demands that she vanish when the objects and spaces of modernity (re)appear in the text. Yarico’s shift to African woman is a result of her unintelligibility in both the temporal and spatial parameters of the Barbadian marketplace and world of transatlantic commerce more broadly. Her presence as an enslaved Indigenous woman would confuse a system which understands indigeneity in terms of absence from the present. Yarico as Indigenous woman must not be enslaved, but rather must willingly give resources and knowledge and then disappear. Her indigeneity works to narrate the colonial myth of the “discovery” of wild and uninhabited America. First “posses’t” by “untaught” “men who thirst for human blood,” this America can be mobilized in conjectural histories which substantiate racial hierarchies but are concealed by the screen of temporality, the almost axiomatic progress from hunted animal skins to silks.⁶⁰⁶ The racial discourse which supports and delivers this structure renders the enslavement of Yarico’s African child turned *issue* inevitable. Tracing the temporal register of race in these poems also explains why, even when Yarico is often Indigenous in the beginning of

⁶⁰⁵ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 120, 121.

⁶⁰⁶ Anonymous, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico,” Felsenstein, 102-103.

the text (on the beach, in the woods, in the cave) she is always African when she arrives in Barbados.

Yarico's enslaved maternity works in various ways in these iterations. Frequently, the child remains unborn, as the poems end at the moment of enslavement. On rarer occasions, the child dies as soon as it is born, or dies with its mother.⁶⁰⁷ In both of Seymour's poems, Yarico is sold while pregnant. The epistle extends the timeline, taking up Yarico's sorrowful recollections. While her pregnancy raised Yarico's price, Seymour associates the moment of enslavement with her child's death. "My sufferings," she cries, "were thy wretched infant's death,/Who, in one hour, receiv'd and lost his breath."⁶⁰⁸ Winstanely takes the association further by directly aligning "womb" and "tomb."⁶⁰⁹ Imagining her and her child's demise, Yarico sees not only death, but erasure from memory itself. "There must I lie," he writes, "that ocean must entomb/My lifeless carcass in its chrystal womb;/Where none can point me out beneath the wave,/Or write the mournful story of my grave."⁶¹⁰ The image of the ocean swallowing her body and her infant's is an echo of the actual death and suffering experienced by enslaved peoples in the Middle Passage, a brief glance at the Atlantic as 'a sea of bones,' the future only offering the possibility of "a well excavated grave."⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁷ In the anonymous 1736 "Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle," Inkle's betrayal kills Yarico and her child on the spot: "My flowing blood, and every vital chill'd;/No more my bosom heav'd, my dying eyes/Were clos'd, and sense forsook me with my cries," Felsenstein, 122.

⁶⁰⁸ Seymour, "An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle," Felsenstein, 97.

⁶⁰⁹ Winstanely, "Yarico's Epistle to Inkle," 9.

⁶¹⁰ Winstanely, "Yarico's Epistle to Inkle," 9-10.

⁶¹¹ Hartman, Saidiya V. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*. 1st ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 136.

After Steele's version in 1711, in which Yarico's race is only implicitly tied to black enslavement, Yarico's maternity becomes the pathetic crux in numerous poetic versions. Since the moment of betrayal is concurrent with the revelation of her pregnancy, enslavement and maternity are inexorably bound together in a reflection of *partus*'s pervasiveness. These final scenes of the poems recurrently position Yarico in a pleading posture, an image of abject suffering which anticipates the those popularized by Josiah Wedgwood's late eighteenth-century medallions. In Yarico's maternity, we can see a performance of sorrow which creates an image of black suffering for white consumption. She is continually "low," even "grasp[ing] his knees, in vain attempts to speak." "Low at his feet she implored," Seymour writes, "And thus, in moving strains, her fate deplor'd."⁶¹² This abjection is epitomized by Yarico's entreaty *for* enslavement in the anonymous 1736 poem. "O yet redeem me, while you've power to save," she begs Inkle, "And make me yours, if I must be a slave!/Your faithful slave, indeed, I'll ever prove,/And with continu'd care attend my love."⁶¹³ More frequently, when her reminders of their time together in the cave fail to move him, Yarico turns to thoughts of their child. "O spare the guiltless babe—let nature move," she implores, "Your heart to pity—tho' 'tis deaf to love!"⁶¹⁴

Unlike the woman from Mocquet's *Travels and Voyages*, Yarico's initial violence toward Inkle and his child is soothed by maternal feeling. The burden of "a mother's cares" stems her resistance.⁶¹⁵ "Let it be/Torn from my womb whate'er remains of thee,"

⁶¹² Seymour, "An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle," Felsenstein, 93..

⁶¹³ Anonymous, "Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle," 1736, Felsenstein, 113.

⁶¹⁴ Anonymous, "Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle," 1736, Felsenstein, 122.

⁶¹⁵ Anonymous, "Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle," 1736, Felsenstein, 121.

she cries, but a moment later is moved by maternal feeling. In an eerie resonance of the logic of heritable racial slavery, Yarico's child comes into consciousness at the moment of its mother's enslavement. In Winstanely's epistle, her unborn child, "to gen'rous pity wrought,/Affrighted, startles at th'enmormous thought;/Bids [her] the tumult of [her] mind control,/And conscious, dictates patience to [her] soul."⁶¹⁶ In the Anonymous 1736 "Yarico to Inkle, an Epistle," Yarico can "feel the infant struggling in [her] womb,/As conscious of misery to come."⁶¹⁷ Once she is within the reach of the Barbadian plantations, Yarico's pregnancy is inexorably tied to reproduction of enslavement. While in Poulain's conjectural history, the time of reproduction was the source of gender inequality, in the conjectural histories produced by Inkle and Yarico, reproduction is tied to a vulnerability of racial inheritance. While the love story as sexual contract in the cave rewrites the arrival of the history as willing Indigenous rescue and succor, the pregnancy naturalizes maternal inheritance of racial slavery. At the same time, the reproductive realities of enslaved women are obscured by Yarico's pregnancy.

Activated by their presence on the "*Barbadian coast*," these final scenes introduce new imagery of plantation slavery, including chains, fetters, and other overseer's weapons.⁶¹⁸ On her knees, Yarico entreats Inkle "for the helpless infant's sake." "Listen, with pity, to my just depair," she begs, "Ah! Let me not in slavery remain,/Doom'd all my life to drag a servile chain."⁶¹⁹ The poetic versions repeat Yarico's pleas and questions, even when their answers seem inevitable. When Yarico asks if Inkle can allow

⁶¹⁶ Winstanely, "Yarico's Epistle to Inkle," 14.

⁶¹⁷ Anonymous, "Yarico to Inkle, an Epistle," 1736, Felsenstein 113.

⁶¹⁸ Seymour, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico," Felsenstein, 93.

⁶¹⁹ Seymour, "The Story of Inkle and Yarico," Felsenstein, 93.

their “tender Infant too,” to become “an abject Slave,/to toil, and groan, and bleed beneath the *Rod*?” Inkle’s inner calculations, the machinery which translates his lover and child into “intr’est” and “gold,” can offer only one answer.⁶²⁰ The logic of *partus sequitur ventrem* similarly hangs around the edges of the texts. The perennial answer to “Must the poor babe a mother’s sufferings share?” is yes, *on the condition of the mother*.⁶²¹

The anonymous 1734 “The Story of Inkle and Yarico” makes vivid the tension between “the condition of the mother” which supported enslaved inheritance and the tradition of paternal inheritance in English common law when Inkle explicitly refuses to give the child his “blessing taste of...paternal care.”⁶²² In “Avaro and Amanda,” Yarico attempts to use paternal inheritance as a persuasive tool. “O let the infant, in my pregnant womb,” she pleads, “Excite thee to revoke my threaten’d doom;/Think how the future slave, in climes remote,/Shall curse the treach’rous sire, that him begot.”⁶²³ Yarico’s pleas, however, only “More hardened” Inkle’s heart. When she reveals her pregnancy, Inkle “for the Child, demands a larger Sum;/ And sells it, while an Embryo in the Womb.”⁶²⁴ Their child is thus either doomed to die before birth or shortly thereafter, or is “Condemned to feel unutterable woes,/And all the wrongs that slav’ry can impose.”⁶²⁵ In these scenes, Inkle’s investment in transatlantic commerce supplants any possibility of paternal recognition. The time of commerce, linked to the logic of *partus*, makes such a

⁶²⁰ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 124.

⁶²¹ Anonymous, “Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle,” 1736, Felsenstein, 113.

⁶²² Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 102.

⁶²³ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 122.

⁶²⁴ Duck, “Avaro and Amanda,” 124.

⁶²⁵ Anonymous, “Yarico to Inkle: An Epistle,” 1736, Felsenstein, 122.

recognition impossible. While the poems may seem to critique the “failure of English values abroad,” in effect they outline the sway of *partus sequitur ventrem*. Inkle’s paternal acknowledgement becomes impossible with such a legally inscribed but also culturally axiomatic logic. In a similar way that the racial logic produces aboriginal absence by positing blackness as that which subsumes all other racial categories, Inkle’s offspring would always be their mother’s *issue* rather than their father’s children.

From the sinking mutilated child of Mocquet’s *Travels and Voyages*, to the precariously situated infant birthed in the wood in Ligon’s *True & Exact History*, to the always-already enslaved “embryo” of the above poem, the offspring of the Inkle and Yarico encounter track fundamental changes in racialized maternity and heritable enslavement over the course of the long eighteenth century. Placing Mocquet, Ligon, Steele, and Steele’s followers together not only trace that change, but also illustrates how central temporality is to the construction of the genres of gender and race. The conjectural histories mobilized by the Inkle and Yarico archive not only reflect but also help to construct and maintain the different racial regimes which alternately write indigeneity and blackness. Yarico’s transformation to enslaved African woman over the course of the eighteenth century reinscribes the relocation of African women’s reproduction outside of private life. But while iterations of the tale attach that relocation to the space of the market—as she approaches Barbados, she becomes African—the move which affixes her reproductive capacity to marketplace is made possible by positioning of the Indigenous woman, and the care and knowledge she provides, in a different time. The reproduction of kinlessness in the enslaved woman’s womb, in turn,

reifies the narrative of aboriginal absence by making only blackness inheritable. Inkle and Yarico makes both moves, consigning Yarico's child to heritable enslavement while also writing the story of Indigenous disappearance.

Chapter 4: ‘Adored and Oppressed’: Imagined Communities and the Sexual Contract in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*

The previous chapters have read visual and literary texts which perform scenes of pristine contact as important discursive productions in the temporalization of difference. Reenactment of contact participates in the temporalization of difference by assigning Indigenous peoples to a primordial past, a temporal technology of distancing which facilitates territorial dispossession. Imagining contact in the form of ‘romantic’ encounter, these texts, I have argued, formulate theories of historical gender relations which seek to explain, by way of the conquest of maternal dominion or the inscription of biologized female weakness, gender relations in the ambit of progressive time. Couched in the domain of romantic encounter, the temporal associations of enchanted “*Indian Isles*,” of “barbar’ous coasts,” of and wild “dessarts” make possible the conjectural work of these texts. They also construct racial difference, tracing the development of two racial regimes, one of which assigns reproduction to the marketplace and the other which assigns Indigeneity to the past.

This final chapter turns to a different kind of text and different form: Gilbert Imlay’s 1793 novel *The Emigrants, or the History of an Expatriated Family, Being a Delineation of English Manners, Drawn from Real Characters*.⁶²⁶ While *The Emigrants*

⁶²⁶ Gilbert Imlay is now best known “as the cad who abandoned Mary Wollstonecraft,” and “remembered for his romantic involvement...rather than his political imbrications,” Verhoeven and Gilroy, “Introduction,” *The Emigrants, or the History of an Expatriated Family, Being a Delineation of English Manners, Drawn from Real Characters, Written in America*. Penguin, New York: 1998) xiii, Juliet Shields, “Genuine Sentiments and Gendered Liberties: Migration and Marriage in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*.” *Atlantic Worlds in the Long Eighteenth Century: Seduction and Sentiment*. Ed. Tita Chico and

includes a handful of Euro-Indigenous encounters, these are not recognizably “pristine” ones, and are pushed to the margins of the novel. Similarly, though there are many romantic relationships in the text, none are between European men and Indigenous women; indeed, only one Indigenous woman appears in the novel, and when she does, she is silent. Lastly, in its geographical imaginings, this novel does not invoke the indeterminate shores of South America or the Caribbean, but rather the interior of the newly formed United States. Imlay’s novel signals an important turn in “American Imaginaries” in its investment in the mythology of the ‘unsettled’ West rather than the moment of Caribbean ‘discovery.’⁶²⁷ However, the novel’s political arguments depend upon the *apparent* separation of romantic union, settler colonialism, and political reform. Imlay’s argument for a new political community depends upon the construction of Indigenous absence, which is both generated by and reified by the history of gender relations articulated through the novel’s marriage (and divorce) plots.

Toni Bowers. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 34. According to those who corresponded with him, he was always moving from one place to another, always in transit, a wanderer. In many ways a prototype of the “American conman,” Verhoeven explains, Imlay was seeking continual reinvention in order to “survive on the murky margins of the late eighteenth-century transatlantic world.” Though certainly on the margins, Imlay “unwittingly acted as an interface between figures of much greater historical significance,” at one point working as an agent for the Girondists as a part of a scheme to incite a rebellion in Kentucky against the Spanish-controlled Louisiana. After fighting in the American Revolutionary Army as a “captain,” Imlay involved himself in land sales in the Ohio River Valley. This involvement included less than above-board practices, and in 1786 his speculation, accompanied with “dubious secessionist politics,” forced him to leave the country. Verhoeven and Gilroy, “Introduction,” ix, 1-2.

⁶²⁷ Stephen Duck, *Poems on several occasions*. (London: printed for the author, 1736) 90. Frances Seymour, “The Story of Inkle and Yarico.” c. 1725. Felsenstein, Frank. *English Trader, Indian Maid*, 91, Jean Mocquet Mocquet, Jean, and Nathaniel Pullen. *Travels and Voyages into Africa, Asia, and America, the East and West-Indies, Syria, Jerusalem, and the Holy-Land*. (London: Printed for William Newton, Joseph Shelton, and William Chandler, 1696) 125, Stephanie Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Thought: States of Nature and Aboriginality*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 4.

While Imlay's novel received few reviews, it works as the fictional companion to his successful 1792 *A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America*.⁶²⁸ First published in London, *A Topographical Description* encouraged those with similar political views to colonize the fertile lands west of the Allegheny mountains. These mountains are figured in the novel as a "topographical moral watershed" separating the utopic community of Bellefont from the depravity and dissolution of Europe, and from the Eastern United States, already contaminated by European culture.⁶²⁹ The geography of *The Emigrants* articulates a seemingly axiomatic connection between the West and 'the natural'; the lands beyond the Allegheny mountains are at once the "frowning wilderness" and the "regions of innocence."⁶³⁰ Such a connection is forged by the temporal associations between the Americas and the unreachable past. This convergence of temporal and moral signifiers outlines a growing body of tropes in the American Imaginaries which helped construct the Americas as 'unsettled,' as either empty or sparsely populated by Indigenous peoples who are inevitably "on the verge of vanishing" in the face of settler encroachment.⁶³¹ for Imlay, the past evoked by the

⁶²⁸ First published in London, *A Topographical Description* was widely reprinted in the United States, usually accompanying John Filson's *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke*. Filson's text was originally published in 1784 and contained "The Adventures of Colonel Daniel Boon."

⁶²⁹ Amanda Gilroy, "'Espousing the Cause of Oppressed Women': Cultural Captives in Gilbert Imlay's *The Emigrants*." *Revolutions & Watersheds: Transatlantic Dialogues, 1775-1815*. Ed. WM. Verhoeven and Beth Dolan Kautz. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999) 192.

⁶³⁰ Gilbert Imlay, *The Emigrants, or the History of an Expatriated Family, Being a Delineation of English Manners, Drawn from Real Characters*. 1793. Ed. W.M. Verhoeven and Amanda Gilroy. (New York: Penguin, 1998) 53, 213.

⁶³¹ Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*, (Durham: Duke UP, 2017) The "portrayal of Indigenous temporal stasis or absence...constitutes one of the principal means of effacing Indigenous sovereignties,"

American landscape signifies a state of nature, a time from which to extract the values necessary for the founding of a new (colonial) state: purity, “innocence,” and freedom. In this way, the conjectural mode is a tool for representing the Americas as a wilderness to be ‘settled.’

In this chapter, I argue that Imlay’s novel mobilizes a conjectural mode in the foundation of its utopic settler community and narrates a history of gender relations which work to essentialize gender as sex. While the novel represents these two projects as separate from one another and from the logic of settler colonialism, they each depend upon the intersection of male ‘savagery’ and female ‘oppression’ to make their arguments. The frequent marriages in Imlay’s novel, I argue, work as reenactments of the sexual contract. As characters in a state of nature, a temporal state from which desirable moral values (virtue, innocence, reason) can be extracted, the Indigenous peoples in Imlay’s novel appear at key points in this narrative string of sexual contracts. The oscillation between the nominal savagery of the brutal European husbands and the ‘authentic’ savagery of Indigenous peoples sets the framework for Imlay’s conjectural history of gender relations. When considered alongside *A Topographical Description*, which refers to specific Indigenous groups and territories with ample (if disturbingly motivated) detail, *The Emigrants*’ commitment to presenting a uniform savagery is illuminated as tool for narrating both the inevitability of settler colonialism and of a gendered hierarchy.

as it “generates a prism through which any evidence of such survival will be interpreted as either vestigial....or hopelessly contaminated,” 5.

The Emigrants has been subject to little scholarly examination, most of which attends to its use of divorce as a political analogy for secession, as its language concerning divorce supports the argument of just separation from tyranny, whether it is political or marital.⁶³² However, I argue that divorce and marriage in this novel, beyond offering their own arguments for secession, outline the gendered structure of a state guided by nascent liberalism.⁶³³ In his construction of depraved British husbands and innocent, subjugated wives, Imlay theorizes the foundation of a new state as one dependent upon essentialized gender difference. Critically, that essentialized difference is narratable only through a conjectural history of gender relations, one that depends upon the concept of male savagery and female immobility for its cohesion. In the novel, marriage functions as a foundational social contract, one that operates on a specific set of gendered differences articulated through a progressive temporal schema. Imlay's conception of female virtue is central to his political argument, as his history of gender relations depends upon figures of women as innately virtuous and physiologically vulnerable.

⁶³² See Amanda Gilroy, "'Espousing the Cause of Oppressed Women': Cultural Captives in Gilbert Imlay's *The Emigrants*," *Revolutions & Watersheds: Transatlantic Dialogues, 1775-1815*. Ed. WM. Verhoeven and Beth Dolan Kautz. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999) 191-206, and Juliet Shields, "Genuine Sentiments and Gendered Liberties: Migration and Marriage in Gilbert Imlay's *The Emigrants*." *Atlantic Worlds in the Long Eighteenth Century: Seduction and Sentiment*. Ed. Tita Chico and Toni Bowers. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 33-47.

⁶³³ I draw from Elizabeth Dillon's discussion of gender and liberalism here. "Viewed historically," she writes, "we might say that liberal thought relies upon the transformation of sex and gender into ontological categories; these essentialized categories, in turn, underwrite the delimitation of women's activity to a prepolitical, private sphere together with the discursive production of men as idealized occupants of the public sphere." *Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere*. (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004) 14.

I begin this chapter by considering the work of conjectural history in the early American political imagination. The significance of conjectural history to early American political discourse has, I want to suggest, often been overlooked or misrecognized. Building from the authorial attribution error of the 1775 “Occasional Letter to the Female Sex,” I draw out the social and political implications of two histories of women: Antoine-Léonard Thomas’s 1772 *Essay on the Character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages* and William Alexander’s 1779 *History of Women, from the Greatest Antiquity to the Present* I then extend this reading to Imlay’s novel and the representation of unhappy marriages and the critique of the laws which constrain women through the inaccessibility to divorce. In my readings of the dissipated and abusive British husbands (all conveniently dead at the end of the novel), I draw out the novel’s delineation of two different conjectural histories, which are distinguished from one another by their respective views on gender relations and sexual difference. The novel overwhelmingly endorses the history outlined by in Thomas and Alexander, which naturalize gender relations as products of physiological difference.⁶³⁴ However, through the aristocratic character, Lord B-, *The Emigrants* traces an alternate, Hobbesian understanding of gender relations in the state of nature. This theorization is never fully addressed by the characters, but rather associated with the worst example of aristocratic excess and abuse, and thus eschewed. In the remainder of the chapter, I examine the captivity narrative and the (re)formation of marriage ties as constituent performances of the sexual contract,

⁶³⁴ Quotations from Thomas are from William Russell’s 1773 translation, published first in London and then in Paris and Philadelphia shortly after. As I discussed in my introduction, Russell’s translation incorporates selections from Scottish stadial theory, especially John Millar and Adam Ferguson.

performances that are both required for the foundation of the utopic community at the end of the novel and also illustrative of the gendered structure of the new state.

4.1 Bonds of Affection in Conjectural Communities

The confusion surrounding the authorship the “Occasional Letter to the Female Sex” is a useful illustration of how the significance of conjectural history as a mode of meaning making, particularly as it pertains to gender difference, has been elided. The first lines of the “Letter” are taken from Thomas Otway’s Restoration drama *Venice Preserved* (1682): “Oh woman! Lovely Woman!/Nature made thee to temper man, /We had been Brutes without you.”⁶³⁵ Spoken by Jaffeir, the tragic hero, to his beloved wife Belvidera, they ask the reader to consider “woman” as a historical category, one whose condition is relevant to the level of civility and polish a society has attained. They frame the text to follow, for the “Letter” discusses the plight of women throughout the ages. Long attributed to Thomas Paine, the “Letter” is constituted of the first pages of William Russell’s 1773 translation of Thomas’s *Essay*, which include Russell’s additions from John Millar’s 1771 *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* and Adam Ferguson’s 1768 *Essay on the History of Civil Society*. The “Letter” was first published in the August 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. Though historian Frank Smith conclusively proved that Paine did not, in fact, write the text of the letter as early as 1930, literary and feminist scholars, historians, and political scientists alike have continually tied the letter to Paine’s

⁶³⁵ Thomas Otway’s (1652-1685). Both *The Orphan, or The Unhappy Marriage* (1680), and *Venice Preserved*, Otway’s most successful plays, remained stock pieces well into the 19th century.

uniquely progressive vision of society.⁶³⁶ The result of this attribution error and its perpetuation is multifaceted. Firstly, it suggests that a modern understanding of feminism (i.e., equal political rights) was clearly articulated in the letter. As Mary Catherine Moran has pointed out, however, there is nothing in the letter “about individuals, male or female, no mention of revolutionary men or women, and the only right to which the article refers is a right to praise.” While the letter does “grant women a kind of equality,” it is “on the basis of the very different and suitably feminine virtues appropriate to wives and mothers.”⁶³⁷ The misreading of the letter creates the fantasy of Paine as protofeminist and even a fantasy of early feminism that did not exist—or at least was not articulated in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.⁶³⁸ The attribution error also associates the letter’s actual discussion of women, where they appear not as individuals with “rights,” but rather as a

⁶³⁶ Michael S. Kimmel and Charles Stephen find that Paine’s letter makes “the almost unheard of argument that if women were equally individuals, they were thus entitled to equal rights.” The letter, allegedly marked Paine as man ahead of his time, as a protofeminist, and according to historian Joan Hoff, a man who argued for women’s rights even when they themselves were “unresponsive to feminism.” “Only a most-radical male revolutionary like Thomas Paine,” Hoff writes, “asserted that revolutionary women be treated like men.” “Moreover it was Paine—not the female patriots—who also took advantage of American Revolutionary conditions to attack the institution of marriage,” she contends. Michael S. Kimmel, and Charles Stephens. Eds. *Social and Political Theory: Classical Readings*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007) 69. Frank Smith, “The Authorship of ‘An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex.’” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography*. 2 no. 3, (Nov. 1930) 277. Joan Hoff, *Law, Gender, and Injustice: A Legal History of U.S. Women*. (New York: NYU Press, 1994) 64.

⁶³⁷ Mary Catherine Moran, “*L’Essai sur les femmes/Essay on Women: An Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Journey*.” *History Workshop Journal*. 59. (2005), 28. My reading is indebted to Moran’s meticulous discussion of the Essay’s translations and misattributions.

⁶³⁸ The letter is included in Michael Kimmel and Thomas Mosmiller’s edited collection, *Against the Tide: Pro-feminist Men in the United States, 1776-1990*, for example.

category of historical analysis, with the political beliefs of a single man, rather in a transatlantic debate concerning the “theme of women and manners.”⁶³⁹

While contemporary scholars have mistakenly attributed the text to Paine, this is not likely the case with its contemporaneous audience. In fact, how the versions of the *Essai/Essay* were consumed and circulated is integral to understanding their importance as a thermometer of social and political thought. The attribution error obscures late eighteenth-century complexity of authorship and the transatlantic exchange of ideas.⁶⁴⁰ It also elides the way that the conjectural history of women was an important subject of transatlantic discussion during the eighteenth century. Thomas’s text and its translations situate women in a historical framework which seeks to explain not the actions of individual women, but rather to explain woman’s position in all societies “ancient and modern.” In these texts, women function as a category of historical analysis in a particular kind of history, one that speculates not only about the role of women in society but also about their “nature” which has *predetermined* that role. Understanding that the “letter” is an excerpt from a popular text rather than the product of a uniquely radical mind reveals a widespread curiosity in the hypothetical history of gender relations which it describes. It also, I argue, connects the political imagination of early America to the genre of conjectural history, which worked as a body of powerful images and political arguments during and after the Revolutionary war.

⁶³⁹ Moran, “*L’Essai sur les femmes/Essay on Women: An Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Journey*,” 18.

⁶⁴⁰ Before the institution of modern copyright, authors borrowed from one another in ways that, while confusing for the literary scholar and historian, allowed texts and ideas to be spread in a variety of media and contexts.

Drawing from conjectural history allowed early American writers to link the project of an independent government to the larger undertaking of perfecting and improving human society. The interest in this hypothetical history of gender relations was also accompanied by a change in the way people experienced, narrated, and imagined time, a change which had special significance for the decades surrounding separation from Britain. As Benedict Anderson has argued, the rise of modern nationalism was made possible in part by a shift in how people experienced time—both an ability to historicize and to experience simultaneity—and the birth of a print culture which fostered the latter and promoted linguistic homogeneity.⁶⁴¹ Newspapers were especially central to both of these changes, and the number of periodicals published in the United States quadrupled in the years after the revolution, which suggests that in the years following independence, periodicals like the *Pennsylvania Magazine* served as an important way to articulate the collective sense of the new “nation”—to develop the “imagined community” that was the early United States. The widespread interest in the discussions of women’s nature imbedded in conjectural histories like Thomas’s during this period suggests that gendered narratives and how those narratives understood time play a central part in newly imagined political communities in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

The Emigrants has not received a great deal of critical attention, though the body of work that does address it has pointed out the novel’s contradictions and its political use of romantic and sexualized tropes. As Karsten Piep observes, “Despite its demand for radical social reforms, the novel tends to reinscribe traditional gender roles and class

⁶⁴¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (New York: Verso, 2006), 24, 44.

hierarchies.”⁶⁴² In a similar vein, Amanda Gilroy argues that “Imlay’s celebration of national difference, the superiority of America against England (and, more generally, Europe), continues to reify the female other as (European) possession or spectacle.”⁶⁴³ Thus *The Emigrants* mirrors other sentimental novels in the 1790’s in its treatment of female powerlessness, but “it also transforms women’s rights, or lack thereof, in marriage into a marker of national identity.”⁶⁴⁴ The way American, as opposed to British, men treat women, the way they take “pity” on them, rather than advantage, becomes a national characteristic of the men of Imlay’s novel, and later, of the idealistic new community those men create, an “*imagined separatist community of transatlantic dissidents*.”⁶⁴⁵ Separating from the corrupted cities of the East, Imlay’s “emigrants” seek to create a new state, one more in conformity to the “codes of nature.” Thus the novel “frames the issue of ‘domestic bondage’ in terms of the larger political question of self-determination,” using the tropes of marriage and divorce to make its case for a new community.⁶⁴⁶

However, I argue that in the novel, marriage is not a stand-in for a discussion of broader political rights, but is in itself Imlay’s central political argument: the main reason he provides for the creation of Bellefont is the need to reorganize the sexual order so that

⁶⁴² Karsten H. Piep, “Separatist Nationalism in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 6 no. 4 (2004), 3.

⁶⁴³ For Gilroy, “the novel demonstrates how the American Revolution ultimately failed women.” “‘Espousing the Cause of Oppressed Women’: Cultural Captives in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 192, 200.

⁶⁴⁴ Juliet Shields, “Genuine Sentiments and Gendered Liberties: Migration and Marriage in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 37.

⁶⁴⁵ “As much national-builders as colonists,” Piep argues, “Imlay’s emigrant pioneers create a spatio-temporal reality for themselves that somehow transcends the geographical, economical, and political confines of nascent creole nationalism,” “Separatist Nationalism in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 4.

⁶⁴⁶ Piep, “Separatist Nationalism in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 7.

the fixed differences between men and women are recognized, rather than disregarded. These differences, I argue, make up Imlay's "code of nature."⁶⁴⁷ In his treatment of unhappy marriages, Imlay proposes the foundation of a new, utopic state, one that must reimagine and reenact the sexual contract before it can begin. In this act of reimagining and reenacting, Imlay draws from contemporaneous conjectural history by employing the fixed concepts of gender evident in Thomas's text. *The Emigrants* contains a narrative mode of conjectural history because Imlay uses the novelistic form to intervene in the at once hypothetical and historical gender relations. The novel recreates localized states of nature so that his characters to perform first the sexual, and then the social contracts, tracing the movement of his female characters from "oppressed" to "adored." This chapter considers the temporality of conjectural history, which combines the timelessness of the state of nature ("antiquity") with the historicized idea of progress and the simultaneous idea of "the present time," to be a central element in Imlay's novel and a key feature of his political argument.

The Emigrants' use of marriage and divorce to convey the necessity of reform and revolution reflects a discursive tendency in the last quarter of the eighteenth-century to turn to the vocabulary of voluntaristic marriage. This vocabulary was an effective and widely used tool for articulating political sentiments and calls to action. The frequency with which writers drew from this language increased threefold after the Revolutionary war.⁶⁴⁸ The popularity of the trope of voluntaristic marriage in early American

⁶⁴⁷ *The Emigrants*, 110.

⁶⁴⁸ A survey of American magazines between 1741 and 1794 shows that "in the thirty-year period before the war there is on average one reference to romantic love per four issues; in the twenty-year period immediately following the war, the number more than triples." Furthermore, between the years of 1776 and 1794, "happiness" was given as the

periodicals speaks to the importance of contractual relationships in the new republic, and the desire that all social relationships be entered into voluntarily and that, if the terms of the contract are unfulfilled by either or both parties, the contract can be dissolved.⁶⁴⁹

Arguing against the plight of women in unhappy marriages was a way to sentimentalize the political argument for separation from Britain. There was an emotionally powerful correspondence between the political “reordering” of society and the “reordering of marriage as a social institution.”⁶⁵⁰ But while divorce was slightly easier to obtain in the post-revolutionary United States than in Britain or other European countries, the laws themselves remained fundamentally the same. As Amanda Gilroy and W.M. Verhoeven observe, “there is a gap between the rhetoric and the reality of revolution, and the women of the new republic remained constrained [in marriage].”⁶⁵¹

There is, then, a stark difference between the force with which the institution of marriage was critiqued and the resistance to reforming divorce laws. This gap gains coherence when we situate the debate about marriage in the context of conjectural

motive for marriage more frequently than wealth, which underscores the importance of unions being voluntary and informed by personal sentiment. The statistics cited here were drawn from 546 periodicals, “98 published between 1741 and 1775, and 447 published between 1776 and 1794.” The study was originally designed to investigate the “sociological opinion that the romantic love complex developed early in the nineteenth century along with industrialization” Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution Against Patriarchal Authority, 1750-1800*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982), 137.

⁶⁴⁹ Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims*, 124.

⁶⁵⁰ Norma Basch, *Framing American Divorce: From the Revolutionary Generation to the Victorians*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999) 20.

⁶⁵¹ “Only in Pennsylvania,” they explain, “was a new divorce law adopted as a part of republican renovation. Elsewhere, divorce required a private bill in the state legislature, which took both financial and political clout to achieve,” “Introduction.” *The Emigrants, or the History of an Expatriated Family, Being a Delineation of English Manners, Drawn from Real Characters, Written in America*. (New York: Penguin, 1998), xxxvii.

history, for while the revolution was represented as America's "collective divorce from Great Britain," it also served as a way to discuss the most fundamental of social contracts.⁶⁵² In the latter function, the discussion of unhappy marriages depended upon, supported, and circulated a concept of female nature that was rooted in physical (even biologized) weakness. In this schema, the different manners and behaviors of women were ultimately the result of how men either took advantage of or took pity on them in their helpless condition. Imagining an unhappily married woman paired with a savage or brutal man, and her separation from that man also figures as a way of intervening in the social contract, or intervening in the progress of humanity as a species. Narrating unions based on mutual sentiment, was a way to imagine an intervention in the gender dynamics that have, according to Thomas, existed "in all times, and in all places."

The publication of the "Occasional letter," and the various printings of its source texts in Philadelphia, as well as the transatlantic journey of those source texts during the years leading up to the Revolutionary war, reveal an important context for the frequency with which the language of voluntaristic marriage was used. Articulating the process of founding a new state—of making a new social contract—occurred in the language of marriage because this process, as Carol Pateman has pointed out, started first with the sexual contract, or the hidden and displaced moment of sexual subjection of women to men which precedes the social contract itself.⁶⁵³ While the sexual contract occurs even before the marriage contract, the former is often displaced by the latter; this may explain why the narration of the sexual contract in literature is almost always accompanied by

⁶⁵² Basch, *Framing American Divorce: From the Revolutionary Generation to the Victorians*. 4.

⁶⁵³ Carol Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford University Press, CA: 1988.

conjugal union. Pateman argues that the social contract theory is the origin story of modern patriarchy, that while paternal right may have been overthrown by contract, this did not alter the sexual contract. Rather, paternal right was supplanted by fraternal right, and thus the civic liberty associated with contract is still firmly a masculine one. In her work on gender and liberalism, Elizabeth Dillon approaches similar questions, but highlights the criticality of “women’s private position...to liberalism since its inception.”⁶⁵⁴ Rather than being excluded from liberalism, she argues, women are located within its structure in a way that “historically helps to create the very meaning of the word ‘woman’ as we know it.” Central to this structure is the emergence of the two-sex model of gender, since “liberalism relies heavily on a binary model of sex and gender” which it also creates; these essentialized binaries “underwrite the delimitation of women’s activity to a prepolitical, private sphere together with the discursive production of men as idealized occupants of the public sphere.”⁶⁵⁵ This ontology of gender is inextricable from white supremacy, as “the figure of the private woman is insistently defined as white.”⁶⁵⁶ In this context, the conjectural history offered in Thomas’s *Essay*, narrated in Imlay’s *The Emigrants*, and circulated as the “Occasional Letter to the Female Sex” emerge as the crucial discursive convergence of gendered history determined by essentialized sexual difference and widely disseminated during a time of acute political upheavals which would produce lasting political and social divisions.

⁶⁵⁴ *The Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere*. (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004) 3.

⁶⁵⁵ *The Gender of Freedom*, 3, 14.

⁶⁵⁶ *The Gender of Freedom*, 3.

Thomas's *Essai sur le caractere, les moeurs et l'esprit des femmes dans les différens siècles* was first published in Paris in January of 1772. While it received a derisive critique from Denis Diderot,⁶⁵⁷ it was reviewed in Britain after its translation by William Russell.⁶⁵⁸ Neither was Russell Thomas's only translator; Jemima Kindersley put out her own edition, "with two original essays," in London in 1781.⁶⁵⁹ In his *The History of Women, from the Earliest Antiquity, to the Present Time*, a text which promises to give "an account of almost every interesting particular of that sex, among all nations," and which also enjoyed a wide transatlantic circulation, William Alexander draws from either Russell or Thomas; though he rewrites the sentences, much of his content is the same. In particular, his opening paragraphs to the fifth chapter of *The History* "On the treatment and condition of women, and the various advantages and disadvantages of their sex, in savage and civil life," mirror the language in Russell's translation. Published in 1773 in Edinburgh, Russell's translation of Thomas's *Essay* was reprinted in 1774 in Philadelphia by the Scottish-born Robert Aitken. Aitken was a friend and colleague of Paine, and was also the publisher of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, the

⁶⁵⁷ Diderot's 1772 *Sur les femmes*, published in *Correspondance littéraire*, responded to Thomas's *Essai*.

⁶⁵⁸ Ralph Griffiths, a reviewer in the *Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*, found that "The subject of the essay is extremely curious and interesting, and treated in a manner equally instructive and entertaining," "Review of *Essai fur le Caractere, les Mœurs et L'Esprit del Femmes dans les different Siecles. — An Essay on the Character, Manners and Genius of Women in different Ages.*" *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*. Vol. 47. (July 1772-1773), 522. The *Essai* "enjoyed a broad circulation (a copy of the work was found in David Hume's library)" and went through "at least three French printings, along with several English editions published in both Britain and America," Moran, "L'Essai sur les femmes/Essay on Women: An Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Journey," 18.

⁶⁵⁹ Kindersley's 1777 *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies* had already garnered her a significant readership.

periodical in which the “Occasional letter” appeared.⁶⁶⁰ While Russell’s notion of translation is rather loose at times, and though he, like Kindersley, adds a chapter of his own text (“Of the Progress of Society in Britain, and of the Character, Manners, and Talents of the British Women” appears in the second volume), his “improvement” supplements, rather than rewrites, the original text. The “Occasional letter” includes the first 18 pages of Russell’s translation of Thomas, beginning with the following, which is a direct translation of the original (without additions):

If we take a survey of ages and countries, we will find the women—almost without exception—at all times, and in all places, adored and oppressed. Man, who has never neglected an opportunity of exerting his power, in paying homage to their beauty, has always availed himself of their weakness. He has been at once their tyrant and their slave. Nature herself, in forming beings so susceptible and tender, appears to have been more attentive to their charms than to their happiness. Continually surrounded with griefs and fears, the women more than share all our miseries, and are besides subjected to ills which are peculiarly their own. They cannot be the means of life without exposing themselves to the loss of it. Every revolution which they undergo alters their health, and threatens their existence. Cruel distempers attack their beauty—and the hour which confirms their release from those, is perhaps the most melancholy of their lives. It robs them of the most essential, and, in some respects, the most endearing characteristic of their sex. They can then only hope for protection from the humiliating claims of pity, or the feeble voice of gratitude.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁶⁰ Moran notes that the fact that Aitken did not specify the source is strange, since most publishers would use such a text as an opportunity to market their book. However, Smith points out that Russell’s *Essay* was advertised in the very same issue, which suggests that either the editor forgot to connect the advertisement to the letter, or that the reader would assume one was tied to the other. The fact that it was printed without signature or attribution is most likely due to either of these causes, rather than a desire for Paine to take credit for Thomas’s words. Moran, “*L’Essai sur les femmes/Essay on Women: An Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Journey*,” 18, Smith, “The Authorship of ‘An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex,’” 278.

⁶⁶¹ Thomas, Antoine-Léonard. *Essay on the Character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages*. Trans. Russell, William. London, 1773. (Published in Paris, London, Philadelphia), 1-3.

While the *Essay* positions itself as a “survey of all ages,” its central effect in these opening paragraphs is to naturalize women’s position in society as a consequence of their anatomies. The subordination women have allegedly experienced in all cultures and in all historical periods, the *Essay* explains, is a product simultaneously of natural inferiority and desirability. The dual experience of being “adored and oppressed” is a universal one, characterized by both physical weakness and psychological distress. Here the position of women as adored and oppressed creatures is presented as a cruel trick of a personified nature more focused on women’s “charms” than their “happiness.” The essay constructs an experience of womanhood delimited by physical limitations. Women’s beauty attracts men’s attention (adoration and oppression). Maternity is represented as an almost inevitable experience of extreme vulnerability, and is followed by a gendered melancholy, a product of the realization that, after the loss of beauty, they must become beggars for basic protections.

Women are “beings so susceptible and tender” that they are easily put under the power of men, and the variation of their manners is tied to the various level of oppression they endure. The fact that women give birth to children is not represented as a unique ability, but rather as a burden that generates a constant “fear” of death. And lastly, when women have lost their most “endearing” quality—their beauty—they can “only hope for protection from the humiliating claims of pity, or the feeble voice of gratitude.” Here we can see a naturalization of the oppression of women, but also an articulation of a biologized concept of sexual difference, both of which are linked to a narrative of progressive social evolution. Indeed, women’s “manners” stem from their bodies. Women are “adored” because of their beauty, and “oppressed” because of their

weakness—neither of which are mutable nor the products of learned behaviors. Even in William Alexander’s slightly less gloomy version of these paragraphs, women suffer the consequences of male ‘adoration,’ which is the natural response to their beauty, but which they cannot prevent or rectify:

There is in the fate of women something exceedingly singular; they have at all periods, and almost in all countries, been, by our sex, constantly oppressed and adored. And what renders their case still more extraordinary, is, that we have not oppressed, because we hated, but because we loved them. We have not in Asia and Africa confined them, because, like the lion, and the tyger, we were afraid of depredations; but because we were unwilling that any body should share with us the pleasure and enjoyment of their company. We have not in Europe assumed almost the sole management of affairs, because we were afraid that they would manage them to our prejudice, but only to save them the trouble of thought and of labour.⁶⁶²

In this version, Alexander stresses that women are oppressed because of adoration and love, rather than fear or hatred. Alexander’s *History* replaces the image of a timeless, miserable struggle of the sexes which Thomas’s and Russell’s text brings to mind, and instead portrays woman as a favorite pet, a creature of which you are fond and with whom you wouldn’t want to part. All three versions make vivid the connection between physical beauty, love, and the absence of powers of self-determination. Adoration of female beauty, they suggest, cannot be separated from a need to possess and to subjugate. Central to both Thomas’s text and Russell’s translation is the idea that female nature is indeed “fixed”—it is historically flat, unchanging, and ultimately corrupted or preserved by men. While women might work as a “civilizing force” on men (“we had been Brutes without you!”), this is not a feature of their agency, but rather their subjugation.

⁶⁶² William Alexander, *History of Women, from the Greatest Antiquity to the Present; Giving Some concerning that Sex, among all Nations, ancient and modern*. (London: Printed for W. Strahan, 1779) 102.

This fixed notion of female nature, however, does not simply seek to explain the “manners” and “abilities” of women; it also seeks to describe social organization and evolution of society as a result of that “nature” and its relationship to the nature of men. It outlined, and naturalized, a social and political structure in which women were bound to a “prepolitical, private sphere” while men were “discursively produc[ed]...as idealized occupants of the public sphere.”⁶⁶³ This move “requires defining women as individuals constitutively unable to exercise choice and agency,” which both Thomas’s and Alexander’s texts do by ascribing to women’s bodies physical limitations which preclude choice and agency. Thomas and Alexander’s insistence on the vulnerabilities which women’s bodies naturally possess underscores the fact that it not only essentialized difference which naturalizes their position within the structure of liberalism, but how that difference is epitomized in their inferiority on the anatomical level. This is the central discursive move which positions them in a prepolitical space, for while “liberalism imputes an equality of agency among all individuals,” women are automatically debarred from being “individuals” because their “bodies “have been seen to constrain and encumber them,” and so they “have been understood to lack the constitutive agency that would enable them to participate in liberal subjectivity.”⁶⁶⁴ Thomas’s conjectural history, and other similar texts, illustrates that the discursive production of essentialized difference and the structure of liberalism that it authorized are naturalized through its purportedly historical dimension. In the context of emergent liberalism in late eighteenth-

⁶⁶³ Elizabeth Dillon, *The Gender of Freedom*, 14. Dillon does not consider the public/private distinction as an accurate representation of lived experiences, but rather an ideological tool that positioned women, Indigenous peoples, and African-Americans as “unable to exercise choice and agency,” 11.

⁶⁶⁴ Dillon, *The Gender of Freedom*, 11.

century United States, Thomas's text epitomizes the mechanisms of the temporalization of difference, in which the time of difference ("at all times") becomes tied to the time of natural history and thus presents social relations ("adored and oppressed") as immutable ("in all places").

An important and consistent feature of histories of women including Thomas's text is silent assumption that "woman" as a category of historical analysis is always white. Women in "savage" countries abound in these texts, but the temporal division present in the history of women positions women in the present, the female occupants of modernity, as white. The recurrent comparisons between women's positions and slavery illustrate this in the most fundamental way with the frequency of the simile—marriage was *like* "a state of captivity," women were *like* slaves in marriage, women were *like* "Negroes bought and sold at a *West-India* fair."⁶⁶⁵ Or, as the anonymous author of the 1735 *The Hardships of the English Laws in Relation to Wives* claimed, "that the Estate of Wives is more disadvantageous than Slavery itself."⁶⁶⁶ While the language of bondage was used to critique women's access to freedoms, its structures presupposed that, as Dillon points out, "the figure of the private woman is insistently defined as white."⁶⁶⁷ At the intersection of savagery and femininity, marriage and enslavement, and adoration and oppression, fashioning coherence out of these paradoxical comparisons, is a temporal framework of difference which juxtaposes the stagnation of 'savagery' with the immobility of women. As Silvia Sebastiani explains, "slavery characterized...both the

⁶⁶⁵ Anonymous, *The Hardships of the English Laws in Relation to Wives*, (London: Printed for W. Bowyer, 1735), 6. Anonymous, *Women's Superior Excellence over Man*, (London: Printed for Jacob Robinson, 1740) 69.

⁶⁶⁶ Anonymous, *The Hardships of the English Laws in Relation to Wives*, 4.

⁶⁶⁷ *The Gender of Freedom*, 3.

past—and in many countries still the present—history of women and the modern history of non-European peoples. By contrast, in European society women had trod the path toward liberty, whereas the independence of savages had ended with their subjection by conquistadors and colonists.”⁶⁶⁸ Thus while it was the “natural differences between the sexes” which “condemned women in savage societies to a state of misery,” the progressive stadial schema “promised their liberation from slavery from the very beginning, by means of the gradual development of human manners and feelings.”⁶⁶⁹ “Their liberation,” however,” only ever means “white” women, since the simile itself (women were *like* “Negroes bought and sold at a *West-India* fair) precludes enslaved and displaced African and Indigenous women from fully occupying the category “woman” itself.

Conjectural histories required this discourse of savagery in order to narrate their theories of historical gender relations. The remainder of the “Occasional Letter” turns to this discourse, drawing from Millar and Ferguson, who in turn draw from travel writing about the Americas. While the travel narratives themselves, though they misrepresent and misread Indigenous cultures with high frequency, record a diversity of languages and cultures. Through the conjectural prism, however, these become a thread in the uniform tapestry of savagery:

More than one half of the globe is covered with savages; and among all these people women are completely wretched. Man, in a state of barbarity, equally cruel and indolent, active by necessity, but naturally inclined to repose, is acquainted with little more than the physical effects of love; and, having none of those moral ideas which only can soften the empire of force, he is led to consider it as his

⁶⁶⁸ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress*. Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) 137.

⁶⁶⁹ Silvia Sebastiani, *Scottish Enlightenment*, 139.

supreme law, subjecting to his despotism those whom reason had made his equal, but whose imbecility betrayed them to his strength. “Nothing” (says Professor Miller, speaking of the women of barbarous nations) “can exceed the dependence and subjection in which they are kept, or the toil and drudgery which they are obliged to undergo. The husband, when he is not engaged in some warlike exercise, indulges himself in idleness, and devolves upon his wife the whole burden of his domestic affairs. He disdains to assist her in any of those servile employments. She sleeps in a different bed, and is seldom permitted to have any conversation or correspondence with him....The women among the Indians of America are what the Helots were among the Spartans, a vanquished people, obliged to toil for their conquerors. Hence on the banks of the Oroonoko, we have seen mothers slaying their daughters out of compassion, and smothering them in the hour of their birth. They consider this barbarous pity as a virtue.”⁶⁷⁰

The temporalization of difference here works behind the alibi of space. While “savagery” is a condition that covers “one half of the globe,” it is also condition of time, an occupation in a less advanced “stage” of human progression. Thomas thus inscribes this universal history of gender relations into the colonial map of the world; rendered in terms of difference which, through omission, position white, European men as the universal human, this universal temporal schema validates itself through the “empire of force” which is generated by essentialized sexual difference. “Savage” women are “wretched” under this empire, and the condition of savagery is epitomized in the Americas, where their existence is characterized by “subjection and dependence,” and “toil and drudgery”: the women in “barbarous countries” are “a vanquished people.” Figures of Indigenous women serve as raw material for these histories, appearing at moments when writers need to critique contemporaneous sets of relations and when those relations are naturalized through essentialized difference. Beyond this, however, they disappear; the implication is

⁶⁷⁰ Thomas, Antoine-Léonard. *Essay on the Character, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different Ages*. Trans. Russell, William. London, 1773. (Published in Paris, London, Philadelphia), 3-5.

that they cannot be liberated since they are in the wrong time. Indeed, the ‘rescue’ of ‘savage’ women is impossible, since the colonization and theft of their lands is a fundamental driving force of the “commercial” age which lends Europe its modernity, and, in turn, its allegedly more ‘civilized’ attitude toward women. *The Emigrants* employment of discourse of savagery reflects a similar theorization of hypothetical, historical gender relations. Like Thomas’s *Essay* and Alexander’s *History*, Imlay’s novel associates savagery with masculinity, and femininity with whiteness; thus while ‘savage’ male characters, both European and Indigenous, are abundant in the text, the Indigenous woman appears only momentarily, and silently watches as the white protagonist, Caroline, is rescued from a faint.

4.2 Imlay’s Conjectural History

In late eighteenth-century America, conjectural history became a useful tool for critiquing laws which did allegedly did not conform to “the codes of nature,” and a powerful device for narrating and proposing new political ideas, and, in Imlay’s case, new political settlements. *The Emigrants* serves as the continuation of Imlay’s socio-political thought first articulated in his extremely successful *Topographical Description*, a manifesto of settler colonialism which suggests that Indigenous people should either “assimilate or be annihilated.”⁶⁷¹ In a letter describing the “rapid population of the western country,” the narrator explains to his friend residing in England that while Indigenous “prowess and determined resolution will, no doubt, annoy our army...our

⁶⁷¹ Gilroy and Verhoeven, “Introduction,” xli. Both *The Emigrants* and *A Topographical Description* are epistolary.

numbers have grown too considerable; for defeats only invigorate our measures, while the loss of every man, to nations whose populations is so extremely tardy as that of the savages of America, is a lamentable consideration.”⁶⁷² The *Topographical Description* presents the settling of the territories, then, as the inevitable displacement of “savages” whose “tardy” population recalls the absence of sexual desire among “savage men” outlined in Thomas’s *Essay*. Invested in the doctrine of physiocracy, which contended that “government policy should not interfere with the operations of natural economic laws” because “liberty follows trade and commerce, not the other way around,” both novel and description delight in “contemplating the vast field of the American empire.”⁶⁷³ *The Emigrants* details the benefits of migration, reasons which extended beyond the fertility of the land to the potential of that land for political and social rebirth, and, of course, for the generation of wealth. Verhoeven and Gilroy suggest that the novel may not have been published in the United States because of its separatist agenda, or even its sentimental form, then seen as an example of “individual excess at a time when national consensus was paramount.”⁶⁷⁴ Indeed, while much of the novel is constituted with sentimental epistolary exchange, the correspondence between the central female character, Caroline, and her uncle, Mr. P.P., serves as an area for an ongoing political discussion concerning natural rights.

⁶⁷² *A Topographical Description*, 79, 81.

⁶⁷³ Gilroy and Verhoeven, “Introduction,” xix, Imlay, *A Topographical Description*, 74.

⁶⁷⁴ Gilroy and Verhoeven, “Introduction,” xv. Piep speculates that “Given Imlay’s stern rejection of conventional morality and his thinly veiled separatist notions” in the novel, “American publishers quietly opted not to intensify the raging controversy between Federalists and Anti-Federalists that threatened the very fabric of the young republic and in 1798 led to the passage of the Alien and Sedition Act,” “Separatist Nationalism in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 3.

Considering that Imlay had a vested economic interest in this settlement, it is unsurprising that the novel is filled with overblown encomiums for the land. Imlay's treatment of the Eastern cities of America, however, demonstrates that his political objective for the novel is not only to encourage emigration from Europe, but also to lay the foundation for secession from the Eastern United States. Following the logic of the novel, and of *A Topographical Description*, Philadelphia, for example, is already contaminated with European depravity; characterized by "extravagance" and "dissipation," which "The English and French manners had introduced during the late war," the city is, for Imlay at least, more closely associated with the sins of Paris and London than the promise of Kentucky and Ohio.⁶⁷⁵ As the novel draws to a close, it is clear that if Imlay's chosen few want to live a life of virtue and happiness, they must start anew in the Western territories. The new Republic in the East is not quite new enough, not quite pure enough, and does not allow for the birth of the political (and sexual) order Imlay imagines. Thus his chosen characters must not only separate themselves from Europe, they must also separate themselves from the United States.

Despite the novel's separatist politics are radical, it relies for the most part on familiar rhetoric tied to the American Revolutionary war. Drawing from a discourse of natural rights and the Enlightenment traditions of utopian, progressive thought, Imlay rebels against patriarchal authority and criticizes the customs of the old world, which he sees as on the brink of moral collapse. For Imlay, "custom" stands in for unnatural and unenlightened European law, and its social counterpart may be "etiquette," a synonym in the novel for deceit, superficiality, and self-interest. Etiquette is contrasted with the

⁶⁷⁵ *The Emigrants*, 55.

American “simplicity of manners natural to a people in a state of innocence.”⁶⁷⁶ The “simplicity” of manners is a product of the pure American landscape as well as a product of the innate virtue of Imlay’s favored characters. Imlay’s most obvious rhetorical tool in his critique of European political culture is of course his use of marriage and divorce. The ease with which the comparison between Britain’s tyranny over America and a husband’s tyranny over a wife was made rests upon the fact that the ideological justification for the United States’ separation from Britain stemmed from a critique of traditional patriarchal thought. Indeed, many contemporaneous pieces of literature tie that critique of patriarchy directly to American patriotism.⁶⁷⁷

Imlay’s use of the British/American, Husband/Wife comparison, then, is in line with his political and literary contemporaries and is unsurprising considering his goal of encouraging emigration to the new country and of critiquing the vices of the old one. In each relationship, one could easily identify an oppressed “innocent” and a dictatorial master. The success of the analogy in Imlay’s novel, then, depends upon the identification between the reader, the characters, and the female victims of marital oppression. As such, Imlay’s sentimental language is more than a convention of the day: it is the political tool with which he achieves his goal. But his ultimate aim is not simply to justify the separation of the United States with Britain (already completed), but also to offer a logic by which the pure, unadulterated Western territories may separate from the Eastern United States. While the premise of this separation may be similar to the separation of the colonies from Britain—the idea is to start a new nation—it cannot rest

⁶⁷⁶ From Imlay’s *Description*, quoted in Gilroy and Verhoeven, “Introduction,” xv.

⁶⁷⁷ For example, Royall Tyler’s 1787 play *The Contrast*.

on a Jacobin critique of traditional patriarchal thought. Influenced as they may have been by Europe's dissipated manners, Philadelphia and New York were still cities in a republic, not a monarchy. It is because of these secessionist goals that Imlay's use of the marriage analogy must inevitably participate in conjectural history for support. Imlay's critique of British politics (and European culture more broadly) is performed through a critique of gendered relationships rather than a critique of Patriarchal government. Because his political ideology is actually quite similar to the ideology described in the language of the American revolution, Imlay must find cause for separation that does not depend on a critique of Monarchy, of paternal political right, or on a critique of inherited rank and title. Because he seeks to create a Republic of his own, he cannot offer a critique of a Republic government of the United States either. Thus Imlay's argument is that the Eastern United States has been poisoned by the cultural inheritance from Britain and Europe—and that cultural inheritance is described largely in gendered terms.

Imlay's separatist politics infuse the comparison between tyrannical Britain/brutish husband and America/oppressed wife with meaning that extends beyond the dynamics of contemporary marital relationships to gender relations in a broader historical sense. Through the novel, Imlay theorizes the start of a new state, in a land that had been used as a theoretical tool with which to imagine the 'state of nature' for over three centuries. In so doing, Imlay's text also makes implicit formulations of the sexual contract and the inherent nature of gender relations and of sexual difference. In fact, because Imlay's critique of the Eastern United States cannot rest on a critique of patriarchy, his theorization of the innate differences between men and women *becomes* his central political argument. This new state must be produced precisely because the old

world, dissipated, effeminate, and impotent, can no longer protect, or, in the words of Imlay's Mr. Il—ray, even “relish” its women properly. Imlay's argument for a new state, at its heart, relies on gender and on his conception of the innate nature of women and men.

Because he cannot critique the republic as a political institution, Imlay must fix his critical gaze on the individuals who live in it: his representation of their morals, their society, their pastimes, even their moods constitute the material of his political argument. *The Emigrants*, like many sentimental novels, appears in epistolary form; it is important to note, however, that during the 1790s, epistolary texts were viewed as dangerous and even revolutionary. “At a time when national political consensus was thought to be paramount,” Verhoeven and Gilroy point out, the epistolary novel was regarded in conservative circles as an example of “individual excess.” The personal letter entered into the public sphere more frequently, and the success of radical correspondence societies rendered the personal letter, “traditionally seen as an authentic document of the self,” a potential “agent of conspiracy.”⁶⁷⁸ Imlay's characters, both virtuous and dissipated, play an important role in his political argument, and one can see that their letters serve as “document[s] of the self” in order to illustrate which “selves” should and should not be incorporated into Imlay's new world utopia.

The novel tells the tale of the T—n family, which consists of two absentee parents, Mr. and Mrs. T—n, and their four children, Eliza, Mary, Caroline, and George. The novel begins when the T—ns have to leave England because of their declining fortune. The blame is largely laid on Mrs. T—n and her not-so-subtly named son George,

⁶⁷⁸ Gilroy and Verhoeven, “Introduction,” xv

the former who dotes on the latter, and the latter who refuses to find useful employment and instead spends his nights and his family's money entertaining himself. The luxurious lifestyle promoted by Mrs. T—n and her son is epitomized by their residence in the West end, the fashionable part of town near Buckingham Palace and St. James place, where aristocrats lived during the reign of George III.⁶⁷⁹ Once they arrive in the States, the family travels by caravan to Pittsburgh and through the Allegheny Mountains to reach Kentucky, where they briefly set up a farm. In letters related both by Caroline and Captain Arl—ton, we learn that the family meets a stranger early on in this journey, who turns out to be the T—n girls' long lost uncle, P.P. (the brother to Mrs. T—n). Ultimately, Mr. and Mrs. T—n and their eldest daughter Mary return to England when Mr. P.P. gets a large inheritance from a relative. George, the libertine son, goes on a trip to Philadelphia to get the family allowance (what little they have left) with which they plan to sustain their home and farm. However, he spends it all in gambling, drinking, and other unsavory activities. After going to England and spending some time in a debtor's prison (from which P.P. redeems him), he reforms and returns to America.

The central love plot in the novel is between Caroline, the virtuous, youngest T—n daughter, and Captain Arl—ton, a veteran of the Revolutionary war. Their relationship is complicated by the strength of their sentiment when it encounters misunderstandings familiar to any reader of eighteenth-century novels. Most notable of these misunderstandings is a note that the spiteful Mary writes to the Captain as Caroline, which conveys a coldness that Caroline never had in person. This first note occurs early on, and spurs the Captain to take a long trip away from the family. After he has returned

⁶⁷⁹ *The Emigrants*, 29.

and renewed his courtship with Caroline, he receives another note, and leaves again for some months. Caroline is depressed and confused by his actions. When Caroline is kidnapped by Indians, we discover that Mary penned both notes; her guilt and worry make her confess. Mary is characterized as “that kind of being which is rather an ornament to a drawing-room, than a useful piece of furniture” by Mrs. W-- in a letter to Ms. R--, a comparison that clearly links Mary to the luxurious world of Europe and her disposition to that of her mother.⁶⁸⁰ It also suggests, of course, that what a good woman is, is a “useful piece of furniture.” Despite Mary’s spiteful actions, the Captain is reunited with Caroline when he accidentally intercepts the Indians who captured her. The Captain and Caroline marry, and settle with P.P. (who ‘adopts’ Caroline), George, Mr. and Mrs. W, Eliza F--, and Ms. R/Mrs. S, who, we’re led to believe, marries the reformed George in the near future, while Mr. Il—ray pairs up with the widowed Eliza. Mr. P.P. dissolves the fortune left to him in England, settling some upon Mr. and Mrs. T—n and Mary, setting George free, and then putting the rest in trust for Caroline and Captain Arl—ton and their new life in Imlay’s utopic colony, Bellefont.

While the romance between Caroline and Captain Arl—ton is vital to the plotline, Caroline’s relationship with her uncle, Mr. P.P., is in some ways the central connection in the novel. Mr. P.P. is taken with Caroline immediately, in part because he sees a resemblance between his niece and his late beloved wife, Julianna, and he asks for permission to call on Caroline even before the familial nature of their tie is uncovered. Their correspondence is the main venue for explicit political discussion in the novel,

⁶⁸⁰ *The Emigrants*, 20.

though the issue of divorce is their main discussion point—the central touchstone of their conversations. Indeed, the letters between them are the vehicle not only for political debate but also political conversion: after a lengthy exchange with her uncle, Caroline finally consents that divorce laws must be reformed, an idea to which she was originally opposed. While Mr. P.P. is *not* Caroline's father, his position as uncle, as an older male relative, lends him authority to be interested in her affairs, her behavior, and her future. Thus Caroline's political conversion occurs through rational discussion, through their exchange of letters, rather than through familial compulsion. It is through the relation of his personal history that Mr. P.P. alters Caroline's view on divorce (and then, as if by domino effect, her beliefs about politics more generally). By using the figure of the uncle, then, Imlay demonstrates how a young woman maybe be persuaded by male authority, rather than compelled by force.

Imlay uses the exchange between the misinformed but well-meaning Caroline and her wiser, more enlightened uncle to make his central political arguments and to critique the theorists who are critical of the doctrine of natural rights. Caroline's views on divorce and on natural rights appear to be largely influenced by those of Edmund Burke and Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, both of whom were vocal figures concerning the French Revolution and the political ideals which motivated it. Imlay's association between Caroline and Burkean thought is interesting considering Burke's advocacy for the American colonies before the Revolutionary war, and his push for a quick reconciliation and acknowledgement of U.S. political independence after the break in 1776.⁶⁸¹ In using

⁶⁸¹ Burke supported colonial objections to taxes levied in in the 1770's. For his attitude on reconciliation, see "On Conciliation with the Colonies" (1775).

Burke to describe Caroline's thoughts, Imlay's chooses a political figure who, while sympathetic to the complaints of the colonies, has expressed more criticism than support of revolutionary behavior in general. Burke may acknowledge some principles of the doctrine of natural rights, but with a view in mind to preserve rather than to challenge tradition, and in particular social roles. Similarly, Talleyrand's association with the French Revolution and with revolutionary principles was, at the time of the novel's publication, still quite strong. In her defense of current marital law, Caroline echoes Talleyrand's 1791 "Report on Public on Public Instruction," a text that aims to address the apparent hypocrisy of gender inequality and revolutionary principles. Imlay's use of Talleyrand in Caroline's political views is a critique of contemporary revolutionary ideas insofar as they fail to strike the root of the problem: gender relations and marital law more specifically.

Mr. P.P.'s more Roussevian politics are articulated as momentary lapses in his letters—moments when he abandons his allegedly unrelated tales of abusive British husbands. In a letter to Caroline, he interrupts his tale of his late wife and her brutish first husband to expound a doctrine of natural rights. "The first aim of society," Mr. P.P. proclaims, "is to protect every individual in the enjoyment of those absolute rights with which they were invested at the *creation*—which were not only antecedent to the formation of states--which are not only paramount, but which are immutable, and cannot be revoked or abridged by any tribunal upon earth."⁶⁸² Caroline responds to his views with a Burkean argument, pointing out that "that when men entered into society, they gave up part of their liberty, the more effectually to secure their more important

⁶⁸² *The Emigrants*, 106.

rights.”⁶⁸³ Therefore the dutiful citizen, explains Caroline, “imposes upon himself the talk of conforming to those laws which the community has thought proper to establish, and which cannot be violated without the utmost danger.”⁶⁸⁴ Imlay’s purpose in having Caroline voice this critique is twofold: to demonstrate Caroline’s inner virtue—her *desire* to obey—and to place the opposing argument in the mouth of a character who could be converted to “reason.” In her progressive stance on female education, we can see echoes of Astell and Wollstonecraft. Mr. P.P. of course agrees with her in this; and we, the readers, are implicitly led to believe that women like Caroline are the products of improved education. Women like her mother, perhaps, are examples what happens when female education does not consist of teaching “some appropriate art or employment.”⁶⁸⁵ In this Caroline may agree with her uncle, but she remains opposed to reformed divorce laws for several letters, which gives Imlay, via Mr. P.P., the chance to argue his point.

Directly following her Burkean reference to the rights of men post-social contract, Caroline goes on to critique her uncle’s proposal for less strict divorce laws. She argues,

However repugnant the laws respecting matrimony, may be to the codes of nature, is of no consequence, compared with the tranquility, safety, and happiness of society; and if we compare the unnatural practices of the Egyptians, and the loose customs of the Greeks and Romans, with the stable practices of the moderns, how much more reason have we to applaud the wisdom of our legislators than to reprobate their folly? Contrast the situation of a woman of honour now, with what

⁶⁸³ *The Emigrants*, 110.

⁶⁸⁴ *The Emigrants*, 110. Caroline’s critique here is a direct echo of Burke’s *Reflections on the French Revolution*, a text that Imlay would have been well aware of, both because of his political leanings and because of his relationship with Mary Wollstonecraft, who famously responded to Burke’s *Reflections*. Burke writes, “Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes surrender in trust of the whole of it.” *Reflections on the French Revolution*. 1790. 4th Ed. Printed in London. 88.

⁶⁸⁵ *The Emigrants*, 107.

it was when a man had nothing more to do, to repudiate his wife, than to signify to her his intention.⁶⁸⁶

Here Caroline makes two arguments, the first of which is that adherence to “the codes of nature” do not produce “tranquility, safety, [or] happiness” in society. This argument she later concedes when she experiences her moment of political enlightenment. The second argument, however, is subtler, and suggests a narrative of progressive social development; this second argument is not fundamentally changed by later conversations in the novel, but only superficially altered. Here she echoes Thomas’s thinking by comparing the enviable situation of modern women to women who lived in ancient Egypt and Rome. Despite the hardships that Mr. P.P. describes to Caroline, women who enjoy “the stable practices of the moderns” are infinitely better situated than their ancient Egyptian or Roman counterparts: women’s place in society is on a linear progressive track, and, what’s more, one can rank a society’s development based on the condition of women. Britain (and Europe more broadly) as stepped over the edge of commerce into degenerative savagery. Caroline argues here that it is in fact the lack of ease with which British men can obtain a divorce that protects the “woman of honour.” As long as one is virtuous, one cannot be cast off, or at least not cast off easily. In part, “the safety...of society” for Caroline is a way to refer to the security of women—their ability to remain in polite society and to be kept by their husbands.

But Caroline’s vision of safety extends beyond this marital security for women. She tells Mr. P.P. that his sentiments express “principles the most dangerous to the safety of society—principles which strike at the root of domestic quiet” and argues that his

⁶⁸⁶ *The Emigrants*, 110.

“opinions... are calculated to promote domestic feuds”.⁶⁸⁷ A lack of “domestic quiet” undermines civilization itself, which reveals the assumption that the conjugal tie is the most foundational to social order. Even less conservative thinkers echoed this opinion. Talleyrand, who was intimately involved in the early years of the French revolution, and in particular in the appropriation of clerical properties by the new government, espoused a position very similar to Caroline’s in his 1791 “Report on Public Instruction,” which he prepared for the French National Assembly. While Talleyrand does initially admit that the subjugation of women may *appear* to be inconsistent with reason, he dismisses it quite easily by referring to the overall “happiness” of society. He writes,

That half the human race is excluded by the other half from any participation in government; that they are native by birth but foreign by law in the very land where they were born; and that they are property-owners yet have no direct influence or representation: are all political phenomena apparently impossible to explain on abstract principle. But on another level of ideas, the question changes and may be easily resolved. The purpose of all these institutions must be the happiness of the greatest number....The exclusion from public employments decreed against women leads to a greater sum of mutual happiness for the two sexes, then this becomes a law that all Societies have been compelled to acknowledge and sanction.⁶⁸⁸

Talleyrand also specifically addressed the issue of female education, and argued that women should only be educated in order to fulfill their duties as republican helpmates—mothers and wives. Caroline of course disagrees with him on this point.⁶⁸⁹ However, both arguments suggest that the “exclusion” of women from the public sphere and from legal rights is a global issue (“half the human race”), that it may smack of injustice, but that it

⁶⁸⁷ *The Emigrants*, 111-112.

⁶⁸⁸ “Report on Public Instruction,” 1791.

⁶⁸⁹ Wollstonecraft responds to Talleyrand in her *Vindication*, which is critically dedicated to him.

ultimately protects political stability and human happiness *and* that this situation is the product of centuries of trial and error. Of most significance here is that central to the discussion of marital rights and the gendered division of social and political rights are ideas about the historical relations between men and women. In order to explain, and in Talleyrand's case, to justify, a set of relations and roles which may appear to be contrary to reason and the principles of equality is to turn to a hypothetical history of "half the human race." The ease with which he does this is telling. The political position hinges upon how we see the exclusion of women from political and public life: is it, as Hobbes's conception of gender difference may suggest, the mark of temporary inequity, one that could, theoretically, be altered and even reversed given a change in power structure? Or is it the inevitable "law that all Societies have been compelled to acknowledge and sanction"? The ease with which Talleyrand can make the transition between women's contemporary role and a hypothetical gendered history helps us understand how Imlay's novel can be both sentimental narrative and argument for the reordering of sexual and romantic bonds.

The epistolary exchange, between Caroline and her uncle, uses his tale as tool for political conversion. Their exchange has a telling structure: it begins with an explicit disagreement about the nature of political power and the role of government, and then seems to leave off this issue and focus on the tale of Lady B and her brutal husband, before picking up the issue of political power when Caroline has her moment of realization, about halfway through the novel. At first glance, it suggests that the discussion of the Lady and Lord B are largely to fill in the gaps, so to speak, of Mr. P.P.'s long lost history. But in examining the progression of their correspondence, we can see

that the narrative of marital injustice is, in fact, Mr. P.P.'s main political evidence which precipitates Caroline's political revelation. She describes this movement in the language of Enlightenment, telling Mr. P.P. that he has "dispelled the mist" which "had always darkened [her] understanding, and illumined the region between prejudice and reason"⁶⁹⁰. Caroline now sees "the fetters that have been so ingeniously contrived to subjugate the human mind." The shining light of Mr. P.P.'s argument has crucially illuminated the difference between "principles, which have for their basis, our unalienable rights, and those which are grounded upon the opinion of the world".⁶⁹¹ This distinction, it seems, has answered the Burkean argument she proposed before: certain "principles," even if they oppose the traditions of society, trump the "opinions of the world." While these ideas may seem to be the central political topic of controversy, they are a mere vehicle for Mr. P.P.'s argument about divorce, which is in turn Imlay's instrument with which he rearranges the social and sexual order.

Because it is tied so tightly to the tale of Lady B's marital suffering, Caroline's political enlightenment also produces a sense of gendered futility. This, in turn, sets the stage for Imlay's argument of male political intervention. Though Caroline has come to an agreement with Mr. P.P. regarding these ideas, she expresses hopelessness about the improvement of society.

But I must lament at the same time, that the inconvenience society will experience from such a perversion, cannot be easily removed: and thus I fear many virtuous characters, will yet suffer under the influence of a system, which their honour will not suffer them to violate; for it is certainly better for a woman of spirit to forfeit her existence, than to excite the scorn and contempt of a supercilious set of beings who have no regard for any thing but appearances.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹⁰ *The Emigrants*, 154.

⁶⁹¹ *The Emigrants*, 154.

⁶⁹² *The Emigrants*, 154.

Caroline's assertion that it is better for a virtuous woman to commit suicide than to endure the scorn and ridicule of society is certainly disturbing. But most importantly this paragraph reveals Imlay's true perception of the current state of marital relations and gender relations in cities of the "old world" (he would include Philadelphia and New York in this) more broadly. Women of honor, as Caroline argues, suffer the worst injuries from their brutal, uncaring, despotic husbands, but their love of virtue and fear of social scorn makes them incapable of improving their situation. Improvement, as it were, must come from the outside, and Imlay's solution is to make divorce more accessible. This reform shouldn't be pursued in order to give a woman greater powers of self-determination, but rather to make sure that a deserving man—one who fits the characteristics outlined by Imlay—is able to step in.

While Mr. P.P. delivers the doctrine of the rights of man, his main purpose in doing so is to offer a context for the larger discussion of divorce. Caroline's sense of helplessness after her political revelation is mirrored, to some extent, by the helplessness of the other women in the novel, including her sister. Both the political conversion and sympathetic connection elicited by their epistolary exchange prepare the reader for intervention on the part of Imlay's American male characters. Alongside the central love plot and the narrative of migration are the tales of brutal husbands in England, and it is these stories which serve as Imlay's main evidence. Imlay uses these men, and the oppressive relationships they have with their wives, to justify the separation of two bodies considered, legally at least, to be one.⁶⁹³ The analogy works easily for Imlay, and

⁶⁹³ In his 1765 *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, jurist William Blackstone explains the law of coverture: "By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is,

the political union of a nation is easily translated into that of a marriage: when a party of that union becomes oppressive and tyrannical, the oppressed has no choice but to separate. Eliza, Caroline's eldest sister, who at first seems happy in her recent marriage to Mr. F, shortly finds out that his spending habits are less than frugal. In Imlay's view, it is his disposition and his "habits of life" which make him unfit for the state of marriage and "had completely disqualified him for domestic pleasures" (238). Mr. F-- gambles and drinks himself into debt, and when confronted by his distraught wife about his behavior, is abusive to her.

The link between freedom and happiness in America and oppression and misery in Britain is underscored by the fact that Mr. F--'s bad behavior begins as soon as Eliza's family leaves London for America. Married Eliza sits in her fashionable room, mistreated by her profligate husband, separated from domestic and familial bliss by the impossibility of divorce as much as by geography. We can easily see that Mr. F-- does not have any true regard for his wife, or even any real attraction to her person. Mrs. F--'s beauty doesn't interest Mr. F--; rather, it is another possession about which he can boast. Faced with financial difficulties, he attempts to prostitute Eliza because he assumed that "he had a resource in [her] charms".⁶⁹⁴ After "attempting to sully the chastity of a virtuous

the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs every thing; and is therefore called in our law-French *e feme-covert*, *foemina viro co-operta*; is said to be *covert-baron*, or under the protection and influence of her husband, her baron, or lord; and her condition during her marriage is called her coverture" (442).

⁶⁹⁴ *The Emigrants*, 238.

woman,” Mr. F-- had reached his lowest point, and, distracted by his encroaching ruin, he shoots himself with a pistol.⁶⁹⁵

Ms. R—suffers a similar fate. She is propelled into a marriage with the unprincipled Mr. S-- by a combination of the degeneracy of her uncle, whom her father has ruined himself supporting, and by Mr. S--’s own deceptive plot. Though Ms. R— finds Mr. S--’s facility with language appealing—brilliant even—that type of admiration, she claims, will always sink in comparison to an “attachment of the soul.” “I cannot love him,” she writes to Mrs. W--, “though I cannot always resist his powers of persuasion—that torrent of eloquence by which he fascinates would be exercised in the Senate to more advantage”.⁶⁹⁶ Mr. S--’s suit succeeds when Ms. R’s father is about to be jailed for debt. The gallant Mr. Il—ray redeems Mr. R--, but does so secretly, making Mr. S--, who knew the truth of the matter, swear he’ll never tell of the good deed. Mr. S--, sensing a unique opportunity, creates a complex plot by which to lead Ms. R into believing that *he*, in fact, redeemed her father: Mr. S-- sends a letter to a female friend of Ms. R, a woman who cannot read, commanding her not to tell Ms. R-- what he’s done (supposedly free her father from debt), when he knows Ms. R-- will be there, and thence be asked to read the letter to its illiterate recipient. Thus his crafty manipulation of language dupes her into marriage; this alleged act of benevolence forces Ms. R-- to reconceptualize her idea of his character. Now that he is virtuous, she marries him. He, of course, turns out to be a brute. Like his counterpart Mr. F--, however, his habits lead him to a premature end: he drinks himself to death, leaving Ms. R free to emigrate to America.

⁶⁹⁵ *The Emigrants*, 250.

⁶⁹⁶ *The Emigrants*, 18.

In each tale the British husbands illustrate a degenerate and callous masculinity, one that Imlay uses to differentiate his model male characters. These husbands are simultaneously oppressive and feeble. Even when endowed with natural talents, like Mr. S—, they squander their gifts. In Mr. S’s case, he chose to use his rhetorical abilities to manipulate, cheat, and blackmail rather than to serve in the Senate, as Ms. R--suggested. Perhaps the most prominent characteristic of the tyrannical husbands Imlay gives us, however, is their effeminacy. Indeed, when discussing Mrs. F—in a letter to Captain Arl—ton, Mr. Il—ray makes a direct connection between Mr. F--’s attempted prostitution of his wife and his own sexual impotence and perhaps sterility as well. This condition, in Il—ray’s opinion, was most likely the result of his “habits of life” --the drinking, the gambling, the late-night carousing.⁶⁹⁷ Il—ray’s conjecture is supported by Mr. F--’s view of his wife’s attractiveness, that his “vanity was gratified in the *éclat* of Mrs. F--’s beauty and accomplishments,” which he saw not as something to be enjoyed by himself, but rather as a “resource” to purchase him other forms of entertainment.⁶⁹⁸ Il—ray confirms Mr. F--’s impotence for the reader when he notes that “it was not very likely...she would ever have any [children] by [him]”.⁶⁹⁹ Despite the fact that his condition appears to be well known, it does nothing to improve the prospects of Mrs. F--. Indeed, Sir Thomas Mor--ly, a barrister and colleague of Mr. P.P.’s, notes that without absolute proof of impotence, Mrs. F—could not obtain a divorce. Mr. Il—ray is shocked at the idea. “How

⁶⁹⁷ *The Emigrants*, 239.

⁶⁹⁸ *The Emigrants*, 238.

⁶⁹⁹ *The Emigrants*, 239.

can you, or law-makers,” he writes to Sir Thomas, “believe that a modest woman would ever attempt to prove the *debility* of her husband?”⁷⁰⁰

The respective impotence or sexual vigor, as it may be, of the British and American men in the novel, is the most important way Imlay distinguishes the new world from the old, the wasted and wasteful civilization from the fertile and the promising wilderness. Indeed, Imlay attacks the impotence of British men as much as he attacks their tyrannical behavior. Upon his arrival in London toward the end of the novel, Mr. Il—ray declares to Captain Arl—ton announces the decline of British culture by declaring that “Effeminacy has triumphed.” “While the sofa has been the pleasurable seat of the lover,” he goes on, “the toilet has been the place where his manliness was displayed”.⁷⁰¹ The decline of British men, Il—ray suggests, has created a surplus of women, tossed aside for entertainments like those that Mr. F—found so attractive. “And thus it has happened,” Il—ray explains, “in every populous and wealthy city in the world, that the most lovely women have been neglected by men, whose impotence was as disgusting as their caprices were unbounded”.⁷⁰² What was just a few lines ago a fairly localized critique of British manliness, or lack thereof, has here been magnified tenfold. In a reorganization of sexual geography, the effeminacy usually associated with French culture has spread to Britain, and the manliness with which the British used to distinguish themselves from their French neighbors migrates to America.

In a way that mirrors the movement of Thomas’s text, Imlay’s “critique of British “effeminacy” and impotence, both personal and political, is bound up with the

⁷⁰⁰ *The Emigrants*, 239, my emphasis.

⁷⁰¹ *The Emigrants*, 236.

⁷⁰² *The Emigrants*, 237.

triangulated set of national relations between Britain, France, and America.”⁷⁰³ (Il—ray has also expanded his scope to include all wealthy cities in the world, which in turn makes America, and specifically their new utopian colony, the only bastion of virtue, freedom, and, it just so happens, men with sexual vigor. For, Il—ray explains, “the charms of fine women can only be relished by men who have not been enervated by luxury and debauchery”).⁷⁰⁴ The only men we meet in the novel that fill this description are Americans, or, of course, emigrants who quickly abandoned the cities like Philadelphia for more virtuous and less superficial country society. And thus Imlay disentangles these women from British society and from British husbands, and sends them to America—first Caroline, then Eliza, then Mrs. R—. Imlay’s characterization of these men suggests that their despotic behavior and their impotence are not simply two undesirable traits, but rather that they are linked: effeminacy and impotence *produces* tyranny. If one cannot “relish” “fine women,” as Mr. Il—ray describes it, one treats them as resources to be tapped into when the fancy strikes or when convenience demands. In a reversal of Alexander’s versions of Thomas, women are “oppressed” because they are not “adored” enough. Mr. F and Mr. S have fallen into a degenerate savagery marked by their lack of sexual interest, a characteristic that conjectural historians ascribed to the “savage” Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

In addition to representing the image of a degenerate masculinity and formed sense of manhood, these abusive husbands are significant because they operate using the logic of a conjectural history, one that is directly opposed to the conjectural history

⁷⁰³ Gilroy, “‘Espousing the Cause of Oppressed Women’: Cultural Captives in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 198.

⁷⁰⁴ *The Emigrants*, 237.

necessary to support Imlay's political arguments. Mr. F and Mr. S's treatment of their wives stems from assumptions about the role of women, but also about innate female virtue, female power, and the nature of marriage. This connection can only be made, however, when one examines the gendered history espoused by the novel's quintessentially bad husband, Lord B—. Mr. F and Mr. S's brutality, effeminacy, and impotence provide examples of degenerate British masculinity and provide reason for the migration of two young women to Imlay's new colony, and in this way they are central to the plot movement. However, their significance as bad husbands is overshadowed by that of Lord B, the overbearing and abusive aristocratic husband of Lady B— in Mr. P.P.'s inset narrative. As a figure with a title and an estate, Lord B embodies both the gendered and the political ideas that Imlay argues against. Lord B— is also the only brutish husband who is able to articulate what can only be called a defense of his behavior. This defense takes the form of a hypothetical gendered history. To justify his treatment of his wife, Lord B-- tells a story which describes the process of civilization as one of male domination of female lust for power, one that appears to draw more from Hobbes than from the more recent Rousseau in his understanding of gender difference.

Mr. P.P. begins his tale as a means to explain to Caroline the events of his youth, his years of imprisonment, and his separation from the family until their reunion in America, but the story also constitutes the most powerful evidence for Imlay's political argument. Mr. P.P. was a young man when he was invited to the home of Lord B-- for the summer months. Lord B—is a tyrant with abusive tendencies, most of which are unleashed on the poor Julianna, Lady—B. Lord B— never spends any time with his wife, preferring to hunt, to breed his hounds, or to invite vulgar friends to the dinner

table. Lord B--, Mr. P.P. explains to Caroline, “was one of those extraordinary men, who considered women merely as a domestic machine; necessary only as they are an embellishment to their house, and the only means by which their family can be perpetuated”.⁷⁰⁵ Like Mr. F— and Mr. S--, Lord B— does not have any true regard for his wife. Even his predilection for brutal, drunken sex reveals his desire for domination rather than for the enjoyment of her body.

Mr. P.P. perceives Lady B--’s misery early on in his stay and makes a vow to protect this “virtuous innocent” in any way he can. However, he does not know how to assist her except by listening to her troubles and keeping her company, a pastime that only increases his growing affection for her. One day while they are in the garden together, Mr. P.P. reads a particularly moving passage from *Othello*, and Lady B-- faints into his arms. A servant sees them, but Mr. P.P. thinks nothing of it. Lord B--, however, uses it as grounds for divorce, claiming his wife has an adulterous relationship with Mr. P.P. It turns out that this entire visit was a set up, and Lord B-- had hoped this exact outcome would be achieved, for he wanted an heir, and Lady B-- hadn’t given him one. Lady B--’s parents abandon her, despite P.P.’s attempt to tell the truth and to get her justice. She goes to live in a house in London run by a gentlewoman, and lives off a 300£ settlement made for her by an aunt, on the instance of her divorce or death of her husband. Meanwhile, Lord B-- divorces Lady B—and brings 10,000£ of damages against P.P., who of course cannot pay. He spends ten years in jail for the debt. He does, however, marry Lady B-- (now simply Julianna) immediately after her divorce, and she

⁷⁰⁵ *The Emigrants*, 93.

bears him seven children while he serves his prison sentence. Lord B--'s inability to obtain an heir, then, is clearly the result of his own infertility.

While Lord B-- ends up getting his just desserts (he marries an extravagant woman who decimates his fortune) Mr. P.P.'s end is less than perfect as well. He is eventually freed from prison, and he and Julianna move to America with their children, enjoying the peace, quiet, and simplicity of the colonies. But Julianna and all of their children are killed, "When the ferocious savages," writes Mr. P.P.,

...were *let loose* to crimson their murderous weapons in the blood of the unoffending, and the unfortunate subjects of an empire, to the remote parts of which they had taken shelter against poverty, and in which the government of their country had encouraged them, who is so insensible as to not feel the keenest indignation at the depravations of that wicked and inhuman war?"⁷⁰⁶

Tellingly, Mr. P.P. does not put the blame on the "ferocious savages," but rather represents them as the agents of the British, as pawns in an unjust and even "inhuman" war. It is the war itself which produced this tragedy, which is the result of Britain's unwillingness to accept the separation of the colonies, to accept their right to separate from a government which does not protect their natural rights.

Like Mr. F--, Mr. S--, Talleyrand, and, before her conversion via Mr. P.P., even Caroline, Lord B— argues that the subordination of women, and the strictness of divorce laws, are necessary for the "tranquility of society." Like them, Lord B- considers these laws the product of years of social progress, as the marks of civilization, and as the cornerstone of society. Where he differs crucially, however, are in the reasons, so to speak, that these laws exist, and in the consequences of their repeal. He expresses this position in a sneering yet serious tone after Mr. P.P. confronts him about his treatment of

⁷⁰⁶ *The Emigrants*, 130, my emphasis.

his wife, specifically his tendency to force himself into her bedchamber when he has been drinking. Mr. P.P. writes to Caroline,

He said in answer, that it was quite the fashion of the times for fine women to have fine feelings; and that it was now looked upon as quite *brutish* for a man to go to bed to his wife in a state of *intoxication, which was at once endeavouring to destroy all our social pleasures*, and rendering a man's life as insipid as the amusements of women—In short, said he, it is a direct attack upon our *prerogatives, which if we surrender, we should become the most abject and contemptible animals in the creation.*⁷⁰⁷

The way that Lord B- characterizes “social pleasures” here is of course disturbing—he is directly referring to his nonconsensual sexual advances toward his wife, a point which Imlay uses to identify him as a monster. Imlay firmly situates Lord B- and his position on women in the past, or representative of old, unenlightened ideas about gender relations. According to Lord B-, Mr. P.P.’s concerns are a product of a contemporary trend that encourages marital disobedience. The “fine feelings” are a “*fashion of the times*,” behavior like Lord B--’s is “*now* looked upon as quite *brutish*”—these temporal markers suggest that Lord B- is not simply defending his own behavior, but that he is also defending a system of thought and social organization. This system it seems, is under “direct attack,” perhaps by sentimental men like Mr. P.P. who, according to Lord B--, cannot see women for what they are.

Lord B--’s conception of the consequences of reform, however, are the most central to this argument, and provide a window into Imlay’s vision of sexual difference and his own hypothetical history of gender relations. Because, while Lord B— is sexually and verbally abusive to his wife, while he neglects her, plots against her, and regards her as an inferior, he does not consider his “prerogatives” to be natural. Rather, they are the

⁷⁰⁷ *The Emigrants*, 89.

instruments of sustaining a certain relation of power—in this case, male domination of women. While his discussion of “fine feelings” and his disdain for the “fashion[s] of the times” may seem to suggest that his view of everything feminine is that it is superficial, his use of the words “abject” and “surrender” are more telling: Lord B— imagines that these prerogatives would not be given up without some kind of conflict, one which would result in man’s abjection—his submission to women.

At this point, Mr. P.P., unaware of the true meaning of Lord B--’s fear of “surrender,” continues arguing with him. “I still attempted to reason with him,” he continues, “but it was all in vain, for he was decided in the opinion, that the *tranquility of society depended upon the tyranny* which should be continually exercised over them, otherwise a female *empire would destroy every thing that was beautiful, and which the talents of ages had accumulated*”.⁷⁰⁸ Lord B- admits here to tyrannical behavior, but argues that it is necessary to protect the work of civilization, “*which the talents of ages had accumulated.*” He also reveals the most crucial difference between Imlay’s current view of sexual difference and his older, aristocratic, monarchic one: while Imlay argues for better treatment for women because it is man’s duty to protect the weak, Lord B— argues for subordination because without it, women would wrest power from men. In Lord B-’s schema, women have (perhaps even an equal) ability to gain power and to dominate. Like Hobbes, he imagines the birth of civilization as the moment at which savage female power, perhaps even a “female empire,” was subdued. Women may be “domestic machines” for Lord B— and his old world companions, but they are machines that continually threaten revolt. In stark contrast to Alexander, Lord B—suggests that he

⁷⁰⁸ *The Emigrants*, 89.

does, in fact, “confine” his wife because, “like the lion, and the tyger,” he is “afraid of depredations”.⁷⁰⁹ The recent rise of “fine feelings” are simply new weapons women have developed in a timeless war of the sexes.

Imlay does not return to Lord B--’s idea again, and does not make much comment on it, but rather renders it absurd. Immediately following this relation, Mr. P.P., who was so vociferous in critiquing Lord B--’s thinking in the past, makes no comment except to say that he “differed so completely from him...that it was impossible...to witness the exercise of such a tyranny.” In fact, it was at this point he leaves the room, unable to respond to his host’s words. “To such *absurdities*,” Mr. P.P. explains to Caroline, “no arguments were of any avail”.⁷¹⁰ He ends the letter “reprobat[ing] customs of the world, that are entirely repugnant to nature; particularly those which diabolically oppress the weak”.⁷¹¹ Lord B—and Mr. P.P. are clear on what these “customs” are; what this exchange demonstrates is that they crucially differ on “nature.”

While Lord B--’s views of female nature are certainly misogynist, they are nevertheless tied to a conception of the state of nature in which women had the ability to hold power, and even dominion, over men. Because Imlay puts such effort into associating Lord B--’s views of women with the past and with the aristocracy, we can speculate that his vision of the state of nature may be like that of Hobbes, in which men and women have equal ability to take power and in which women remain free before the sexual contract. Here the sexual contract is synonymous with the social contract—part of the process, in Lord B--’s conjectural history, of forming society, is subduing women. It’s

⁷⁰⁹ *The Emigrants*, 102.

⁷¹⁰ *The Emigrants*, 89, my emphasis.

⁷¹¹ *The Emigrants*, 90.

possible that Lord B— imagines the state of nature as one in which original sovereignty is maternal, and, like Hobbes, views the wrestling of that sovereignty from women as the moment in which history begins, as Ferguson’s “vanishing point.” For Lord B—, the state of nature may be a state of sexual chaos, where men are “abject” because they are subject to these unchecked appetites. Imlay’s decision not to elaborate on this conception is significant, and can either suggest that the idea, at this point, was truly absurd, and that the Hobbesian view of women in the state of nature was entirely relegated to the irrationality of the past, or, that Imlay’s argument, and his liberal position which allegedly champions women and female virtue, would be undermined by the stark difference between *his* vision of women in the state of nature and this earlier one. Of course, both could be true, and his location of this concept of nature in Lord B— at least demonstrates that Imlay does not want it to be taken too seriously— or examined too closely for merit.

Imlay never states his own concept so clearly as Lord B— does, but rather leaves the reader to imagine what the state of nature looked like based on the innate natures of men and women as Imlay represents them. Nevertheless, Imlay’s descriptions of female and male natures are essential to his political argument. During their exchange concerning divorce laws and the rights of man, Mr. P.P. suggests that it is only the disparity in education that has prevented intellectual equality between men and women, and that women’s capacity for feeling and sense of moral duty is perhaps “superior” to men’s, because they are characterized by “generous sentiments.” While women may have moral and intellectual equality with men, there is a crucial difference in strength, argues P.P. He explains that:

Nature has given a superiority to man over woman in point of strength, and consequently an activity, that fits him, not only for more difficult parts of sublunary duty, but necessarily promotes the ascendancy of power, which the exercise of talents produces; *and it is thus that the codes of a savage world, have continued to oppress and restrain the acts of volition on the part of women, when the most licentious bounds on the part of men, have found impunity from the prejudices of the world.*⁷¹²

This passage, which echoes both Rousseau and Thomas, situates the nature of women in a framework of conjectural history because its articulation of innate gender difference—and social roles which should correspond to that difference—rests upon a conjectural history of gender relations. According to Mr. P.P., this difference of physical strength is responsible for the condition that women “in every populous and wealthy city in the world,” in the words of Mr. Il—ray, find themselves in now. It is because of their physical weakness and the lenity with which they approach men’s follies that women are in a position of oppression. In the narrative suggested by Mr. P.P., gender relations in the state of nature were not entirely different than Imlay finds them now. Men, finding they had superior strength, never failed to use it to their advantage, and used this disparity “to oppress and restrain the acts of volition on the part of women,” while they did as they pleased. Women’s nature was not to resist—or if they did, one might imagine it had the look of “death before dishonor,” the only course for virtuous women, according to Caroline. Like Locke and Rousseau, Imlay imagines that the sexual contract precedes the social contract, and that women’s subjugation to men has existed since time immemorial. This, Imlay suggests, has been the trend for several thousand years; one can hear the echo of Thomas’s (and Russell’s, and Alexander’s) words, “In all places, and in all times, adored and oppressed.” The slippage of the word “savage” here is also significant—

⁷¹² *The Emigrants*, 114.

Imlay uses this word to describe Indigenous peoples, British men, as well as men before the formation of society. The “codes of a savage world” are still obeyed, he argues. But while all of Imlay’s favored male characters in the novel criticize this state of affairs, and while it is associated with social order in which civic and natural law are divorced from one another, it is nevertheless also *natural*. Their superiority of strength, Mr. P.P. states, “*necessarily* promotes the ascendancy of power.” It’s natural, so to speak, for this inequality to occur and the proof of this is the history of women’s experience and their simultaneous adoration from and oppression by men. This is crucially different from the hypothetical history suggested by Lord B- because Lord B’s justification for his behavior rests upon the fact that gender relations *could be* different than they are—thus men must prevent women from having power over them and making them figures of abjection.

4.3 The Garden of Female Virtue

The creation of a new State—Bellefont—by Imlay’s voice pieces in the text—Captain Arlington, Mr. Il--ray, and Mr. P.P., is meant to correct the ills of both British and ‘Eastern’ American government and the degeneration of culture. One of the fundamental political critiques these characters make is the separation between the dictates of “nature” and laws made by men. All three of these characters express their firm belief that the laws of a country must “conform...to the laws of nature.” Indeed, it is a main criticism of these three that British law now violates those very laws, that the relationship between natural law and civic law is not tight enough. Drawing the character of that nature is vital for the sake of Imlay’s argument, and when describing the latter in the context of political power, he follows the language of “the rights of man.” The difficulty he encounters occurs largely in the role nature plays in creating gender

difference. Mr. P.P.s explanation of women suggests that women are, according to nature, the objects of oppression, and have been both pre- and post- social contract. Thus the same ‘nature’ that guarantees men like Arlington their rights also guarantees female weakness and dependence.

We must turn to Imlay’s theorization of female virtue to understand fully the significance of gender relations in his political argument. While Lord B— and his predecessors would likely describe women as manipulative, scheming, and dishonest creatures, Imlay’s view of female virtue could not be more different. While they may be weak physically, he argues, they *all* possess a “softness” of character, a compassionate heart, and an innate sense of “delicacy.” In the conjectural history that Mr. P.P. has given us, all women are this way— and female vice is only a product of male oppression. Imlay goes out of his way, then, to explain that women’s indiscretions are never the product of a vicious character, but rather a product of bad circumstances, which are in turn the result of bad treatment at the hands of men. Through Mr. P.P. and Mr. Il—ray, he argues that women are inherently virtuous with the same intensity Lord B— argues that they are power-hungry deceivers. Imlay constructs a world in which all virtuous women may fall from no fault of their own. Mr. P.P. writes to Caroline that even “The most amiable women must be susceptible of injuries...It is in that situation, when injured beauty, and insulted virtue mourns in secret, that it is driven to extremes; and when the base betrayer, seizes the opportunities which a brutish tyrant affords him, that women of honour are hurried into the gulph of ruin”.⁷¹³ The definition of tyranny for Imlay is the desire to take advantage of female weakness—to smell it out, so to speak, to isolate it from its friends,

⁷¹³ *The Emigrants*, 115.

and then to push it off “the gulph of ruin.” To ignore women when this has been their experience, he tells Caroline, is both “cowardly” and “inhuman”.⁷¹⁴

Mr. P.P.’s, as well as Mr. Il—ray’s, solution to this problem is to reform marriage laws, and to, we assume, make divorce more accessible for women. Mr. P.P. explains to Caroline that,

An ingenuous and liberal system would afford ample protection to their delicacy, and by giving reciprocity to conjugal engagements, it would interdict the practice of those cunning and base arts to which a timid prudence ever has recourse;-- which first leads to an incontinency in the exercise of resentment, that is frequently considered as retaliation; and then hurrying over every barrier of moderation, seeks in vengeance for a compensation of the deprivations which despotism has produced, untill every radical vice completely destroys that elegant softness, with which nature has so exquisitely formed the female heart.⁷¹⁵

The details of this “ingenuous” system remain vague. How would such a system protect “delicacy”? How would it prohibit “base arts”? These are questions to which Imlay provides no answer. What is clear from this description, however, is that Imlay’s new system is characterized more by its treatment of women than by a radical reorganization of political order. Or rather, the political reordering *is* synonymous with a sexual and romantic reordering: mistreated English wives are disentangled from their brutish English husbands, and instead paired with new husbands in America. The second part of the passage crucially underscores Mr. P.P.’s earlier words—that female virtue is only ever corrupted by male tyranny. Incontinence only develops as a response to “despotism,” and once it has begun, it slides quickly downhill, until those adopted vices destroy the “elegant softness, with which nature has so exquisitely formed the female heart.”

⁷¹⁴ *The Emigrants*, 115.

⁷¹⁵ *The Emigrants*, 115.

Because, in Imlay's schema, female nature remains largely flat throughout time, this movement forward must begin with men. Indeed, according to Mr. P.P., the fate of women is entirely left up to men; Caroline, her sister Eliza, Mrs. S—, and the unfortunate Lady B— are at their male associates' and family members' mercy. After explaining to Caroline how even “the most amiable women” can be injured and led to ruin through no fault of their own, Mr. P.P. goes on to illustrate that the preservation of female virtue—epitomized by “beauty and innocence”—is a crowning jewel to any society which hopes to earn the descriptions of free and civilized. He writes,

The empire of the world is the dominion of beauty, enthroned in the bosom of reason and virtue; and whether it is to be left, to be destroyed, or decay in the atmosphere of sorrow, or to be trampled upon by the rude dogmata of ignorance; or whether it is to be guarded, and its fragrant blooms made to disseminate its odours, and extend its fair germ, are considerations in which no rational man can hesitate to determine. What, is beauty and innocence not only to be depressed, but is it to be made to pine in secret, languish in solitude, and expire unnoticed and unpitied, because a brutish or drunken man is insensible to its charms? Or is it to be deemed infamous to feel the influence of its radiance, while the purest sentiments of love, honour, virtue, dignity, and courage, should prompt you to protect and assuage its anguish?⁷¹⁶

Female virtue is akin to a flower—it can either be cultivated and appreciated, or trampled and ignored. “Beauty and innocence,” the personification of woman for Mr. P.P., can either be left to suffer the “barbarous codes of a savage world,” or can be “guarded” by more enlightened men. In either case, the flower that is female virtue is an object for every “rational man” to consider. Imlay's metaphor illustrates a central tenet of his political argument: that female virtue is innate, and that male virtue can be recuperated when it is freed from the shackles of political oppression and superstition. Essential to this project of recuperated masculinity is the ability to view female virtue in the right

⁷¹⁶ *The Emigrants*, 115

light, to be able to see and enjoy its blossom, as it were, and inhale its “fragrant blooms.” Spectacle and the sentiment it elicits are key in this, and Mr. P.P.’s image of the trampled flower is clearly embodied by several of the female characters, those who suffer under the hands of tyrannical husbands like Eliza, Mrs. R--, and Lady B--, as well as Caroline herself.

The pleasure of smelling a rose, Mr. P.P. insists, must be superior to the pleasure of destroying it. But the language that Imlay uses to describe these women suggests that even greater than the satisfaction of inhaling the “fragrant blooms” of female virtue is the exquisite pleasure of saving it just before the tyrannical boot stamps out its “elegant softness.” The thrill of performing this rescue is intoxicating to Imlay’s male characters, particularly when the threat of tyranny has produced at least some emotional, and sometimes physical, distress. This thrill is rendered in language that is both sentimental and erotic. Indeed, Mr. P.P., in describing the sympathy he felt for Lady B--, demonstrates that his sympathetic gaze is fixed firmly on her body, as if to suggest that when “beauty and innocence” is “made to pine in secret,” one must read the physical body for marks of distress and conflict. “I had frequently observed her bosom palpitating with contending passions,” Mr. P.P. admits, “and had as often seen the tears of sorrow, like the lustres in heaven, eradiate the divinity of her charms.”⁷¹⁷ Her emotional distress heightens her beauty, and the tears themselves work as a kind of cosmetic agent, magnifying her “charms” and increasingly the territory in which they have power. In trying to describe the birth of his feelings for Lady B--, he explains to Caroline that “Beauty is never so formidable as when in tears—It is then that every charm receives

⁷¹⁷ *The Emigrants*, 88.

additional lustre, and when the heart is softened to pity, the arrows of love are mortal at every shot".⁷¹⁸ Here Imlay's liberally minded character takes a political turn of sorts, for while he countered Caroline's invocation of Edmund Burke just a few letters earlier, here he epitomizes the thesis Burke puts forward in *A Philosophic Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757), namely that "beauty in distress is the most affecting beauty."⁷¹⁹ For Mr. P.P., and for Imlay's other male characters, female distress produces *pity*, which in turn inspires romantic love. Pity for the weakness and helplessness of Lady B— produces a "kind of ethereal rapture" for P.P., one that, despite his adamant claim that his feelings were the products of "chaste sentiment," is notably erotic. The presentation of this scene and of beauty oppressed is not simply a literary convention for Imlay. In the state of nature, according to Mr. P.P.'s description, savage men who had a thirst for power took advantage of female physical weakness, considering them, as Lord B—does, to be "domestic machines" or "mere automaton[s]".⁷²⁰ They follow the "barbarous codes of a savage world," legitimizing their tyranny as necessary for "the safety of society" and to, as Lord B--- notes, prevent the rise of a destructive "female empire."

⁷¹⁸ *The Emigrants*, 88.

⁷¹⁹ In a section entitled "Perfection not the cause of beauty," Burke writes: "This opinion has been made to extend much further than to sensible objects. But in these, so far is perfection, considered as such, from being the cause of beauty, that this quality, where it is highest, in the female sex, almost always carries with it an idea of weakness and imperfection. Women are very sensible of this; for which reason; they learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness. In all they are guided by nature. Beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty. Blushing has little less power; and modesty in general, which is a tacit allowance of imperfection, is itself considered as an amiable quality, and certainly heightens every other that is so."

⁷²⁰ *The Emigrants*, 117.

The logic of the novel suggests that sexual contract precedes the social contract. Before the founding of his new state in Bellefont, Captain Arl—ton must establish a union with a virtuous woman—Caroline—before he can lay the foundation for his utopic community. The Captain is taken with Caroline immediately, delighted with his first sight of her, when she blends in among the pure scenery of the Allegheny Mountains. “When she was resting upon a large stone on the road side,” he writes to Il—ray, “leaning with one hand upon her cheek, and held a handkerchief, which I thought had been applied to her eyes, that were glimmering like the rays of the sun through the mist of an April shower”.⁷²¹ Imlay appreciates her beauty and her imagination, but it is not until she faints at the sight of a small group of Indigenous peoples that his attachment grows profound. While on their journey, the group encounters “two Indian men and an Indian woman,” who “came suddenly” upon them. Caroline, walking in front of the others, is the first to see them and immediately faints. Luckily, the Captain explains, “I had only time to catch her in my arms before she fell.” She recovered quickly, however, and “immediately resumed her cheerfulness, and apologized for being so weak,” he explains to Il--ray.⁷²² But in the time between her fall and her recovery, Arl—ton has fallen in love. He writes to Il—ray,

It was at that moment when after her animal spirits had ceased to flow, and when they were returning with accelerated quickness, that the mild lustre of so much beauty and conscious innocence, warmed the celestial fire of love into the most unbounded admiration. I felt for the first time in my life, my powers of utterance suspended—I felt in the returning pulsations of her hand, the high beating tones of Nature vibrate through every part of my frame; and in this ecstatic moment, when language was mute, and when Caroline’s eyes spoke the most ineffable things, I was lost in the elysium of intoxicated desire.⁷²³

⁷²¹ *The Emigrants*, 15.

⁷²² *The Emigrants*, 49.

⁷²³ *The Emigrants*, 49.

Like Mr. P.P., Captain Arl—ton reads the silent female body, listening to “the most ineffable things” which, had they been communicated in that manner any longer, he tells Il—ray, “this interesting minute would have fixed my fate for ever”.⁷²⁴ Caroline is most beautiful when she is between consciousness and unconsciousness, between life and death, (“her animal spirits had ceased to flow...”), in other words, when she is totally powerless. This scene also illustrates the divergence of *The Emigrants* from *The Topographical Description* in its attitude toward Indigenous peoples. While in the *Topographical Description*, Imlay details specific tribal names and locations, in *The Emigrants* all “Indians” are “savages.” Caroline’s first interaction with Indigenous peoples is the simultaneous presence and absence of the Indigenous woman. While we are told that she is there, unlike her male counterparts, she says nothing. While the discourse of male savagery, both as it pertains to the Lord B-’s of the world and to the Indigenous men who kidnap Caroline later in the novel, helps him delineate examples of natural manly virtue, the woman poses a theoretical problem for him. Female nature thus becomes a silent presence here, a placeholder for Caroline in her state of unconsciousness.

This scene is but a preview of the captivity plot that Imlay includes in the second half of the novel. The presence of the Indigenous peoples here signals the state of nature, and their narrative purpose, since there is no “real danger,” is quite explicitly to induce a fainting fit from Caroline and a subsequent rescue by the Captain.⁷²⁵ The Indigenous men’s response to Caroline, too, serves as an opportunity for Il—ray to demonstrate the

⁷²⁴ *The Emigrants*, 49.

⁷²⁵ *The Emigrants*, 49.

lack of native threat to new settlers. “And then saying to me,” Arl—ton writes to Il--ray, “Brother, if we have been your worst foes in war, we will be your best friends in peace, and that they were going to Pittsburg for the purpose of burying the hatchet, that white people and Indians might live together like brothers”.⁷²⁶ Arl--ton’s description of the native men here also helps to construct his idea of natural manly virtue, for they did not mean to scare Caroline. “I had not discovered that the men had approached close to us,” he explains to Il—ray, “and I was first apprized of it, by their asking me if they could be of any assistance to Caroline, and saying that they were very sorry they had alarmed so pretty a woman, for that was their expression”.⁷²⁷ Their response to Caroline’s beauty is a less intense version of Arl—ton’s, but shows that it is her beauty which makes her an “interesting object,” one who deserves care and attention, a beauty which possesses a ‘civilizing’ force.

Caroline, unlike her sister Eliza, Lady B--, and Mrs. S--, is fortunate enough to have escaped an oppressive marriage. Her brush with “barbarian slavery” comes in the wilderness rather than in city. Imlay uses this term to describe both Caroline’s captivity and the oppressive marital unions of her sister and friend, which underscores his argument that current gender relations are “savage” and comparable to those of an earlier (hypothetically) period in human history. While once again enjoying the natural beauty of the unsettled West in solitude, Caroline is kidnapped by a “remote tribe,” and, despite the immediate dispatch of rescue parties, isn’t found until some weeks later.⁷²⁸ Captain Arl—ton, who has, because of Mary’s malicious letter, left the society of Caroline and her

⁷²⁶ *The Emigrants*, 49.

⁷²⁷ *The Emigrants*, 49.

⁷²⁸ *The Emigrants*, 192.

family, happens to hear of a kidnapping. Unaware that Caroline is the victim, he, displaying his heroic character, immediately seeks out the kidnappers. Caroline's kidnapping serves to reunite the two, and to solidify the bond between them. Most importantly, however, this captivity plot functions as the performance of the sexual contract between Captain Arl—ton and Caroline; weak and in the power of the “savages,” of a “remote tribe”—they possessed bows and arrows rather than guns—Caroline is rescued by a rational man of feeling and sense, protected from future outrages. Imray rewrites the conjectural history proposed by Lord B— and intervenes in the one put forward by Mr. P.P., delivering Caroline from the fate of being trapped in a “state of degradation and misery”.⁷²⁹ The thrill of this rescue is again represented in eroticized language; again it is physical distress, rather than emotional distress, that the Captain responds to, or at least, that which he is captivated by. Arl—ton wonders how her “tender frame” could “support” the trials of captivity. He writes to Il—ray, describing the experience of finding Caroline,

Ah! Il—ray how did my swelling heart beat with joy, which was instantly succeeded by sorrow, when I first caught a glance from the brilliant eyes of the most divine woman upon earth, torn into shatters by the bushes and briars, with scarcely covering left to hide the transcendence of her beauty, which to be seen by common eyes is profanation, and it was only by the effulgence of her aethereal looks that I could have known her?⁷³⁰

Like the earlier cessation of her “animal spirits,” Caroline's state, naked, bruised, and “half harassed to death,” only excites Captain Arl—ton more. “Indeed I wondered that she was alive,” he writes to Il—ray, “but she was not only alive, my friend! But she looked more lovely than ever.” Though Caroline's “beauteous face had been lacerated

⁷²⁹ *The Emigrants*, 101.

⁷³⁰ *The Emigrants*, 198.

with brambles,” still “the little loves seemed to vie with each other, as if to prove, which of her features were the most fascinating”.⁷³¹ Indeed, his first vision of Caroline prompts a total loss of control, and the Captain, “regardless of every appearance, fell at her feet, and then embracing her...felt all the transports that *the circumstances of our meeting* and *the divinity of feminine charms* can inspire”.⁷³² The circumstances are, of course, her captivity and helplessness, and her charms the charms of female virtue in physical distress and even danger. Later that night, the Captain watches Caroline as she sleeps. “Distracted with the potency of the bewitching joys” he had “snatched” from her immediately during their initial embrace, he is unable to turn away from her “half-naked bosom,” “more transparent than the effulgence of Aurora....and more lovely than a poetical imagination can paint.” This scene combines both the unconsciousness of the earlier encounter with Native Americans, when Caroline fainted (she is asleep), with visible marks of physical suffering, the “lacerations” produced by the “brambles” and briars—wild and uncultivated vegetation. This combination creates such excitement in him that, “in a playful reversal of Enlightenment rhetoric,” as Verhoeven and Gilroy note, Arl—ton is “obliged to extinguish the light, to preserve [his] reason.”⁷³³

While Caroline is injured by the wilderness itself, in a state of undress, and “half-harassed to death,” these circumstances are not, Imlay is careful to point out, the result of mistreatment. Indeed, the courteous behavior of her native male kidnappers echoes the earlier gentlemanly concern for her welfare. She explains to Il—ray that “she never felt the least harassed, or alarmed for her safety.” This, Il—ray explains in a letter to P.P. “is

⁷³¹ *The Emigrants*, 199.

⁷³² *The Emigrants*, 199, my emphasis.

⁷³³ *The Emigrants*, 199.

corroborated, by the testimony of *all decent looking women*, who have been so unfortunate as to fall into their hands. Indeed, I have been told of instances, where women have been treated with such tenderness and attention by them, that they from gratitude become their wives.”⁷³⁴ Imlay’s descriptions of Indigenous peoples as simultaneously “ferocious,” “blood-thirsty” “savages” who work as agents for the British and as symbols of natural simplicity and virtue are contradictory. Imlay’s use of men in both of these scenes of cultural interaction, however, serves to support his basic thesis, that one must turn toward the unsettled regions of the Western United States in order to regain this chivalric sense of manly virtue. Paired with the earlier comment recognizing Caroline’s beauty, this line positions female beauty as a safeguard, as a kind of civilizing force that moderates male behavior. Caroline’s beauty inspires kind treatment. If we read this against Imlay’s tales of the impotent and effeminate Mr. S and Mr. F, then here he suggests that sexual attraction to women, a desire to protect, guard, and possess their beauty, inspires generous treatment, which in turn may garner marriage via female “gratitude.” Paradoxically, then, her captivity functions both to outline a concept of manly virtue attainable in a state of nature, and as an experience of “slavery,” like that of an oppressive marriage.

Now that she has been rescued from the “barbarian slavery” of Indian captivity, Caroline can realize Imlay’s image of an idealized woman—a “useful,” though beautiful, “piece of furniture,” in his new political state. Following his earlier association between Caroline and the scenery, Imlay again uses floral language to describe her: “the lustre of her eyes was like the torch of love,” he writes, and “her smiles like the genial hours of

⁷³⁴ *The Emigrants*, 204.

May when nature blooms in all its eradiated charms” (198). He ramps up the identification between the rescued Caroline and the blossom of female virtue when Caroline is described using a metaphor, rather than a simile. Delivering the news of her rescue to Il—ray, Captain Arl—ton writes,

Caroline has fallen into my hands!--she is at this moment decorating the gardens of this place while I am writing to you, and seems to give enchantment to the whispering breezes that are wafted to my window, and which in their direction as they pass her, collect from her sweets the fragrance of ambrosia, and the exhilarating charms of love itself.⁷³⁵

At first, Caroline’s activity in the garden, so shortly after her kidnapping, seems quite in line with what we know of her industrious nature. Unlike her idle sister Mary, Caroline likes to keep herself busy with “useful employment.” However, by the end of the phrase we can see that it is Caroline herself that is the object in this scene: she is “decorating the gardens,” and she “give[s] enchantment to the whispering breezes” which “collect from her sweets the fragrance of ambrosia.” The emphasis on scent here recalls Mr. P.P.’s essay on the bloom of female virtue, when “beauty,” is cultivated and “its fragrant blooms made to disseminate its odours, and extend its fair germ”.⁷³⁶ Perhaps Imlay emphasizes this sensual reaction, because, unlike taste or touch, and *like* sight, one consumes scent without much control; like his reaction to the vision of Caroline “torn into shatters by the bushes and briars,” Captain Arl—ton cannot help himself.⁷³⁷

⁷³⁵ *The Emigrants*, 198.

⁷³⁶ *The Emigrants*, 115.

⁷³⁷ In Burke’s *Enquiry*, he follows the claim about “beauty in distress” with the comment that “to be affected” by weakness and imperfection mingled with beauty did not require one’s “will”: “Who ever said we *ought* to love a fine woman, or even any of these beautiful animals which please us? Here to be affected, there is no need of the concurrence of our will.

Scent here stands in for both the benefits of cultivated female virtue awaiting the new state of Bellefont and for the physical pleasures which Captain Arl—ton must wait to enjoy with Caroline. As they pass through the plains of Illinois, he is once again “distracted” by the sensual nature of the landscape, and in particular, the scent. “The zephyrs,” Imlay writes, “which had gathered on their way the fragrance of flowery riches which bespangle the earth, poured such a torrent of voluptuous sweets upon the enraptured senses, that *my animation was almost overpowered with their delicious and aromatic odours*”.⁷³⁸ Caroline’s captivity and subsequent rescue traces her movement, as virtuous but weak “Beauty,” from savage captivity into sympathetic protection. Her rescue and their engagement is simultaneous, marking the success of the sexual contract—Caroline is now engaged to be married. As soon as this occurs, the landscape itself changes from dangerous wilderness to fertile Eden. Indeed, the moment the Captain sees Caroline, “the horrors of a wilderness was converted into elysium”.⁷³⁹ As they pass through the unsettled regions of Illinois on their way to Caroline’s family, “everything seemed to be enchantment”.⁷⁴⁰ Caroline’s experience mimics Arlington’s in that it is the landscape itself—untouched and “pregnant with her charms” --that intensifies their feelings of love. The “wild regions of the country of Illinois, where sweetened breezes attune the soul to love” were transformed for her as well: “wildness seemed to me a heaven,” she writes to Eliza, “and while the soft gales of nature, which then appeared to

⁷³⁸ *The Emigrants*, 204, my emphasis.

⁷³⁹ *The Emigrants*, 198.

⁷⁴⁰ *The Emigrants*, 204.

unbosom and display her every charm, my senses were ravished with the modulated symphony of the feathered choir.”⁷⁴¹

It is finally in the pristine and eternally new American landscape, in the “unsettled” plains of Illinois, in which they can communicate freely, in which the veils of social etiquette (synonymous with superficiality and affectation for Imlay) fall to the wayside. Away from the meddling letter-writing Mary, Arl—ton can freely make his intentions known to Caroline, and she, in turn, can accept. This union lays the foundation for his new political community. The landscape shifts from a brutish wilderness to an Arcadian paradise—savage briars make way for “sweetened breezes” and Indian captors are replaced by Captain Arl—ton: now that the sexual contract is complete, he embarks upon his project of creating a new state which, driven by “manly character,” can be “decorated” with the blossoms of female virtue. After the “delirium” induced by his rescue of Caroline has passed, Arl—ton describes his political project to Il—ray, who plans on joining Bellefont as soon as he has successfully rescued the unhappily married Eliza (Mrs. F--). It is in the pure Ohio valley that Arl—ton plans on “form[ing] in epitome the model of a society which...ought to form part of the polity of every civilized commonwealth.”⁷⁴² He writes to Il—ray, “Every male being of the age twenty-one, and sound in his reason, is intitled to a vote in the nomination of a member to represent them, and every member is intitled to the rewards and honours which the institution may think proper to bestow”.⁷⁴³ Bellefont remains a “select society,” one that privileges landowners, war veterans, and, of course, (presumably white) men. Mr. Il—ray, Mr. P.P., and Captain

⁷⁴¹ *The Emigrants*, 216.

⁷⁴² *The Emigrants*, 233.

⁷⁴³ *The Emigrants*, 233-234.

Arl—ton, and the chosen “twenty members” occupy positions of privilege, though, Caroline is quick to explain, they will not seek to exclude their inferiors from knowledge, as their European predecessors have done. Indeed, in Arl—ton’s plan above, the dissemination of the “useful arts” and the “science of government and jurisprudence” is central to establishing the desired degree of equality.

Despite the fact that the novel, and its gallant Anglo-American men in particular, make such a point about rescuing the “unfortunate fair” from “a tyranny more odious than ever was practiced by the most contemptible despot that ever tyrannized a nation,” women in Imlay’s new society remain firmly fixed in the domestic realm.⁷⁴⁴ Indeed, except for their marriages to American men of “manly eloquence” instead of British men who lack “every *manly* sentiment,” and the absence of the dissipated hobbies which color life in the Eastern cities, life in Bellefont appears similar to life in England for the women of the novel.⁷⁴⁵ For all of Captain Arl—ton’s bluster about appreciating the natural perfection of his new wife, he nevertheless excludes her from political life. Indeed, Caroline all but disappears once she has related the story of Captain Arl—ton’s rescue. Imlay attempts to ascribe this to Caroline’s natural industry; unlike her sister Mary or her mother, Caroline must be engaged in a “useful employment.” Caroline’s status after the reenactment of the sexual contract demonstrates that “women’s primary function in Arl—ton’s settlement is to inspire chivalry and patriotism in men.”⁷⁴⁶ While Arl—ton is occupied with “the important duties” of creating a new political community, Caroline, in

⁷⁴⁴ *The Emigrants*, 243.

⁷⁴⁵ *The Emigrants*, 242-243.

⁷⁴⁶ Juliet Shields, “Genuine Sentiments and Gendered Liberties: Migration and Marriage in Gilbert Imlay’s *The Emigrants*,” 44.

the long tradition of female charity, brings baskets and advice to her new neighbors.⁷⁴⁷

She thus fades into the background, and the performance of the sexual contract becomes the hidden foundation of Bellefont.

Establishing equality in a new state, argues Imlay through Il—ray, will allow men to “*regain* their pristine sincerity, and, consequently, those base arts that have so often degraded the dignity of man will no longer be known.”⁷⁴⁸ The temporal marker of “*regain*” is crucial here, because for Imlay, the landscape offers access to an untouched quality of nature; this is both a place to retrieve or return to, in order to recover or rediscover one’s inalienable rights, and also a place of emotional, spiritual purity, a place where innate virtue resides. As Caroline and Captain Arl—ton’s description of the post-rescue landscape demonstrates, America embodies this idyllic, pristine state. America is not simply a chance to start anew for the T---ns and others like them; it is a chance to return, in a sense, to a more natural environment, one untainted by the material mark of European culture as well as the temporal mark of its barbaric history. For Piep, however, this temporal slippage is largely a product of Imlay’s political project and the fact that his characters must “*imagine themselves into the existing geopolitical landscape, thereby altering its shape, size, composition, tradition, character, self-concept, etc.*”⁷⁴⁹ Imlay’s characters must “*create a spatio-temporal reality for themselves that somehow transcends the geographical, economic, and political confines of nascent creole nationalism.*”⁷⁵⁰ The fact that it is a “future” rather than “interior time” that makes the new community—

⁷⁴⁷ *The Emigrants*, 233.

⁷⁴⁸ *The Emigrants*, 233, my emphasis.

⁷⁴⁹ *The Emigrants*, 5.

⁷⁵⁰ *The Emigrants*, 4.

Bellefont—possible is a product of Imlay’s utopian project. “Inspired by Rousseau’s writings,” Piep explains, “Imlay’s novel thus offers the uncivilized American West as the ideal location for establishing “a new mode of [European] civilization” that *reconciles* humankind *back* to nature by way of a *forward looking* social contract.”⁷⁵¹ What is largely missing from this formulation, however, is that the narratives with which Imlay imagines such a community and creates such a temporal incongruity are inextricable from his conjectural history of gender relations.

For Piep, Imlay’s critique of the treatment of women is the tool with which he attacks the larger political systems as a whole: the novel “frames the issue of “domestic bondage” in terms of the larger political question of self-determination.”⁷⁵² It is Eliza’s marriage to the reckless Mr. F--, he claims, which constitutes “Imlay’s harshest critique of the economic and sexual exploitation of women,” since Mr. F--’s “horrific conduct” would be condemned soundly by all of the future members of Bellefont.⁷⁵³ But we must remember that Mr. F--’s behavior is most disturbing to Mr. Il—ray because of his effeminacy. The true outrage here was that “the most lovely women have been neglected by men, whose impotence was as disgusting, as their caprices were unbounded.”⁷⁵⁴ The fact that the “charms of fine women” could no longer be “relished by men” is the marker of the culture’s descent into savagery. Because, on his last visit to England, Il—ray reports that the country is a place where “effeminacy has triumphed,” Imlay can cast off European culture as forever tainted by decadence and an irrational adherence to barbaric

⁷⁵¹ *The Emigrants*, 8.

⁷⁵² *The Emigrants*, 7.

⁷⁵³ *The Emigrants*, 7.

⁷⁵⁴ *The Emigrants*, 237.

traditions. While the project of separatist nationalism that the novel constructs, and the contemporary association between the trope of voluntaristic marriage and free government, suggests that Imlay's use of divorce was merely a vehicle by which to address the "larger political question of self-determination," the novel itself reveals that it is the other way around. The marriage between Eliza and Mr. F—*does* inspire outrage among the future citizens of Bellefont, but it is not because Eliza's rights are being violated (while Imlay argues that women are not property, Captain Arl—ton's plan for Bellefont clearly illustrates that their political rights are obtained through marriage), but rather because she is not being "relished" by a man who possesses "manly virtue."

The "dual experience of being late and, simultaneously, being ahead of time" is a product of looking *back* to nature and *forward* to the future utopia of Imlay's creation, but gender is central rather than marginal here. Imlay's use of the abusive marriages is to construct a variety of scenes in which the sexual contract can be reenacted. Mr. Il—ray's rescue of Eliza serves as a performance of this reenactment, as Il—ray swoops in to comfort and advise Eliza. "I have not the power," she writes to Caroline,

to express to you the horror and disgust I have experienced at the late conduct of Mr. F--; and as I have found in Mr. Il—ray that warm benevolence, and delicate sense of dignity and honour which is characteristic of a man of principle, I have not hesitated to communicate to him the circumstances, as I found my existence, as a *woman*, depended upon my finding a refuge against brutality, and I knew not where else to seek for it.⁷⁵⁵

Her very survival, "as a *woman*," claims Eliza, depended upon her removing from one man of "brutality" and attaching herself to one of "benevolence." In this reenactment of the sexual contract, and in the one between Caroline and Captain Arl—ton after her

⁷⁵⁵ *The Emigrants*, 241.

rescue from “savages,” gender covers over an important slippage of the meaning of “nature.” Bellefont is a place where men can “regain their pristine sincerity,” where they can return to in order to escape political tyranny and the dissipation of the modern world.⁷⁵⁶ In other words, it is the home of “nature,” a place where the “*unnatural* customs of the European world” can be removed.⁷⁵⁷ And yet, according to the conjectural history that Imlay gives us via Mr. P.P., nature is what produces and has produced the subjection and oppression of women. It is nature that molds the erotic spectacle of female suffering (Lady B--’s sorrow, Caroline’s lacerations) and nature that demands Eliza’s “existence, as a *woman*,” rests on discovering a “refuge against brutality” in a figure of male benevolence and pity. Here again we encounter a temporally fluid concept of “nature” whose gendered dimension reveals a paradox: nature is a place and a time to return to, but it is also a place in which women are *naturally* oppressed, the place in which the “codes of a savage world” were once forged. Indeed, it is Britain’s adherence to those codes which Imlay critiques so vociferously—British culture is backwards and must be amended precisely because it is “savage” to maintain the “barbaric slavery” of British women through unfeeling divorce laws.

Regarding Imlay’s attention to divorce and reading his critique of brutal husbands and the defense they give for their behavior as an intervention in conjectural history

⁷⁵⁶ *The Emigrants*, 223.

⁷⁵⁷ *The Emigrants*, 219. Samuel Johnson gives eleven different entries for the word “nature,” which illustrates just how central and also how flexible the term was. While his first definition is nature personified (“an imaginary being supposed to preside over the material and animal world,” the second is more familiar: “the native state or properties of any thing, by which it is discriminated from others.” Johnson also defines nature causally: “the regular course of things.” These two definitions, primarily, are at work in Imlay’s novel.

reveals that what is most “unnatural” about European practices, according to Imlay, is viewing women as potentially powerful agents of their own destinies. The temporal incongruity we find in the novel is, in part, a product of looking back to nature and forward to political utopia at the same time, but the act of looking back has a hidden gendered dimension, which depends upon the performance of an innate and even biologized female weakness. Looking back for Imlay means to (re)view an idea of female nature and present it as an eroticized spectacle of vulnerability, a spectacle which tantalizes the viewer with absolute power as much as with his ability to rescue. His narrative reenactments of the sexual contract depend upon contradicting Lord B--’s conception of female nature, since it is that conception which motivates his own admittedly tyrannical behavior. Thus Lord B--’s treatment of Lady B-- is “unnatural” because he assumes she has the power to, and perhaps even the desire to wrest authority from him the moment he gave her any degree of freedom. Imlay’s argument is that female nature is, ultimately, best embodied by the desperate Eliza seeking refuge from brutality, and the injured and unconscious Caroline, held in (literal) captivity by male savages. While Caroline may experience the pleasures of their newfound paradise—the sweetness of flowers and the beauty of the landscape—ultimately she embodies physical, if not emotional or spiritual, weakness. This pleasure, her freedom to “decorate” the garden of virtue that is Bellefont, is not a right, but a gift born of “pity.” Caroline herself, with her imagination and innate sense of generosity, may exercise a powerful influence over those around her, but, Imlay points out, that influence can only truly be exercised under the protection of men who want to protect rather than to dominate. Captain Arl—ton is not only aware of Caroline’s physical weakness—it is that weakness which attracts

him in the first place: the lacerations, the unconsciousness, the captivity. It is in these moments which Imlay can reimagine the sexual contract, during which, *rather* than subduing by strength, he subdues by love which is inspired by female “gratitude.”

While Caroline now resides in “the remote corner of the empire of science and reason,” she writes to her sister Eliza, “here everything is new.” Imlay writes,

Here is a continual feast for the imagination---here everything is new, and when you contemplate a frowning wilderness, and view the shades or gradations of the polish of manners, which the blandishments of science has produced, and then compare this scene with what must have been the state of Great Britain, and the manners of the Aborigines of that island, when it was first invaded by the more polished Romans, what a comprehensive and sublime subject is it for the human mind? How familiar does it make you with the appearance of things at an event so remote, and to form an adequate idea of which, requires a scene like this? And in what an estimable point of view does it place those geniuses, who by their labour and talents have produced the astonishing contrast?--I must pause for a moment at the stupendous thought.⁷⁵⁸

This scene occurs early on in the novel and precedes both Caroline’s first encounter with Indigenous peoples and her later kidnapping. It helps frame the scenes of captivity and rescue that occur later in the novel by placing the image of wilderness in conversation with the idea of history, and firmly locates it in a larger discussion of human progress. Indeed, here Caroline underscores the fact that the “wilderness” of America not only represents a spatially distant land (a “remote corner of the empire of science and reason,”) but also temporally distant one, as it recalls moments early in British history. The landscape of the new world becomes a necessity for imagining earlier stages in human history. The “feast for the imagination” that America provides serves as proof of a time that “was never generally so, all over the world.”⁷⁵⁹ The natural character of

⁷⁵⁸ Imlay, Letter XIV, 53.

⁷⁵⁹ Hobbes, *Leviathan*. XIII.

America and its inhabitants makes “familiar” the “appearance of things at an event so remote”—indeed, contemplating those very things *requires* this scene, a scene of simultaneous newness and timelessness. Imlay’s use of Caroline as a way to tie his separatist community to the project of conjectural history is twofold then: her performance of the sexual contract with Captain Arl—ton lays the foundation for Bellefont, and her historical “imagination” places Bellefont in larger conversation of human history and historical progress.

But to return to Caroline’s rich imagery, the specific “event so remote” to which she refers is the Roman invasion of Britain. While the “gradations” of manners among the “Aborigines of that island” is contrasted with the superior “polish” of the Romans, the value that Imlay ascribes to each is not certain. For though the Romans were credited with introducing civilization to Britain, in the novel, “polish” is generally associated with the depravity, dissipation and/or barbaric traditions of European culture. The analogy is further complicated by the identity of those who currently inhabit the “frowning wilderness” of America and demonstrate different “shades or gradations of the polish of manners”—is Imlay referring to the Indigenous peoples who he simultaneously describes as the ignorant agents of British barbarism, as “ferocious savages,” and as possessors of “manly virtue”? Or does he refer to the settlers of the small towns the T—n family passes through, and the dissipated citizens of Philadelphia?⁷⁶⁰ Imlay describes the reformed George as having “the appearance of an Ancient Briton” rather than the appearance of a

⁷⁶⁰ The identity of “those geniuses, who by their labour and talents have produced the astonishing contrast” is ambiguous: does Caroline refer to the great figures of history, who have pushed human society forward, or instead to conjectural theorists, who more literally “produced the contrast” between the Native Americans, the Europeans, and the “Aborigines” of ancient Britain?

modern “fine fellow,” a transformation wrought on him by a change of habit and environment. His description of George feels particularly poignant because George is the only recovered, so to speak, character in the novel. While George had spent time in America before his time in jail, it’s important to remember that he remained in Philadelphia, a city that Imlay is keen to point out is just as corrupt as London or Paris. While George’s transformation is certainly *progressive*, it is also signals a move *backward* in time. For after he has been reformed, Mr. P.P. writes, “he has already become robust, and he now ha[d] more the appearance of an Ancient Briton, than one of those fine fellows, whose nerves require the assistance of harshorn, to enable them to encounter the perils of a hackney coach, or the fatigues of a masquerade.”⁷⁶¹ Here Imlay explicitly ties his concept of enlightened masculinity to an early moment in British history, to a time he sees as an embodiment of a ‘natural state,’ and uses the temporal gap between the Ancient Britain and a modern “fine fellow” to demonstrate the former’s masculine strength and the latter’s effeminate reliance on smelling salts. Ending the novel with this letter, then, signals a break with tradition, even if its spokesperson has well-meaning intentions. Imlay’s invocation of the Ancient Briton marks a return to nature and a recuperation of virtue, so that the novel ends with a return to a pristine origin, from which Bellefont will grow into Imlay’s ideal society.

Imlay’s novel is invested in social origins and in the reenactment of those origins. His utopic state, Bellefont, seeks to create a space in which men, like George, can “regain their pristine sincerity,” a place where society can be as “conformable to the code of

⁷⁶¹ *The Emigrants*, 256.

nature as possible.”⁷⁶² Preceded by the performance of the sexual contract, the foundation of Bellefont is built upon a historically flat concept of female nature, one in which women, “naturally formed for tenderness,” are shaped and controlled entirely by the men around them: both their virtue and their vice is the result of male protection or oppression, respectively.⁷⁶³ In order to perfect society, men like Mr. Il—ray and Captain Arl—ton must replace the “brutish tyrants” epitomized by Mr. S— and Mr. F— because they understand that women, innately instilled with “virtue” and “charm,” must be “guarded” and “protected.”⁷⁶⁴ However, the point of origin for Imlay’s novel, and the catalyst for its initial action, is the bad behavior of Mrs. T—n, behavior that cannot be explained by a slavery-like marriage, a point that is repeated in the novel through the influence she has upon her children. Indeed, aside from Caroline’s kidnapping, it is Mrs. T—n’s maternal influence’s on the characters of Mary and George which inspires the chief moments of conflict in the novel: namely, Mary’s note writing, which separates Caroline and Arl—ton not once but twice, and George’s gambling, which upsets the family settlement and eventually leads to his imprisonment. When considered with Il—ray scant response to Mary’s Mandevillean characterization of human nature, Mrs. T—n’s total silence throughout the novel suggests a trepidity regarding maternal influence and female vice. While male vice is the cause of much suffering the novel, particularly the suffering of Lady B—, Ms. R—/Mrs. S—, and Eliza/Mrs. F—, it is nevertheless compatible with Imlay’s new model of society. In fact, it is a necessary part of its foundation, since women must be rescued by gallant men like Arl—ton from figures of

⁷⁶² *The Emigrants*, 223, 19.

⁷⁶³ *The Emigrants*, 31.

⁷⁶⁴ *The Emigrants*, 115.

savage masculinity—whether they be the Indigenous peoples who kidnap Caroline or the brutal Lord B-- who abuses his Lady. Women like Mary and Mrs. T--n, however, if unwilling to accept Imlay's doctrine of female virtue, undermine his project rather than contribute to it by, like Mrs. T—n, violating their own nature, the worst offense in the “whole catalogue of crimes which degrade the human heart.”⁷⁶⁵

By way of conclusion, I want to return to the image of the Indigenous woman, looking on silently as Caroline faints into Captain Arl---ton's arms. The brevity of her appearance belies her theoretical importance to the conjectural imagination of *The Emigrants*, and to its broader political context. As a “savage” woman, this character occupies another time, one characterized by a gendered oppression. Though mirrored by Caroline's unconsciousness in this scene, the Indigenous woman's silence will not be broken; she will not emerge from the “completely wretched” condition which characterizes the “savage” state.⁷⁶⁶ At the same time, her silence ratifies the gendered history outlined by Thomas's *Essay*, one which temporalizes essentialized sexual differences and locates them inside of the state. While, according to the assurances of stadial theory, her oppression promises to ease away, the broader effects of universal time reveal it to be an empty one: while allegedly assigned to “wretchedness” because of her “stage” of temporal development, her subjection is confirmed by her ‘racial’ difference, itself made possible by a temporal hierarchy. The universal promise of conjectural history is a deceit built on the conflation between human histories and the history of “Man.” To

⁷⁶⁵ *The Emigrants*, 31.

⁷⁶⁶ Thomas, *Essay*, 3.

write a universal “history of women” is to construct a temporal framework which perpetuates violence and constructs Indigenous absence.⁷⁶⁷ The “history of women,” which begins with her experience and defines the level of civility by her removal, animates the logic of political separation in the novel and is in turn animated by the logic of settler colonialism: “the logic of elimination.”⁷⁶⁸

Marking the division between past and present, her character and presence as a witness of a sexual contract which inaugurates a new settler society traces the way conjectural history, and its temporal distancing devices, was an imaginative well for settler colonial projects. It is through the conjectural imagination of the novel, in the ambit of a universal time of natural history, that Imlay constructs the Western territories as open expanses to be settled. If, to return to Adam Lifshey’s figuration, the product of the “reiterating foundational narrative” that is “America” is a “profound, but spectral Indigenous absence,” the woman’s silent presence is revealed as just that.⁷⁶⁹ But she is a specter out of time, serving as the raw material for Imlay’s settler project and as the harbinger of Indigenous genocide which is a “lamentable” but inevitable product of the alleged ‘savagery’ of Indigenous men, both their desire for military conflict and the “tardy” growth of their population.⁷⁷⁰ Tied to this lateness, Imlay represents her as already gone, already childless, kinless, vanishing into the time of the past.

⁷⁶⁷ “We cannot really speak of a global ‘coevalness’—the absolute time of Euro-American historicism—in the sense that such a concept presumes a singular timeline in which everyone moves in synchrony” because that synchrony erases colonial violence. Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*, 21.

⁷⁶⁸ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native.” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006):387.

⁷⁶⁹ Lifshey, *Specters of Conquest: Indigenous Absence in Transatlantic Literatures*, 1.

⁷⁷⁰ Imlay, *A Topographical Description*, 81.

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