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Historical Precedents and Early Modern Interpretations: English Histories of America, 1500-1700

Introduction:

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, historical study offered compelling strategies to the English for determining why to colonize America, how to know the New World, and how to understand the Native Americans. English scholars and travelers believed that the correct assembly and reading of historical sources would reveal the significance of the new continent. These sources could demonstrate the value of colonization and position English settlement in America as the inevitable conclusion to a lengthy history. Englishmen repeatedly turned to the European past for lessons on colonialism or analytic models to understand America. History was the guiding principle underlying accounts of the New World.

Permanent English settlements were not established in the New World until the early seventeenth century, over a century after Christopher Columbus's original voyage. Sixteenth century English scholars sought to produce information about America, explain to the English elite why they should support expensive and dangerous expeditions across the Atlantic, and justify the English right to territory claimed by the Spanish. These scholars used historical study to mitigate the lack of English settlements in America and promote colonization as a beneficial enterprise. The earliest collector of American travel accounts, Richard Eden, glorified the Iberian conquests in America through classical parallels. He presented the Spanish and the Portuguese as the modern inheritors of the virtuous Greek and Roman empires. Eden suggested that exploration and settlement abroad could naturally improve the English people.

English scholars used historical examples to focus attention on an idealized past, rather than the scarcity of English overseas trade or settlement during the sixteenth century. John Dee created a fictional history of English travel to America and encouraged modern Englishmen to

follow their ancestors abroad. Dee's work was oriented towards the future. He suggested the English had discovered America before Columbus, which proved Elizabeth I's right to claim territories in the New World. According to Dee, America was already known to the English and only required resettlement for this knowledge to be fully restored. Richard Hakluyt also envisioned historical study as a restorative process, which could reveal information about America that had been forgotten or lost, instead of previously undiscovered. He compiled every available report of English travel abroad and created a massive collection to represent the lineage of English discovery and settlement. Hakluyt believed that the best examples for how and why to travel could be found in the English past. Hakluyt and Dee confronted the challenges of how to promote English colonization in a foreign continent by using English history as a method of persuasion.

Dee and Hakluyt's works reflect the importance of historical study for early modern English scholars. Historical analysis was valued as an investigative process, which exposed hidden truths through the collation and reading of as many sources as possible. Scholars believed that God's intentions for humanity could be traced by studying the past. Examining history was instrumental in decoding the significance of events and determining a course of action. English scholars used history to reconcile differing information, communicate the benefits of America, and assure readers of a promising future for English colonization.

Studying the past to know America was not limited to scholars who remained in England. History offered valuable strategies to English travelers for how to view the New World and characterize what they observed. Thomas Harriot traveled to the Roanoke colony in North Carolina in the late sixteenth century and created a description of the Algonquians he encountered. He focused on cultural and religious attributes shared by Native Americans and

Europeans. He suggested that Native Americans were living in an earlier stage of historical development, equivalent to the tribal people of Britain before the Roman conquest. By identifying their historical condition, Harriot predicted that the Native Americans were ready for conversion and reformation by a foreign power. Harriot did not describe the Native Americans only through empirical observations. He used historical parallels to determine what he needed to learn in America and to express the significance of what he observed.

During the seventeenth century, these types of historical critiques persisted as instructive and useful ways to know the New World. English colonists crafted histories of the Native Americans to understand their development in comparison to other peoples and to suggest that they would be imminently converted to Christianity. The ongoing prevalence of historical criticism indicates why Thomas Morton, a New England colonist, asserted that Native Americans had descended from Brutus, the legendary Trojan founder of Britain. Morton was a unique figure in the Atlantic world; however, leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony like John Eliot created their own historical genealogies. Eliot contended that the ancient Israelites were the ancestors of the Native Americans. His narrative was linked to the hopes of English Puritans for the second coming of Christ, which would be instigated by the conversion of all foreign peoples. The works of Morton and Eliot reflect the continued value of studying the past for Englishmen who lived in America and had direct contact with Native Americans. History offered an optimistic perspective for viewing America, by confirming that the New World was part of a global progression of Christianity directed by God across continents and over millennia.

Early modern English scholars and travelers came to know America through the interpretation of the past. Historical study formed the intellectual foundations for English colonization in the New World. Examining how early modern writers applied history to America

informs our understanding of the development of English colonization and prejudices against non-European peoples.

The first chapter of my thesis considers how English authors manipulated history to justify settlement in America and to establish a legal right to colonization. Writers used a shared set of historical precedents to create these justifications. The precedents were drawn from classical, ecclesiastical, and medieval history, and formed glorified rationales for English expeditions to the New World. Writers employed these precedents to different effect, creating a variety of explanations for why colonization would be beneficial. In general, classical precedents established how conquests abroad would bring glory to the English, ecclesiastical precedents were an assurance that colonization was scripturally sanctioned, and medieval precedents confirmed England's historical right to settle America. Collectively, these precedents were resources for English scholars attempting to prove the value of settlement abroad.

The second chapter examines how historical study shaped what English scholars and travelers knew about America. Writers attempted to establish what information about the New World existed in past accounts. They believed that this information offered keys for determining the significance of the new continent and the characteristics of the Native Americans. In this chapter, I outline the tensions between historical sources and the experiential information gained by travelers in the New World. Observations from English travel accounts did not supplant historical texts. Writers attempted to reconcile contemporary and past journeys to create a complete and accurate record of America. Historical study continued to represent the best strategy for determining the value of information and placing that information within a relevant context.

In the first and second chapters, I establish why English writers examined the past to gain knowledge about America, explain the benefits of travel abroad, and legitimize their colonial activities. In the third chapter, I suggest that this focus on the past encouraged English authors to construct histories of the New World. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, scholars and colonists created several visions of the identity of the Native Americans and the worthiness of their civilizations. Many writers considered Native Americans to be a prehistoric people, existing before the development of an advanced government or economy. Depending on the author's viewpoint, this condition could signify that the Native Americans were violent and uncivil, or that these people possessed certain natural virtues. Scholars struggled with questions of a biblical or classical genealogy for Native Americans, which could explain how they had arrived in the New World and the identity of their ancestors. In their works, Morton and Eliot created a shared heritage between Native Americans and Europeans. Combining the Native American and the European past could bridge the divisions between these peoples, if only theoretically. Other scholars constructed histories that disparaged Native Americans as the descendants of barbaric and uncivilized nations.

English scholars and travelers examined history to unravel the meaning of America within global human development. Their perspectives on the past determined how they thought about America and presented the continent in their writings. Early modern Englishmen did not believe that studying America called for a new intellectual context or unmediated observations. These writers knew America by filtering information about the New World through their constructs of European history. The mysteries of the New World required the incisiveness of historical study, to expose the origins and character of this place and its peoples.

Chapter 1: Rhetorical and Legal Foundations for Colonization

Introduction and Context:

Richard Eden was the earliest English writer to collect and publish accounts of travel to America. He attended Christ's College, Cambridge, and was employed as an alchemist before becoming a secretary to Sir William Cecil in 1552.¹ In this position, Eden began to translate and publish European travel literature, as part of Cecil's hope to expand English foreign trade. In 1553, Eden published *A Treatyse of the Newe India*, an extract from the German cartographer Sebastian Munster's atlas *Cosmographia*.²³ During the same year, Edward VI died and the crown passed to Mary I. Her marriage to Philip II and her support of Catholicism encouraged a close relationship between England and Spain. Eden pledged his loyalty to the new monarch and received patronage from Spanish nobles at court, which funded his next project.⁴ He translated Spanish accounts of America, including Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's *De Orbe Novo* and Gonzalo Oviedo's *Natural hystoria de las Indias*. These works used the firsthand reports of Spanish explorers to chronicle new discoveries and conquests in America. Eden published his English translations as *The Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India* in 1555.⁵ He embellished this collection with a preface praising Spain for opening a new part of the world to trade and settlement and encouraging the English to note this example. Eden drew his description of America from relatively recent Spanish accounts; however, his preface placed these journeys in a classical context. He presented Spain as the modern inheritors of the Greek and Roman legacy of conquest abroad. Drawing out this parallel, Eden suggested that:

¹ "Eden, Richard (c. 1520–1576)," Andrew Hadfield in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G.

² Ibid.

³ Anthony Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 85.

⁴ "Eden, Richard," Andrew Hadfield in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁵ Ibid.

if man maye be a god to men as holy scripture speaketh of Moises and other) the kynges of Spayne of late Dayes (if I may speake it without offence of other) may so...be compared to those goddes made of men (whom the antiquitie cauled Heroes and for theyr manyfolde benefites to man kynde honoured theym with Diuine honoure).⁶

According to Eden, the Spanish monarchs extending their empire abroad were the modern equivalents of classical or biblical heroes such as Moses. He referred to a glorified antiquity to elevate Spanish colonization in America to classical heroism. English scholars and elites idealized the Greek and Roman empires as states that had spread their virtues, infrastructure, and scientific discoveries to the rest of Europe through conquest. This mythic understanding of the past offered useful parallels for European settlement in America.

During the sixteenth century, English scholars like Richard Eden appropriated Spanish descriptions of America to create the rhetorical foundations for English exploration. Spanish texts modeled the use of historical precedents to encourage travel abroad. In this chapter, I will examine how several English writers invoked classical, scriptural, and medieval European history to explain why and how the English should settle in the New World. These precedents were collected to reveal the benefits of colonization and to justify English expeditions.

The first section of this chapter considers the manipulation of Greek and Roman history for heroic examples of discovery and empire. English authors used the classical past to present America as an opportunity for political growth and the improvement of national virtue, which would advance Europeans beyond their idealized predecessors. Citing classical history allowed English scholars and explorers to argue that trading with and settling in foreign nations was part of the spread of civility across the globe. The second section in this chapter assesses how writers referred to scriptural examples to justify colonization abroad. Early modern European scholars believed that biblical precedents could unlock the meaning and significance of contemporary

⁶ Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, *The decades of the newe worlde or west India*, trans. Richard Eden (London: 1555), *Early English Books Online*, A1v.

events, by revealing God's intentions for humanity over time. The third section examines how scholars used the medieval European past to establish English legal claims to America and prove to other European nations a history of English settlement in the New World. This chapter will thus exhibit a common set of argumentative models used by English authors to link the past to modern colonization. English authors employed the past to resolve the intellectual dilemmas of whether to explore and settle America, and the significance of this new continent to European history.

For the majority of the sixteenth century, English travel to America was limited to annual fishing voyages to modern-day Canada. However, the meaning of such travel was transformed after the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558, as the rivalry between England and Spain became increasingly hostile. In the latter half of the century, the English traveled to America with the goals of attacking the Spanish, searching for the Northwest Passage, and creating permanent settlements. Englishmen became interested in America as a site for trade, English expansion, and proselytization. Martin Frobisher sailed to Newfoundland in 1576, 1577, and 1578 to search for a trade route to India and China. Sir Francis Drake left England in 1577 to raid Spanish settlements in Central and South America. He returned in 1580, after completing the first English circumnavigation of the world. Humphrey Gilbert traveled to Canada in 1583, while his stepbrother, Sir Walter Raleigh, organized the first English settlement in America at Roanoke Island, North Carolina, in 1585. This expedition was the first of several small colonies on the island. The final group of settlers famously disappeared by 1590.⁷ In the last years of Elizabeth's rule, war with Spain and the colonization of Ireland limited new attempts at settlement in America. However, this period of heightened English interest in voyages to the New World was

⁷ "Raleigh, Sir Walter (1554–1618)," Mark Nicholls in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23039> (accessed January 15, 2015).

accompanied by a surge in the publication and dissemination of works written about travel and English imperialism.

Eden's *Decades of the Newe Worlde* did not stimulate the immediate proliferation of similar travel accounts. Rather, such an escalation only took place in the 1570s, coinciding with the increase in exploratory voyages to America. These authors focused on rationales for English travel and settlement abroad. For example, John Dee used his detailed studies of historical sources to predict that English journeys would be successful. Dee was educated at Cambridge and became well known for his work as a mathematician and natural philosopher, as well as for accusations of witchcraft during his career.⁸ He traveled in Europe repeatedly, beginning in 1547 with his journey to the University of Louvain to visit the geographers Gerardus Mercator and Abraham Ortelius, who Dee later consulted for details on the geography of America.⁹ Dee occasionally advised Elizabeth I and during the 1570s, he began to write in support of English colonization in America.¹⁰ In *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Nauigation*, he became the first English author to use the term 'British Empire,' thus expressing the hope that the English would create extensive settlements overseas.¹¹ During the 1570s and 1580s, he produced documents summarizing Elizabeth I's legal claims to America based on historical English voyages.¹² Dee was an aspiring political counselor, who used his scholarship to promote colonization within elite political circles.

⁸ "Dee, John (1527–1609)," R. Julian Roberts in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7418> (accessed January 24, 2015).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 152.

¹² Ken MacMillan, introduction to *John Dee: the Limits of the British Empire* by John Dee (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004), 3.

Richard Hakluyt used historical study, like Dee, to craft arguments in favor of English travel abroad and to gain patronage in the Elizabethan court. He was raised and educated by his older cousin and namesake, Richard Hakluyt, who promoted foreign trade. Hakluyt the younger attended Christ Church, Oxford and was ordained as a priest in 1580.¹³ He began his literary career by publishing treatises to encourage investment in Gilbert and Raleigh's expeditions. Like Dee, Hakluyt synthesized historical sources to create suggestions for how and why the English should settle abroad. His early works were similar to Dee's style of scholarly commentary; however, he shifted his focus in 1580s to compiling every known record of English foreign travel. In 1589, he published the first edition of *The Principal Navigations*, an immense collection of accounts of English voyages, beginning in the fourth century and extending to the recent circumnavigations of Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish.¹⁴ The English exploratory missions in the 1570s and 1580s failed to produce any permanent settlements or significant discoveries. However, Hakluyt and Dee were able to shape the late sixteenth century English discourse on America by establishing the importance of English colonization within a historical framework.

Throughout this thesis, I will discuss these scholars along with other figures, many of who possessed a literary background and university training like Dee and Hakluyt, who traveled to America and published reports of their experiences. These authors visited the New World during the early stages of English settlement and referred to history to justify their involvement in America. Thomas Harriot was a mathematician educated at Oxford and employed by Sir Walter Raleigh during the 1580s to teach Raleigh and his captains mathematical and instrumental

¹³ Hakluyt, Richard (1552?–1616),” Anthony Payne in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11892> (accessed January 15, 2015).

¹⁴ Ibid.

skills for navigation.¹⁵ Harriot traveled to Roanoke Island in 1585 as part of a brief colony that would return to England in 1586.¹⁶ While at Roanoke, he studied American wildlife and the social and religious customs of the Native Americans. He published his observations as a pamphlet, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, in 1588.¹⁷ Theodor de Bry, a Belgian goldsmith and engraver, republished an expanded and enriched version of Harriot's account in Frankfurt in 1590, which for the first time brought English travel writing to a broad continental audience.

After the failure of the Roanoke colony, the next significant English settlement was founded at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. Accounts of life in North America and propaganda for colonization appeared again in the literary marketplace. William Strachey was a member of the Jamestown colony during its early years. He was educated at Cambridge and attempted to earn a living as a poet.¹⁸ He became an agent of the Levant Company and a secretary for the English ambassador to Constantinople in 1606.¹⁹ His dismissal from the post resulted in Strachey leaving England for Virginia in 1609, where the Virginia Company employed him as a secretary. Strachey returned to England in 1611 and wrote *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, which combined his observations of America with his reading of the travel collections of Richard Eden and Richard Willes, and possibly a Spanish history of America: Jose de Acosta's *The natural and morall historie of the East and West Indies*.²⁰ John Smith was also a member of the

¹⁵ "Harriot, Thomas (c.1560–1621)," J. J. Roche in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12379> (accessed January 19, 2015).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund, introduction to *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* by William Strachey (London: Hakluyt Society, 1953), xx.

¹⁹ "Strachey, William (1572–1621)," Betty Wood in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26623> (accessed January 18, 2015).

²⁰ Wright and Freund, introduction, xxvii.

Jamestown settlement. Smith was not educated at a university, and he served as a soldier in continental Europe until his return to England in 1605.²¹ He sailed on the first voyage to Jamestown and briefly acted as the governor of the colony. He hoped to establish a new colony in the northeast of America, and mapped the coast in 1614 and 1615. He published his report of the area, which he named New England, in 1616 as *A description of New England*. Smith published several other works during the early seventeenth century to promote colonization in America and glorify himself as an explorer and leader.

The scholars and travelers described in this chapter possessed a variety of political motivations for colonization. They hoped to gain royal patronage, influential positions in the government, and investment in their enterprises abroad. Collectively, their works are representative of how historical precedents shaped justifications of English colonization and determined how the English thought about the New World.

Section 1: Classical Precedents and the Idealization of Colonialism

This section considers how English authors invoked the Greek and Roman past to explain the significance of America within European history. The humanist scholarship of the Renaissance encouraged studying classical texts for guidance on contemporary events.²² England and Spain were religiously and politically opposed by the end of the sixteenth century, but their scholars drew upon a common set of classical examples to justify imperialism abroad.²³ For example, in Greek mythology, the Pillars of Hercules flanked the strait of Gibraltar and

²¹ “Smith, John (*bap.* 1580, *d.* 1631),” Gwenda Morgan in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25835> (accessed February 11, 2015).

²² Nicholas Popper, *Walter Raleigh's History of the World and the Historical Culture of the Late Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 3.

²³ David A. Boruchoff, "Piety, Patriotism, and Empire: Lessons for England, Spain, and the New World in the Works of Richard Hakluyt," *Renaissance Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (Fall, 2009): 825-826.

represented the geographical boundary of the known world. Inscribed on these pillars was the motto: "non plus ultra," or "nothing further beyond," indicating to sailors that they could not pass that point. Charles V repurposed this motto to become "plus ultra," or "still further," expressing that he had surpassed classical limits by extending his empire to America.²⁴ In their writings on America, the Spanish imagined their discoveries as moving beyond limited classical knowledge. This discourse of imperial progress continued to rely on the iconography and rhetoric of ancient empires.

In *The Decades*, Richard Eden envisioned Spain as furthering the civilizing practices of the Greeks and Romans. He opened his preface with Cicero's exhortation that citizens must improve each other's lives to demonstrate their rationality.²⁵ According to Eden, Spanish colonization was an example of civil improvement: "[b]ut certeynely the most trewe and permanent glory, procedeth of such monuments as brynge some great and notable comoditie and profite to the lyfe of men, rather than of the hugious heapes of stones of the pyramides of Egypt."²⁶ Eden compared the Egyptian and Roman empires to suggest that the Egyptians had focused on internal glory, yet the Romans had improved societies beyond their borders through colonization and trade. Like the Romans, Spanish citizens benefited from the material goods and profits gained through colonization. Eden presented the Spanish and the Romans as benevolent empires that spread civility through settlement and commerce. This example indicates how scholars understood modern colonialism through the interpretation of ancient colonialism. Eden's parallels between ancient and modern empires were intended to reveal to the English a series of historical rationales for colonization and exploration abroad.

²⁴ Arthur Williamson, "An Empire to End Empire: The Dynamic of Early Modern British Expansion," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, no. 1-2 (March 2005): 228.

²⁵ Martire d'Anghiera, *The decades*, Alv.

²⁶ Ibid.

After Elizabeth's ascension and the decline of Anglo-Spanish relations, Richard Hakluyt and John Dee attempted to assure English elites that colonization could be successful. They used classical examples in their writing as a means of persuasion. Well-known Greek and Roman figures and images projected a future of economic and political success in America that seemed unlikely for the English during this period. For example, the frontispiece to Dee's *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Nauigation* depicted Elizabeth I steering a ship towards Fortuna, the Roman goddess of opportunity who holds a laurel wreath, a symbol of Roman imperial authority.²⁷ Additionally, the allegorical figure of Britannia was shown planting grain, as a representation of extending English agriculture overseas.²⁸ Elizabeth was stylized as a classical emperor, gaining material prosperity for England through expansion abroad. *General and Rare Memorials* focused primarily on technical suggestions for creating an English navy; however, Dee used classical iconography at the outset to represent the benefits of a fictional English empire.

During the late sixteenth century, scholars manipulated classical imagery to create assurances of future success and offer a heroic narrative for national political questions. These allusions enabled readers to imagine English journeys abroad as similar to the Romans conquering Europe or Alexander traveling into Asia. Ancient empires offered a more favorable assessment of travel and conquest than the reality of English people venturing into unknown areas with little ability to predict the outcome of their journeys. Like Dee, Richard Hakluyt promoted English travel abroad through classical references. He published *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America* in 1582 to encourage investment in Humphrey Gilbert's

²⁷ Ken MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.

²⁸ Ibid.

journey to North America.²⁹ Hakluyt argued that the Northwest Passage was easily discoverable and would provide economic and social benefits to England. He described how bees respond to overpopulation by seeking new hives and commented that "[i]f the examples of the Grecians and Carthaginians of olde time, and the practice of our age may not move us, yet let us learn wisdom of these smal weake and unreasonable creatures."³⁰ This metaphor reflects Hakluyt's belief that colonialism furnished concrete rewards, as reflected in nature and history. With the publication of *Divers Voyages*, Hakluyt began his career of promoting English voyages to America and assembling historical precedents on which to base these expeditions. He hoped to be consulted by the crown, as Dee was, for political advice on colonization.³¹

For Hakluyt, ancient conquests and Spanish colonization were analogous developments that proved the continuity over time of reasons to create empires. In 1587, Hakluyt published a new edition of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's *De Orbe Novo* in the original Latin.³² In the dedication to this text, Hakluyt expressed his admiration for Peter Martyr, as the author was known in England: "I can truly say, what once Alexander of Macedon is reported to have said of invincible Achilles: O happy man, who hast found a Homer to be the herald of thy praises, I can say of the Spanish people: O blessed and thrice happy you men of Spain, who have gotten Martyr."³³ Hakluyt paralleled Homer and Martyr to suggest that Martyr was equally accomplished in his ability to record significant historical events. He applauded Martyr for his commemoration of Spanish triumphs.

²⁹ "Hakluyt, Richard," Anthony Payne in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

³⁰ Richard Hakluyt, "Preface to *Divers Voyages*," in *The Original Writings & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 176.

³¹ MacMillan, introduction, 26.

³² "Hakluyt, Richard," Anthony Payne in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

³³ Richard Hakluyt, "Epistle Dedicatory to Sir Walter Raleigh," in *The Original Writings & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 364.

Hakluyt suggested that Homer and Martyr were his historical models for how to construct a glorified national history. In *De Orbe Novo*, Hakluyt promised his dedicatee, Sir Walter Raleigh, that he would, "collect in orderly fashion the maritime records of our own countrymen, now lying scattered and neglected."³⁴ This process would supposedly restore the English to their appropriate imperial position. Hakluyt praised Raleigh's dedication to colonization and advised him: "let the doughty deeds of Ferdinand Cortes, the Castilian, the stout conqueror of New Spain, here beautifully described, resound ever in your ears and let them make your nights not less sleepless than did those of Themistocles the glorious triumphs of Miltiades."³⁵ Hakluyt compared Cortes and Raleigh to Athenian generals and proposed that Cortes's accomplishments should not diminish Raleigh, but serve as inspiration. Hakluyt used heroic parallels to present Cortes and Raleigh as equally accomplished colonizers, despite the discrepancy between English and Spanish successes in the New World. In the late sixteenth century, English scholars sought to overcome the lack of English colonies abroad by imitating Spanish accounts, which used Greek and Roman history to frame the acts of colonization and exploration.

English writers continued to link their colonial activities to classical examples after the establishment of permanent settlements on the coast of North America. In 1610, the Virginia Company published an anonymous pamphlet entitled *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia*, which praised the quality of life in the Jamestown colony. In their description of Jamestown, the unknown author claimed that, "the resolution of Caesar in Fraunce, the designes of Alexander in Greece, the discoveries of Hernando Cortes in the West, and of Emanuel, King of Portugale in the East, were not encouraged upon so firme grounds of

³⁴ Ibid., 369.

³⁵ Ibid.

state and possibility."³⁶ Eden and Hakluyt had presented English and Spanish voyages as equivalent to the deeds of Greek and Roman heroes. The author writing for the Virginia Company argued that the English had improved upon their classical and Spanish predecessors by creating a colony guaranteed to succeed. This work indicates how propagandists might use the same historical examples as scholars to replace proof of success in America with glorified historical examples.

Classical history shaped English perceptions of the value of colonizing America. In *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, William Strachey used the English past to highlight the possible benefits of the Virginia colonial project. He described the Roman conquest of Britain and the government of Publius Ostorius Scapula, who:

reduced the conquered partes of our barbarous Island into Prouinces, and established in them Colonies of old soldiers, building castells, and townes and in every Corner teaching vs even to know the powerfull discourse of divine Reason (which makes vs only men, and distinguisheth vs from beasts, amongst whom we lived as naked, and as bestly as they³⁷

According to Strachey, the Romans had created the infrastructure of civilization in England and brought the English to humanity by teaching reason. English colonization could be the modern counterpart to this civilizing mission. Strachey argued that if the English settled the New World, their efforts would equal the accomplishments of the Romans. He used classical history to represent colonialism as an act carried out by a civil and virtuous empire.

Like Strachey, John Smith invoked Roman history to motivate Englishmen to travel abroad. In *A Description of New England*, he outlined his vision of the classical past: "Rome, What made her such a Monarchesse, but onely the aduentures of her youth, not in riots at home;

³⁶ *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia*, in *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580-1640*, ed. Peter Mancall (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995), 128.

³⁷ William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1953), 24.

but in dangers abroade? and the iustice and iudgement out of their experience, when they grewe aged."³⁸ He idealized Roman conquests to admonish reluctant English settlers and indirectly praise his own role in advancing the English state. Smith presented New England as an ideal location for settlement and he likely hoped the Plymouth Company would hire him as a colonial governor.³⁹ He did not allude to an exact historical event or figure in Roman history for his argument in favor of English colonization. He followed his praise of Rome with an analysis of its downfall: "Those by their pains & vertues became Lords of the word; they by their case and vices became slaues to their seruants. This is the difference betwixt...the golden age and the leaden age, prosperity and miserie, iustice and corruption, substance and shadowes, words and deeds."⁴⁰ English colonization was broadly equated to a golden era of political virtue and martial action.

Classical history offered a range of precedents in favor of expansion and colonialism that English authors presented as indisputable. These writers used classical examples to accentuate different features of their arguments. John Dee and Richard Hakluyt described English and classical empires as equally accomplished in order to forecast English success abroad. William Strachey and John Smith inferred lessons on the value of colonization from the Roman Empire. English scholars and travelers regarded classical history as the best medium for justifying settlement abroad and glorifying English explorers. This perception of the Greeks and Romans was drawn from Spanish scholarship, which emphasized the heroism of Spanish colonizers. Humanist scholars regarded classical empires as the beginning of civil conquest over foreign

³⁸ John Smith, *A description of New England*. Rare Book and Special Collections. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C. Relevant entry is F7 .S63 1616, 32.

³⁹ "Smith, John," Gwenda Morgan in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁴⁰ Smith, *A description of New England*, 32-33.

states. English writers attempted to parallel the development of ancient empires and the creation of an imperial English nation.

Section 2: Ecclesiastical Precedents for Colonization

In addition to classical history, English authors referred to the biblical past as an assurance of success for expeditions abroad. Iberian and English writers retained an intellectual reliance on scripture, despite the focus of humanist scholarship on studying the classical past.⁴¹ This section considers how scriptural precedents were manipulated to express God's intentions for the English. Writers presented colonization as the fulfillment of the divine plan for Christianity to spread around the world. In this section, I will examine a range of providential and scriptural narratives used by the English to legitimize foreign travel and settlement.

Propagandists used the Bible to create a teleological explanation for colonization. According to this theory, God had created America to be Christianized by Europeans and filled it with material goods to guarantee their prosperity. One of the first English accounts of Virginia described the region as an earthly paradise. In 1584, Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe surveyed Roanoke Island for Sir Walter Raleigh in preparation for an English settlement the following year. Barlowe's account of the journey was included in the 1589 edition of Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*. He described North America as a modern-day Garden of Eden, where: "The earth bringeth foorth all things in aboundance, as in the first creation, without toile or labour."⁴² According to Barlowe, God's support for English colonization was expressed by the

⁴¹ Williamson, "An Empire to End Empire," 230.

⁴² Richard Hakluyt, *The principall nauigations, voiages and discoueries of the English nation* (London, 1589), *Early English Books Online*, 731.

bounty of the New World. This continent was a new opportunity to fulfill God's mandate that men must establish dominion over world.⁴³

Thomas Harriot's *A briefe and true report* similarly invoked the Bible to scripturally contextualize the New World. Theodor de Bry republished Harriot's report with the addition of illustrations, based on the watercolors of John White, who had accompanied Harriot to Roanoke. The first illustrated plate in de Bry's text was an image of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, representing the origins of humanity.⁴⁴ Adam and Eve were pictured in the moment before they ate from the tree of knowledge. In the background of the image, Adam farms and Eve holds a child, both actions were visual representations of how the human race grew and survived after their expulsion from Eden. This reminder that all humans had a common ancestor and historical evolution prefaced White's images of Native Americans. The application of scripture assured readers that America was not beyond Christian boundaries and Native Americans could be restored to their original knowledge of God. Harriot placed America within a Christian framework to guarantee the possibility of spiritual and material improvement.

English authors used the Bible to illustrate that colonization was part of God's design for humanity. In *Principal Navigations*, Richard Hakluyt organized English voyages in chronological order and by region, to follow the continuous movement of Englishmen around the globe. Hakluyt understood these journeys as the realization of a biblical prescription to know the world through travel.⁴⁵ He established this position in the dedication of *Principal Navigations* to Sir Francis Walsingham. He described reading Psalm 107 as a child: "where I read, that they

⁴³ Ralph Bauer, "The 'America of Nature': Francis Bacon and the Archaeology of a Paradigm," in *The Alchemy of Conquest: Discovery, Prophecy, and the Secrets of the New World*, (working paper, University of Maryland), 48-49.

⁴⁴ Thomas Harriot, *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia*, (London: 1590), *Early English Books Online*, A1r.

⁴⁵ David Harris Sacks, "Richard Hakluyt's Navigations in Time: History, Epic, and Empire," *Modern Language Quarterly* 67 (March 2006): 49.

which go downe to the sea in ships, and occupy by the great waters, they see the works of the Lord, and his woonders in the deepe."⁴⁶ Hakluyt believed that voyages abroad improved one's understanding of God. *Principal Navigations* was intended to be a collection of lessons gained from travel that could guide contemporary English journeys. David Harris Sacks suggests that the chronological organization of accounts by different authors replicated the form of the Bible.⁴⁷ This style was intended to reveal God's support for the English empire, as biblical authors used a series of eyewitness narratives to reveal God's work in the world. For Hakluyt, the history of English travel proved their destiny as a chosen people and established that their modern journeys were the completion of a divine plan. In the dedication of *Principal Navigations*, Hakluyt described Henry VIII's support for exploration abroad, which he hoped Elizabeth I would continue. He compared the two monarchs to David and Solomon: "as the purpose of David the king to builde a house and temple to God was accepted, although Salomon performed it."⁴⁸ Hakluyt imagined Queen Elizabeth as Solomon, completing the dictate to explore America given by her father. He invoked sacred history as source of precedents that gave spiritual meaning to colonial goals.

Hakluyt believed that collecting English travel accounts would facilitate international commerce and the exchange of information between different peoples. This process would culminate in the reunification of all nations under Christianity.⁴⁹ This restoration would be a reversal of the forced dispersion of humanity at the Tower of Babel.⁵⁰ According to Hakluyt, that separation was a punishment against ancient people for their arrogance, while God was

⁴⁶ Richard Hakluyt, *The principall nauigations, voiages and discoueries of the English nation* (London, 1589), *Early English Books Online*, 2.

⁴⁷ Sacks, "Richard Hakluyt's Navigations," 31.

⁴⁸ Richard Hakluyt, "Epistle Dedicatory to Sir Francis Walsingham," in *Original Writings & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 400.

⁴⁹ Sacks, "Richard Hakluyt's Navigations," 47.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

rewarding modern Europeans for their Christianity through the discovery of America. Samuel Purchas, who published a travel collection in 1625, reflected this perspective in his commentary on Christopher Columbus's discovery, "as the Psalmist singeth of Heauenly, it is also in Earthly Mysteries, *The secrets of the Lord is with them that feare him, and the meeke he will guide in iudgement.*"⁵¹ English scholars assembled a body of scriptural examples to present America as divinely bestowed on Europeans.⁵²

In *A Description of New England*, John Smith argued that colonization was a Christian enterprise. He advertised the ease of planting crops in New England, and the abundance of raw materials in America that could support an economy. Smith suggested that English colonization was modeled after the Bible: "*Adam and Eue did first beginne this innocent worke, To plant the earth to remaine to prosteritie; but not without labour, trouble & industrie.*"⁵³ According to Smith, the trials of colonization required Englishmen to emulate their biblical forbearers, in addition to the Roman Empire. Smith used classical and biblical allusions to similar effect. He referred to well-known examples that could establish the political necessity and moral value of colonizing America. In his work, Roman history provided a lesson on the dangers of inaction, while scripture offered a clear mandate for settlement abroad. Biblical precedents elevated English colonization to the significance of Adam and Eve's original settling of the Earth.

English authors manipulated scripture to argue that colonialism was divinely ordained. These authors believed that the Bible expressed God's design for the English to inhabit the New World. They labored to place the new continent within a biblical framework, which could confirm its purpose in Christian history.

⁵¹ Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 8.

⁵² Bauer, "The 'America of Nature,'" *Alchemy of Conquest*, 49.

⁵³ Smith, *Description of New England*, 59.

Section 3: Medieval Precedents for European Empire

This section explores the use of precedents from European history to prove a legal claim to America. The classical and scriptural past represented how European nations could achieve national glory and divine favor through colonization. European history could determine which nation possessed the right to settle in the New World. English and Spanish scholars created opposing accounts of the discovery of America. These scholars wanted to reveal the continent's hidden identity as part of a historical European empire, which would irrefutably establish the right to colonization.

In *The Decades*, Peter Martyr and Richard Eden considered whether America was described in any historical European sources. Martyr's work included the reports of early Spanish explorers like Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci, who had attempted to place America within a European history and chronology. Columbus claimed that he had discovered the lost island of Ophir, supposedly the easternmost part of Asia. Solomon's fleet had traveled to this mythical port, famed for its gold, in the biblical Book of Kings. In the preface to *The Decades*, Eden suggested that Ophir could not be found in America, as Solomon did not have sufficient navigational knowledge to reach the New World and, "yet do we not reade that any of his shyppes were so laden with golde that they soonke, as dyde as shyppes of kynge Ferdinandos as you maye reade in the last booke of the fyrste Decade."⁵⁴ Eden used this example to discredit Columbus's claim and praise the Spanish for gaining more wealth than Solomon.

Eden's dismissal of Ophir as located in America was based on Peter Martyr's work. Martyr suggested that Columbus had found Antillia, which was supposedly confirmed by "the

⁵⁴ Martire d'Anghiera, *The Decades*, A4r.

description of the Cosmographers well considered."⁵⁵ In Iberian legend, Antillia was an island in the Atlantic Ocean where several Catholic bishops had fled after the Muslim conquest of Spain. Identifying America as Ophir or Antillia could place America within an existing chronology and determine its historical significance for Europe, whether as a famed Asian destination for gold or a medieval sanctuary for Spanish Christianity. If America was Antillia, the Spanish had settled the continent before Columbus's journey. For Martyr, America was destined for Spanish empire, which was confirmed by this medieval history.

English scholars hoped to disprove the Iberian legal right to the New World. They sought to demonstrate that the English were the first Europeans to travel to America. John Dee, most prominently, described colonization as the recovery of a mythic English empire, which once covered most of northern Europe and America.⁵⁶ According to Ken MacMillan: "Dee's conception of empire was not commercial, cultural, or ideological. Instead it was historical."⁵⁷ Dee presented England as on the verge of reclaiming its former imperial power. The legal foundation for any European nation's claim to America was Justinian's summary of Roman law in the *Digest*, specifically that "what presently belongs to no one becomes by natural reason the property of the first taker."⁵⁸ In "Unto your Majesties Tytle Royall," presented to Elizabeth in 1578, Dee catalogued alleged pre-Columbian English voyages to the New World, including the journeys of King Arthur in the sixth century and the Welsh Prince Madoc in 1170. Dee placed these historical accounts within a larger narrative tracing the genealogy of Brutus, the Trojan soldier who allegedly conquered the Scottish, Welsh, and English people and formed the first

⁵⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁶ MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession*, 59-60.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 60.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 61.

British Empire.⁵⁹ According to Dee, King Arthur was a descendant of Brutus and Queen Elizabeth I was the modern descendant of Arthur, therefore she was capable of remaking the British Empire through the conquest of America. Dee assembled mythic stories from England's past to outline the English claim to America and to argue that the English must enforce this claim by settling in the New World.

Dee contended that proof of England's imperial rights was located in the past. To further his aspirations as a political counselor, Dee generated an extensive genealogy of English sovereignty. In *The Limits of the British Empire*, he argued that Elizabeth I was the rightful heir to the Spanish and Portuguese crowns. He based this claim on the fourteenth century marriages between the daughters of King Pedro of Spain and the brothers of Edward, Prince of Wales.⁶⁰ For Dee, national sovereignty was founded on historical lineages. Elizabeth's advisers were skeptical of Dee's claims, however his works illustrate the value placed on history in establishing national dominion, whether in Europe or America. Dee suggested that he gathered his historical evidence through the, "vnderstandinge and recoveringe of divers secret, ancient, and waightie matters."⁶¹ For Dee, the past was a repository of hidden and authoritative information that could be assembled to legitimize English authority abroad.

Richard Hakluyt adopted a similar position to Dee on English history in the *Principal Navigations*. He included the voyages of Prince Madoc and King Arthur in his collection as examples of pre-Columbian journeys. His description of his investigation into the past corresponded to how Dee understood his work: "for the benefit and honour of my Countrey [I] zealously bestowed so many yeres, so much traveile and cost, to bring Antiquities smothered and

⁵⁹ Ibid., 59.

⁶⁰ John Dee, *John Dee: the Limits of the British Empire*, ed. Ken MacMillan (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004), 94-95.

⁶¹ Ibid., 83.

buried in darke silence, to light, and to preserve certaine memorable exploits of late yeeres by our English nation atchieved, from the greedy and devouring jawes of oblivion."⁶² Hakluyt and Dee regarded historical precedents as the intellectual foundation for English colonization. They organized these precedents to create a seemingly natural progression from pre-Colombian English discoveries to contemporary English voyages, a narrative that could compete with Iberian claims of dominance in America.

Conclusion:

Sixteenth and seventeenth century English travelers and scholars expressed why and how England could triumph in America through their selection of historical examples. These examples offered a supposedly secure guarantee of national achievement based on past successes and assured the English that they were following God's plan. English scholars imitated the glorified historical references of Spanish accounts to disguise the fragility of English expeditions abroad. These parallels illuminated America as a promising site for colonization and the restoration of the English empire. Hakluyt and Dee formulated an English past that confirmed their claims of the historical and modern importance of colonialism. By the time the English arrived in the New World, they believed that European history offered the most useful intellectual framework for the act of colonization. Connecting the New World to the European past fundamentally shaped how English authors understood and responded to America.

⁶² Richard Hakluyt, "Preface to the Reader," in *The Original Writings & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 433.

Chapter 2: Historical Study and Knowledge of America

Introduction:

In the previous chapter, I considered how scriptural, classical, and medieval European history offered useful precedents for English authors in explaining why the English should travel and settle abroad. In this chapter, I will assess how scholars and travelers used historical sources to create a body of credible knowledge about America. I will compare this process to how English writers used European history to shape their travels in Europe. European history was regarded as a source of objective political and cultural lessons. English travelers in Europe read classical and medieval histories to determine what was valuable to see and learn on the continent. English scholars believed this process of interpreting history to understand and clarify the world could be applied to America. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, English editors collected information on travel to America and English travelers produced descriptions of their voyages abroad. Authors attempted to reconcile historical sources with contemporary accounts to make sense of the environment and inhabitants of the New World.

This chapter is organized to show how historical study influenced what English scholars and travelers knew about America. I suggest that historical accounts guided the journeys of Englishmen in both Europe and America. The first section of this chapter considers how English travelers in Europe viewed their trips as an education in the European past. According to these writers, travel in Europe was purposeless without the correct historical orientation. This viewpoint informed how English scholars approached the study of America and the fluidity of knowledge about the New World. The second section of this chapter examines how late sixteenth century scholars attempted to use European historical texts to resolve debates over the appearance, geography, and inhabitants of America. These scholars believed that the influx of

information about America should be mediated by existing accounts of non-European places. They placed new knowledge into familiar descriptive frameworks. However, scholars often ignored historical examples that contradicted their arguments and concealed how they reconciled different sources. The third section assesses how the application of classical information to America encouraged descriptions of Native Americans as monstrous. Scholars viewed knowledge as naturally revealed over time; therefore, past accounts were necessarily the foundations for new information. This belief encouraged the persistent use of Greek and Roman classifications for foreigners. The fourth section examines how English travelers in the New World used historical analytical methods as a lens for observing and writing about America. These travelers sought to legitimize the information they learned abroad through reference to historical sources.

English authors regarded historical study as a means of substantiating information about America. However, their works did not create a shared consensus on how to make historical accounts compatible with firsthand observations of the New World. At the end of this period, historical criticism had deepened debates over what Europeans could objectively know about America.

Section 1: Historical Analysis and European Travel

By the early seventeenth century, English people had visited locations as distant as Indonesia and joint-stock organizations like the Levant Company and East India Company were creating trade connections between England, the Mediterranean, and Asia.⁶³ Furthermore, the Jamestown colony had become the first permanent English settlement in America. Global travel

⁶³ Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 50.

was increasingly common for the English. Yet, the most popular travel route during this period was to tour the European continent and particularly, France and Italy. These voyages were early versions of the 'Grand Tours' of the eighteenth century. Young English gentlemen completed their education by traveling through Europe, visiting famed sites and often residing for months in various cities. These trips gave these Englishmen the opportunity to observe the politics and society of other nations, and to appreciate the famous accomplishments of European history. This educational process was assisted by the presence of tutors or governors.⁶⁴ These journeys represent a different type of travel than voyages to America. By the early seventeenth century, traveling in Europe was viewed as an indispensable activity for men seeking to gain the best cultural and historical knowledge. Travelers suggested that they could no longer receive instruction solely from the acts of reading and studying at a university in England. According to John Stoye, the focus of journeys in Europe was "great monuments or ancient treasure, universally famed, which every educated man was required to inspect for himself."⁶⁵ Englishmen learned from European travel in part due to their prior knowledge of European history. Their journeys allowed them to ruminate on what they had learned and reinforce these lessons through direct experience. Travelers believed that viewing physical objects and sites would improve their understanding of human cultural production and development over time.⁶⁶

European travel was an educational process that depended on the historical training of the traveler. The work of Jean Gailhard is representative of this viewpoint. Gailhard, a French tutor who led several English students on tours of continental Europe, published a travel guide to Italy in 1668, entitled *The Present State of the Princes and Republicks of Italy*. He argued that

⁶⁴ John Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604-1667: Their Influence in English Society and Politics* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), 128.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 241-242.

⁶⁶ Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 217.

understanding the politics and history of Italy required travel, as "we must go to the spring, if it can conveniently be done, for it loses something of its worth, either through the defects of the Vessel, or some other accident, if it be brought to us."⁶⁷ Travel provided direct experience, unaltered by the commentary or misinformation that supposedly accompanied reading. However, these experiences could not be appreciated without previous understanding. A guide to the art of Italy published in London in 1679 suggested that for young noblemen, travel would: "inflare their minds, and excite their industry, to imitate those great *Masters* whose Employment made their Lives easie, their Persons Venerable, and their Names Immortal."⁶⁸ Viewing the accomplishments of historical European figures would supposedly instruct the English in civic virtue and self-improvement. This lesson was not possible without an understanding of European history and a clear "stock of historical commonplaces about the scene of great events and the doings of great men."⁶⁹ The course of Englishmen's journeys and the lessons to be gained were rooted in the study of the European past.

English travelers in Europe believed the historical artifacts and sites they viewed were intrinsically valuable and instructive. Richard Symonds was one of many gentlemen who traveled abroad to escape the Parliamentary triumph after the English Civil War.⁷⁰ He remained in Europe for three years, from 1649 until 1651, and stayed in Rome for the majority of this period. Symonds methodically recorded his activities on the continent, including the classical

⁶⁷ Jean Gailhard, *The Present State of the Princes and Republics of Italy* (London, 1668), *Early English Books Online*, A5v.

⁶⁸ Giacomo Barri, *The painters voyage of Italy* (London, 1679), *Early English Books Online*, A6v.

⁶⁹ Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad*, 18.

⁷⁰ "Symonds, Richard (*bap.* 1617, *d.* 1660)," Ian Roy in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26890> (accessed February 15, 2015).

and Renaissance artwork he viewed and his visits to the workshops of Italian artists.⁷¹ The instruction he gained in drawing and painting in Italy was more artistically productive than if he had remained in England. Symonds practiced Latin and Italian in his journal, another example of educational activities improved by residence abroad. Sir Thomas Puckering traveled in Europe during 1610 and noted the histories of the various cities he visited, while particularly focusing on their universities and libraries.⁷² His descriptions of these cities perhaps enabled comparisons between European and English accomplishments. Seventeenth century English gentlemen such as Richard Symonds and Sir Thomas Puckering noted what they learned and observed in Europe for both self-instruction, and the benefit of English society.⁷³

English travelers' education in Europe focused on physical and expensive markers of civilized development. The European sites that received the most attention were cathedrals, palaces, universities, and the popular 'cabinets of curiosities,' in which Europeans collected rare artifacts.⁷⁴ Robert Montagu, the third earl of Manchester, traveled abroad as a teenager in 1649, another Royalist sent to the continent following the Civil War. A tutor guided him to notable European monuments. In his journal, Montagu described his visit to the Tuileries Palace in Paris, where he "saw likewise the haule of Antiquities, which is all of marble and jasper, where there are 9 pieces very considerable for their antiquity and workmanship, the first and in most

⁷¹ Richard Symonds, *Memorandum-Book, containing notes of paintings and different galleries and churches in Rome, with a few rough sketches, accounts of ceremonies, etc.* Archives and Manuscripts. British Library. Relevant entry is Egerton MS 1635.

⁷² Sir Thomas Puckering, *Manuscript*. Archives and Manuscripts. British Library. Relevant entry is Harleian MS 7021.

⁷³ Michael G. Brennan, "Introduction," in *The Origins of the Grand Tour: The Travels of Robert Montagu, Lord Mandeville (1649-1654), William Hammond (1655-1658), and Banaster Maynard (1660-1663)*, ed. Michael G. Brennan (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2004), 7.

⁷⁴ Games, *Web of Empire*, 39-40.

esteeme for antiquity sake is the Diana of Ephesus."⁷⁵ Young English gentlemen touring Europe were encouraged to observe cultural forms that dated from the classical antiquity. Jean Gailhard suggested that in every Italian city: "one is to see the Churches, wherein consists their Glory, their Palaces, Gardens, Houses of pleasure, Cabinets, etc. all which are embelished with Statues, Pictures in *Oleo*, in *Fresco*, and *Mosaick* works."⁷⁶ Journeys in Europe provided the English with opportunities to see what European scholars considered their distinguished historical feats, preserved to symbolize the civility of European culture.

The ability to know the past was an essential characteristic of civilized people. European history dictated what English travelers were supposed to view abroad and enabled Englishmen to understand what they observed. These travelers could then contemplate their experiences and derive the suitable lessons. Although the lessons were different, English travelers applied many of the canons from travel observation on the continent to their efforts to know America. Historical study informed Englishmen on how to interpret the world and confirm their scholarly lessons through experience.

Section 2: Historical Methods for Knowing America

This section considers how English writers extracted information about America from historical sources. These authors believed that English success abroad would be facilitated by their analysis of the past. English scholars suggested they did not have to physically travel to America in order to know the continent. Instead, they could understand the New World by reading past accounts and drawing out relevant information.

⁷⁵ Robert Montagu, *Manuscript Journal*. Special Collections. Bodleian Library. Oxford University. Relevant entry is Rawlinson MS. D 76.

⁷⁶ Gailhard, *Present State*, 82-83.

In the English language, travel was connected to both physical movement and the production of new material through an action. The earliest definition for travel or 'travail' was to torment or distress.⁷⁷ Beginning in the medieval period, travel could also signify working at a task or physical movement. These various definitions of travel indicate the different ways Englishmen traveled in relation to America. By going abroad, travelers gained useful information about locations and peoples that could benefit English colonial expeditions. However, scholars believed that traveling within historical sources to gain new information was an equally valuable means of knowing America. At the beginning of English colonization, this type of intellectual labor was regarded as essential for guiding travelers in the New World. The English needed historical models for how to contextualize and organize their experiences in America. Scholars trusted that the reading of historical texts would reveal lessons about America that were as relevant and useful as insights from direct experience.

English writers suggested that the Spanish were successful in the New World because of their scholarship, which combined contemporary reports and historical sources. English scholars like Richard Eden viewed Spanish accounts as a template for how the English could produce an equally comprehensive body of knowledge. On the title page of *The Decades*, Eden declared that in his work a reader could "consyder what commoditie may here by chaunce to the hole christian world in tyme to come, but also learne many secretes touchynge the lande, the sea, and the starres, very necessarie to be knowe to al such as shal attempte any nauigations."⁷⁸ Eden presented Spanish explorers as possessing a complete understanding of travel and settlement abroad. He hoped to reveal the secrets of Spanish explorers to assist English navigators and enable the English to generate their own information about the America.

⁷⁷ "travail, v.," OED Online, (Oxford University Press: December 2014), <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/205255> (accessed January 29, 2015).

⁷⁸ Martire d'Anghiera, *The Decades*, Cover.

English collectors like John Dee and Richard Hakluyt argued that conclusive knowledge about America was contingent on the reading of historical texts. According to early modern scholars, history was an investigative subject that reached conclusions by reconciling a diversity of ancient texts. Scholars pursued more complex chronologies and privileged classical authorities to reveal the natural laws underlying human societies.⁷⁹ In *The Limits of the British Empire*, John Dee referred to the mainland of America as Atlantis, thereby connecting his geography of America to Plato's classical story of a large island beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Sixteenth century Spanish scholars were the first to identify America as Atlantis. In *The Decades of the Newe Worlde*, Richard Eden appended a translation of an extract from Francisco Lopez de Gomara's *Historia general de la Indias*, published in Spain in 1552. Gomara detailed Hernan Cortes's conquest and, in a chapter entitled "Of the great Ilande which Plato cauled Atlantica or Atlantide," he asserted that Atlantis was the historical identity of America. He used as evidence his claim that, "In Mexico also at this day they caul that water Atl. by the halfe name of Atlant, as by a woorde remaynyng of the name of the Ilande that is not. Wee may lykewayse say that the Indies are eyther the Ilande and firme lande of Plato or the remanent of the same."⁸⁰ Gomara's account illustrates how expectations about America derived from classical sources shaped what Europeans observed in the New World. Gomara included this detail about Aztec speech because it aligned with his beliefs that America was Atlantis. Similarly, Dee believed that the observations of travelers in America would confirm his inferences about the New World from historical sources.

In *The Limits of the British Empire*, Dee focused on the northern regions of America. His description of this region was based on the medieval account of the Venetian noble brothers

⁷⁹ Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 33.

⁸⁰ Francisco Lopez de Gomara, "Other Notable Thynges as Tovchyng the Indies," in *The First Three English Books on America*, ed. Edward Arber (Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co., 1895), 377.

Nicolo and Anthony Zeno, who claimed they traveled to North America, or Estotiland and Drogió, during the fourteenth century. According to the Zeno brothers: "a man traveling a long way on from Drogió itself, in a south-westerly direction (passed through the lands of cannibals and savage people who go always naked, however bitter the extremes of cold they must endure), comes to a region of a more temperate climate and to a people knowing the use of gold and silver and living in a civilized manner."⁸¹ The Zeno brothers, and then Dee, adhered to Parmenides and Aristotle's theory of the zones, according to which the world was divided into different climatic areas, including the torrid, temperate, and frigid zones. The torrid zone, covering the central, equatorial section of the earth, and the frigid zones at the poles of the earth were uninhabitable. Dee used a Greek geographic model to describe America's climate and inhabitants. His work may have been more credible and believable for an elite Tudor audience because the characteristics of the indigenous peoples were connected to their residence in the temperate or frigid zones. Well-known sixteenth century European scholars like Jean Bodin used historical examples to argue that, "each nation had a basic character, determined by its original geographical location."⁸² Dee developed his description from this assumption that America, and its inhabitants, possessed an innate type of character. He suggested that the accuracy of his work depended on his skillful reading and collation of historical sources, such as Greek philosophy and the Zeno account. Dee's appeal to classical knowledge disguised the tenuous basis for his conclusions about America.

Like John Dee, Richard Hakluyt believed that empirical information about America could be obtained from ancient sources. In the preface to the 1598 edition of *Principal Navigations*, Hakluyt described how Portugal and Spain had benefited from classical history and geography:

⁸¹ Dee, *British Empire*, 37.

⁸² Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 122.

"these two worthy Nations had those bright lampes of learning (I meane the most ancient and best Philosophers, Historiographers and Geographers) to shewe them light; and the loadstarre of experience (to wit those great exploits and voyages layed up in store and recorded)."⁸³ According to Hakluyt, Spain and Portugal succeeded in their colonization of America because they possessed ancient sources on geography and a catalogue of voyages abroad, which confirmed these sources through experience. Hakluyt argued that the English explorers would not flourish until they could also consult a repository of empirical information drawn from history. He believed the best materials for constructing this type of knowledge were the accounts of English travelers. In *Principal Navigations*, he assembled reports of English journeys to every region of the globe, seeking to provide the same "loadstarre of experience" possessed by the Spanish.

Hakluyt believed that historical study was a means of revealing hidden knowledge and unlocking the true meaning of events. In the preface to *Divers Voyages Touching the Discovery of America*, a treatise published in 1582 to support English colonization, he commented, "there is a time for all men, and see the Portingales time to be out of date, and that the nakedness of the Spaniards, and ther long hidden secretes are now at length espied, whereby they went about to delude the worlde."⁸⁴ Like Eden, Hakluyt referred to Spanish information about America as secrets, which the English must expose to gain an advantage in the competition for overseas trade and settlement. Hakluyt identified Peter Martyr as a model for the type of detailed accounts that would place modern accounts of American into their appropriate historical context. Hakluyt published his Latin edition of Martyr's *De Orbe Nouo* in 1587. In the preface, he lauded Martyr for how the Spanish scholar had described "the whole body of that tremendous entity America, and clothes it decently in the Latin dress familiar to scholars. And so often as the events

⁸³ Hakluyt, "Preface to the Reader," in *Writings & Correspondence*, 435.

⁸⁴ Richard Hakluyt, "Preface to *Divers Voyages*," in *Writings & Correspondence*, 175.

themselves demand he examines the hidden causes of things, inquires into the hidden effects of nature, and from the innermost shrines of his erudite philosophy he draws comments."⁸⁵ As suggested by Hakluyt, Martyr's abilities extended beyond recording Spanish travelers' observations of America. His work was useful because he examined these observations and discovered their causes by using his preexisting knowledge.

To create a description of America that could equal Peter Martyr's, Hakluyt assembled a variety of historical accounts in *Principal Navigations*. In the preface to the 1598 edition, Hakluyt listed out the "testimonies" of ancient writers whose geographic knowledge had inspired the Spanish and Portuguese. He suggested, "doth not Strabo in the 2. booke of his Geography, together with Cornelius Nepos and Plinie in the place boforenamed, agree all in one, that one Eudoxus fleeing from king Lathyrus, and valing downe the Arabian bay, sailed along, doubled the Southern point of Africk, and at length arrived at Gades?"⁸⁶ The purpose of this example was to prove that Eudoxus, a Greek navigator, had sailed around the entirety of Africa from Egypt to Spain, thousands of years before the Portuguese. However, this quote also suggested that Eudoxus had not traveled to the New World before Christopher Columbus. For Hakluyt, voyages like Eudoxus's indicated that ancient thinkers possessed some knowledge of foreign lands, although this information was limited.

Like Eden and Dee, Hakluyt selected historical precedents that seemed to predict modern European explorations. In the dedication to Sir Robert Cecil of the 1599 edition of *Principal Navigations*, he noted that in the dialogues *Timaeus* and *Critias*, Plato had described the island of Atlantis in the ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules.⁸⁷ Although Plato never traveled to this lost

⁸⁵ Hakluyt, "Epistle Dedicatory," *Writings and Correspondence*, 362.

⁸⁶ Hakluyt, "Preface to the Reader," *Writings and Correspondence*, 435.

⁸⁷ Richard Hakluyt, "Epistle Dedicatory to Sir Robert Cecil," in *The Original Writings & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 470.

island, Hakluyt believed this statement was confirmation that ancient scholars knew of America and could have created accounts of this continent. Hakluyt observed that: "Seneca in his tragedie intituled Medea foretold above 1500. yeeres past, that in the later ages the Ocean would discover new worlds, and that the yle of Thule would no more be the uttermost limite of the earth."⁸⁸

Thule was an island to the north of Europe that marked the boundary of the known world in medieval maps. Hakluyt described the English voyages in *Principal Navigations* as the completion of classical inquiry about the world. He sought to create a progression from ancient thinkers who possessed a "dimme glimse" of America to English travelers spreading to every part of the globe.

Hakluyt believed that experiential information about America could be produced in concert with humanistic knowledge from classical sources. In *Principal Navigations*, Hakluyt included a section from Richard Willes's *History of Travayle*, originally published in 1577, on the existence of a Northwest Passage. Willes was educated at Oxford and was an experienced European traveler who taught rhetoric in Perugia, Italy for several years.⁸⁹ Willes discussed several theories on the geography of the Northwest Passage, and concluded by proposing: "[i]t must be Peregrinationis historia, that is, true reportes of skillfull travelers, as Ptolome writeth, that in such controversies of Geographie must put us out of doubt."⁹⁰ Willes referred to the Greek geographer Ptolemy as model for how to write travel reports that could resolve debates over the physical and cultural characteristics of America. Scholars like John Dee and Richard Hakluyt wanted their works to unify historical models and contemporary accounts. Dee had selected what he viewed as the best reports and interpreted their information for the reader. Hakluyt was a

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ "Willes, Richard (1546–1579?)," Anthony Payne in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, , <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29444> (accessed February 22, 2015).

⁹⁰ Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Nauigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, (London: 1600), *Early English Books Online*, 28.

more restrained editor, who published multiple accounts of the same location without attempting to reconcile or interpret these works. He justified this editorial style in the dedication of the 1600 edition of *Principal Navigations* to Sir Robert Cecil: "if I finde one voyage well written by two severall persons, sometimes I make no difficultie to set downe both these journals, as finding divers things of good moment observed in the one, which are quite omitted in the other."⁹¹

Hakluyt believed that readers would naturally draw accurate information about America from his accumulation of sources.

The volume of these accounts led to a diverse collection of information about different cultures and locales in America. Michael Oberg argues that late Tudor and early Stuart scholars, such as Hakluyt, created "a new historical consciousness, one characterized by a tendency to look at history as a continual process of development in both societies and cultures. With this came an awareness of the relativity of social customs, institutions, and values across time."⁹² By publishing a multiple accounts of foreign places, Hakluyt indirectly created varying descriptions of these places. However, Hakluyt did not plan for *Principal Navigations* to illustrate the diversity of human customs over time. In the preface to the 1598 edition, he described his work as restoring English journeys from, "being before displaced, to their true joynts and ligaments; I mean by the help of Geographie and Chronologie (which I may call the Sunne and the Moone, the right eye and the left of all history) referred each particular relation to the due time and place."⁹³ He envisioned *Principal Navigations* as a literal body of knowledge, which would naturally coalesce into a complete description of America.

⁹¹ Hakluyt, "Epistle Dedicatory," *Writings and Correspondence*, 471.

⁹² Michael L. Oberg, *Dominion and Civility: English Imperialism and Native America, 1585-1685* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999), 21.

⁹³ Hakluyt, "Preface to the Reader," *Writings and Correspondence*, 433.

Like Hakluyt, Samuel Purchas, regarded history as a source of definite truths that could resolve disputes over the New World. Purchas was educated at Cambridge and ordained as a priest in 1601.⁹⁴ He was the inheritor of Hakluyt's collections of oral and written travel accounts, which he acquired in 1620 and published as *Purchas, his Pilgrimes*, in 1625.⁹⁵ Hakluyt had organized *Principal Navigations* spatially, with each volume covering voyages to a different area of the world. Purchas used a similar organization, however he added a chapter on the journeys of the apostles and biblical kings. In the dedication to Prince Charles, Purchas described his work as, "hauing out of a Chaos of confused intelligences framed this Historicall World, by a New way of Eye-evidence."⁹⁶ The past was a source of empirical knowledge, if a skilled editor could extract this evidence. Purchas claimed that his firsthand accounts could resolve scholarly conflicts over true information about the New World: "What a World of Trauellers haue by their owne eyes obserued in this kinde, is here (for the most part in their owne words transcribed or translated) deliuered, not by one professing Methodically to deliuer the Historie of Nature according to rules of Art, nor Philosophically to discusse and dispute."⁹⁷ Hakluyt and Purchas indicated in the prefaces to their works that they would present direct observations without attaching interpretation or commentary. Purchas suggested that philosophical commentary was an inferior addition to eyewitness evidence. The strength of Purchas's description of America was reinforced by the supposed impartiality of his historical sources.

In European debates over the factuality of information about America, Purchas prioritized evidence gained through the reading of historical accounts. In the first chapter of the *Pilgrimes*,

⁹⁴ "Purchas, Samuel (*bap.* 1577, *d.* 1626)," David Armitage in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22898> (accessed February 23, 2015).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (London: 1625), *Early English Books Online*, A3r.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, A4r.

he discussed the various theories related to the location of Ophir in America. In the midst of cataloguing this debate, he interjected his own opinion: "I answered that *Peru* was not inhabited, nor yet *New Spaine*, one thousand yeares after *Salomons* time; of which I shall speake more anon, and in my following Discourse of the Apostolicall peregrinations."⁹⁸ Purchas attempted to discredit a modern interpretation of the identity of America through his analysis of biblical history. For him, the journeys of the apostles were more credible than contemporary travelers' beliefs that America could be Ophir. In the debate over the identity of America, the observations of modern travelers did not necessarily prevail. Reading ancient sources was an equally legitimate means of gathering information. For English scholars, the process of knowing the New World was meaningless without the application of historical information.

John Dee, Richard Hakluyt, and Samuel Purchas's uses of history to know the New World can be compared to the work of Jose de Acosta, an influential Spanish scholar and historian of America. Like the English scholars, Acosta selected historical accounts that supported his understanding of the New World. He became a Jesuit in 1570 and sailed to America the following year to serve as the rector of the Colegio of Lima and to accompany the Spanish Viceroy on a survey of Peru.⁹⁹ He traveled to Mexico in 1586 and collected information on the religion and civilization of the Aztecs. He published the account of his journey and his observations of indigenous life and culture in 1590, following his return to Spain.¹⁰⁰ The text was translated into English and published in London in 1604 as *The naturall and morall historie of the East and West Indies*. Acosta believed that knowing America would further Europeans'

⁹⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁹ Walter D. Mignolo, "Introduction," in *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, ed. Jane E. Mangan, trans. Frances M. Lopez-Morillas (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), xviii.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., xvii.

understanding of God and his natural laws.¹⁰¹ His moral history correlated his experiences in the New World with philosophies of human behavior and nature. At the outset of the narrative, he outlined this project: "the New World is not new but old, for much has been said and written about it, I believe that this history may be considered new in some ways because it is both history and in part philosophy and because it deals not only with the works of nature but with problems of free will, which are the deeds and customs of men."¹⁰² A complete description of America involved discussing principles of human social and cultural development, to determine if these laws applied to the new continent. In his description of the rise of the Aztec and Incan states, Acosta suggested that: "some men who in strength and skill were superior to the others began to lord it over the rest and command, as Nimrod did in ancient times."¹⁰³ He linked the history of the Native Americans with Old World historical examples, to indicate a common set of human behaviors and practices over time.

Acosta used historical sources for humanistic parallels; yet, he argued that ancient thinkers did not possess concrete information about the New World. He denied that ancient humans had traveled to America by the Atlantic Ocean or that classical scholars like Plato were aware of the continent's existence. He dismissed Seneca's prediction about Thule, which Richard Hakluyt had cited, commenting that: "[w]hat we may reasonably doubt is whether Seneca really divined this or whether his poetry expressed it by chance."¹⁰⁴ Acosta proposed that his contemporaries had overstretched ancient sources by applying their theories to the New World. To demonstrate this point, he addressed Parmenides and Aristotle's theory of the zones. In outlining his argument that the torrid zone was full of human life, Acosta suggested: "[f]irst we

¹⁰¹ Ibid., xviii.

¹⁰² Jose de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, ed. Jane E. Mangan, trans. Frances M. Lopez-Morillas (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 9-10.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 74.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 42.

will write the truth as actual experience has revealed it to us, and then we will try (although it is a very arduous task) to offer reasons for it according to sound philosophy."¹⁰⁵ Classical philosophy could not be abandoned, despite the "arduousness" of reconciling ancient beliefs with his observations. After describing his experiences in the torrid zone, he returned to classical theories, admitting: "Ptolemy and the famous philosopher and physician Avicenna came much closer to the truth, for both believed that there were very moderate dwelling places under the equator."¹⁰⁶ Acosta used ancient geography as the foundation for information about America that should be refuted or confirmed by direct experience. He attempted to create a similar type of progression as Hakluyt, from what ancient scholars knew to his new philosophy of human development and the natural world in America.

Richard Eden, John Dee, Richard Hakluyt, Samuel Purchas, and Jose de Acosta represented themselves as cosmographers, capable of synthesizing historical and modern sources to form a complete representation of America. Historical sources gave meaning to the New World as a continent with a classical lineage. Historical examples offered helpful tools for decoding information and crafting a narrative description of the New World. These sources could confirm a set of immutable characteristics for America, which would aid Europeans in their conquests. Hakluyt in particular viewed historical examples as the starting point for a progressive narrative that would encompass all knowledge of the New World. The authors discussed in this section worked to make their conclusions appear self-evident and unchanging. They attempted to conceal any contradictions in their accounts, such as the possible unreliability of their historical materials. These scholars selected different sources as the basis for their accounts, leading to different conclusions about the significance of America in world history.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 89.

Section 3: The Influence of Ancient Classifications

The previous section outlined the tactics of several late sixteenth century scholars for linking historical sources and modern accounts of America. These scholars attempted to create continuity between past and present information about the New World. This section considers how this desire for continuity encouraged writers to replicate ancient classifications of foreign peoples in their descriptions of the Native Americans.

Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* featured several claims of monsters living abroad, which medieval and modern travelers had drawn from classical sources. For example, the fourteenth century narrative of John Mandeville's alleged pilgrimage to Jerusalem described abnormal people living far from Europe. Hakluyt included an admonition to readers about Mandeville's work:

As for the accounts he gives about men of monstrous shapes in chapters 30, 31, 33 and here and there in the following chapters of his travels, though I do not deny that certain of them were possibly observed by him somewhere, yet they are, for the most part, clearly drawn from Caius Plinius Secundus- as will soon appear to anyone who will compare them with the chapters of Pliny which I have appended for this purpose- and all of these Pliny himself refers to their various authors, loth to put his trust in the majority of them. Farewell, and use this work with me- or produce a better!¹⁰⁷

Hakluyt did not state for readers whether Mandeville's claims of monsters were true. He highlighted a classical origin for these accounts, yet admitted that Pliny did not trust his sources. Hakluyt hoped his sources would reveal a clear sequence of ideas about foreign places and peoples throughout history. Ancient and medieval journeys were necessary antecedents in the advancement of knowledge over time. He proposed the reader use Mandeville's text or create a better version, perhaps through their own travels. Other accounts in *Principal Navigations* included images of monstrous foreign people. For example, in a report of an expedition to

¹⁰⁷ Richard Hakluyt, "Brief Admonition to the Reader," in *The Writings and Correspondence & Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, ed. E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 395-396.

Guinea in 1554, the merchants and explorers, including Sir George Barne, Sir John Yorke, Thomas Lok, Anthony Hickman and Edward Castelin, described inhabitants of Troglodytica in Egypt: "[A]s writeth Pliny, and Diodorus Siculus. They have no speech, but rather a grinning and chattering. There are also people without heads, called Blemines, having their eyes and mouth in their breast."¹⁰⁸ Pliny and Diodorus Siculus's descriptions of foreign locales and peoples were copied by medieval and modern travelers and emulated as models for how to write about the New World.

The work of George Abbot further demonstrates the application of classical images to America. Abbot was educated at Oxford and became the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611. As a lecturer at Oxford, he combined his knowledge of global geography, commerce, and politics to publish *A briefe description of the whole world* in 1599.¹⁰⁹ In his section on America, Abbot characterized Native Americans as fundamentally different from Europeans: "people naked, vnciuill, some of them deuourers of mens flesh, ignorant of shipping, without all kinde of learning, hauing no remembrance of history or writing among them."¹¹⁰ His work reflects the influence of Herodotus, who described the Egyptians in the *Histories* by using, "the simplest of principles for organizing the description of a foreign society: he defined it by opposition to everything Greek."¹¹¹ Abbot determined that Native Americans were a people that lived too distantly from civilization, and therefore did not share European capacities for education, historical study, or appropriate dress. He denied the existence of pre-Columbian contact between

¹⁰⁸ Richard Hakluyt ed., "The second voyage to Guinea set out by Sir George Barne, Sir John Yorke, Thomas Lok, Anthonie Hickman and Edward Castelin, in the yere 1554," in *Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery: An Anthology*, ed. Peter C. Mancall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 69.

¹⁰⁹ "Abbot, George (1562–1633)," Kenneth Fincham in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2011, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4> (accessed February 22, 2015).

¹¹⁰ George Abbot, *A briefe description of the whole vworld* (London, 1559), *Early English Books Online*, Q4v.

¹¹¹ Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 37.

Prince Madoc or King Arthur and indigenous peoples and suggested that Plato and other ancient authors were not aware of America's existence.¹¹² He did not include any examples of classical knowledge about Native Americans; however, he did adopt a classical model for describing the supposedly innate characteristics of these peoples.

European history determined which attributes Abbot assigned to the Native Americans. He acknowledged that, "[i]f there were any thing at all in these *West-Indies* which might favour of civilitie, or any orderly kinde of gouernment it was in the Kingdome of *Mexico*." He praised the centralization of the Aztec government and their capital city of Tenochtitlan, for, "being a Citie built of Brick, to a good and elegant proportion, where the water issueth into diuers streets of it, as it is in *Venice*."¹¹³ Abbot acknowledged that some areas of America were more civilized than others. This assessment was based on a comparative model, and how well Native Americans were able to approximate what he perceived to be more sophisticated cultural forms. He applied this type of analysis to other non-European locations, including Asia. He disparaged the Tartars, a Mongolian nomadic tribe, because they had built no cities, yet praised the Chinese for their discovery of gunpowder and printing, and their capital city of Quinsay. Abbot identified urban development and advanced technologies as the markers of civilized development, an assessment drawn from his study of the past. European history offered multiple ways of viewing the New World, whether through cultural comparison or reference to the historical succession of European ideas about foreign people and locations.

A briefe description of the world vworld demonstrates the continued usefulness of historical accounts of distant places. As suggested by Anthony Pagden, during the sixteenth century, America was viewed as, "an extension into a new geographical space of both the

¹¹² Abbot, *A briefe description*, R1r-R1v.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, T1v.

familiar and the fantastic dimensions of the Atlantic world as it was known through the writings of commentators both ancient and modern."¹¹⁴ America could be considered by one scholar as the lost island of Atlantis, a place of advanced civilization, and by a different scholar as a land where humans looked and behaved dramatically different from Europeans. In his text, Abbot included the claim that: "there are found in some parts of *Peru*, very huge and mighty bones of men that had been Gyants who dwelt and were buried there."¹¹⁵ Abbot used Greek and Roman histories as a template for describing the physical and cultural differences of non-Europeans. This method appeared in other English texts that purported to describe the world, such as Robert Stafford's *A Geographical and Anthological description of all the Empires and Kingdomes*, published in 1607. Stafford wrote of cannibals in South America and suggested that, "[i]n the Iland *Caribum*, the inhabitants are all *Anthropophagi*."¹¹⁶ Herodotus used the term 'anthropophagi' in the *Histories* to describe a tribe of cannibals near Scythia. For Stafford, this term still reflected an empirical truth about the inhabitants of the Caribbean. Classical texts continued to define the known geography of the world and offer plausible viewpoints on the identities of what lay beyond those boundaries. Several English writers replicated classical depictions of foreigners in their descriptions of indigenous Americans. In these cases, information about America was molded to fit existing classifications.

Section 4: Using History to Guide Observations of America

This section will consider how Englishmen traveling to America during this period used historical analysis to mediate their observations of the New World. As indicated by the previous

¹¹⁴ Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: the American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 11.

¹¹⁵ Abbot, *A Briefe Description*, X1v.

¹¹⁶ Robert Stafford, *A geographical and anthological description of all the empires and kingdomes* (London, 1607), *Early English Books Online*, 66.

sections, English scholars believed they could collect information about America and Native Americans through their skillful reading of historical and modern sources. The study of history and travel intersected as endeavors that could accomplish the same goal: detailed and organized studies of America. This section assesses how Francis Fletcher, who accompanied Sir Francis Drake on his circumnavigation, and Thomas Harriot adopted a historical framework for their experiences in America. These travelers relied on history to determine what they needed to learn about the New World and to contextualize these lessons for an English audience.

Like Jose de Acosta, Francis Fletcher used his experiences abroad to refute classical theories about the world. Fletcher's life is not well known outside of his travels with Sir Francis Drake. He acted as a chaplain on Drake's circumnavigation of the world, from 1577 to 1580. Drake's nephew used Fletcher's journal to publish a narrative of the voyage, *The World Encompassed*, in 1628. In this work, Fletcher challenged several classical theories espoused by European writers about the geography and inhabitants of America. He suggested that the supposed giants of South America: "are nothing so monstrous or giantlike as they were reported, there being some English men as tall as the highest of any that we could see, but peradventure the Spaniards did not thinke that ever any English man would come thither to reprove them, and thereupon might presume the more boldly to lie."¹¹⁷ This quote reflects Eden and Hakluyt's claims that their works were exposing the secret knowledge of the Spanish. Images of monsters aboard, such as giants, could have been used to discourage English colonization. Fletcher wrote upon entering the torrid zone: "we found that vaine guesses and imagined conjectures to be untrue and false concerning the same, and the surmised opinion of the antient and great philosophers to bee contrary to appearance and experience...we proved the same to bee

¹¹⁷ Sir Francis Drake, *The World Encompassed*, ed. W. S. W. Vaux (London: Hakluyt Society, 1854), 60-61.

altogether false, and the same zone to be the earthly Paradise."¹¹⁸ Fletcher rejected ancient thinkers for their unproven conjectures about locations they had never seen in person. He considered experiential evidence indispensable in describing America, yet he referred to classical knowledge as the accepted system against which his findings would be considered. Scholars like Hakluyt valued experiential knowledge but believed that historical accounts were as useful for knowing America as modern accounts. Fletcher placed a greater value on the information he learned through direct observation.

In *The World Encompassed*, Fletcher asserted that Drake's voyage had surpassed all former precedents for global travel. However, he continued to use classical terms to contextualize America for Europeans. In the account, Fletcher described their journey through the Strait of Magellan in South America and reported that they had discovered several islands apparently unknown to the Spanish. He suggested that these islands were "*incognita*, for howsoever the mappes and general descriptions of *cosmographers*, either vpon the deceiueable reports of other men, or the decitfull imaginations of themselues (supposing neuer herein to be correct), haue set it downe, yet it is true, that before this time, it was neuer discovered."¹¹⁹ Fletcher believed that the English were the only explorers capable of providing an accurate account of the New World. He seemingly rejected the strategies of scholars like John Dee or Richard Hakluyt, who relied on reading and collating the "descriptions of cosmographers" and the "reports of other men." Fletcher used a type of historical framework by labeling these islands as "terra incognita." This expression, drawn from Ptolemy's *Geography*, described unknown lands, which could be claimed by the right of first discovery.¹²⁰ The idiom used by ancient

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 89-90.

¹²⁰ MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession*, 33.

geographers, like Ptolemy, to represent their world continued to shape how travelers structured their accounts and what information they identified as relevant for Europeans.

Like Fletcher, Thomas Harriot and John White emphasized the value of their firsthand observations of America in *A Briefe and True Report*. In his preface, Theodor de Bry suggested that the Native Americans surpassed the English in many respects, including "Sober feelinge and Dexterity of witte," yet Europeans would not believe this claim without "the true Pictures of those people."¹²¹ According to Michael Gaudio, John White's images of the Native Americans were "intended to provide immediate access to the world of facts."¹²² Information about these people could not be solely gained through historical sources. White depicted Algonquian burial customs, the appearance of their villages, and a range of cultural practices used in their daily lives. Although these depictions were specific to the Algonquians in Roanoke, de Bry correlated this information to historical images in order to relate White's representations to Europeans.

Knowledge of the past created recognizable meaning for what English travelers observed in America. Sabine MacCormack argues that sixteenth and seventeenth century European studies of America often compared classical deities, religious rituals, and architecture, to the practices of indigenous Americans.¹²³ She refers to topographical studies of the city of Cuzco, which used European cartographical models. According to MacCormack, "Cuzco represented a civilization that was not accessible to Europeans through a long-established learned tradition...what Europeans might learn about Cuzco in a particular and about America in general had to be translated or transposed into a familiar framework before it could be understood and

¹²¹ Harriot, *A briefe and true report*, 5.

¹²² Michael Gaudio, "The Truth in Clothing: The Costume Studies of John White and Lucas de Heere," in *European Visions, American Voices*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2009), 25.

¹²³ Sabine MacCormack, "Limits of Understanding: Perceptions of Greco-Roman and Amerindian Paganism in Early Modern Europe," in *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750*, ed. Karen Ordahl Kupperman (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 87.

absorbed."¹²⁴ The previous section demonstrated how that framework could be classical accounts of foreign peoples. In *A Briefe and True Report*, the framework was the British historical past.

White's illustrations of Native Americans were followed by several images of Picts, an ancient British tribe, also drawn by White. The Picts and Native Americans appeared in similar poses and were partially or fully nude. However, unlike the Native Americans, the Picts were not shown with signs of civilized development, such as towns, agriculture, or religious customs. The bodies of the Picts were covered with tattoos, in accordance with how the tribe was described in Roman sources. Following the images of the Picts, de Bry reprinted several Roman reports on the tribe, including Pliny's comment that, "[w]omen and girls among the people of Britain are in the habit of staining the body all over with [a plant], when taking part in the performance of certain sacred rites. Imitating the color of Ethiopians, they go naked."¹²⁵ Europeans viewed the nudity of the Picts and their extensive tattoos as physical markers of cultural difference.¹²⁶ The Native Americans were depicted with decorations like tattoos, however these decorations did not cover their entire bodies and the patterns were subdued and functional. White recorded how various tattoos symbolized loyalty to different tribal chiefs, reflecting a specific political purpose for the decoration. According to Harriot and White, the Algonquians were not identical in their behaviors and practices to prehistoric Europeans such as the Picts. The comparison between the Picts and the Algonquians highlighted the commonalities and differences between these peoples as a means of clarifying the features of Native American society. The appearance and customs of the Native Americans were perhaps more coherent and understandable if aligned with historical accounts. This work illustrates how European canons of historical study could be applied to non-

¹²⁴ Ibid., 84.

¹²⁵ Thomas Harriot, *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 76.

¹²⁶ Gaudio, "Truth in Clothing," *European Visions, American Voices*, 30.

European places. The conjunction of history and travel was regarded as the best model for creating an authoritative and comprehensive description of a place and its peoples.

Conclusion:

By the early seventeenth century, English travelers in Europe contended that travel and the study of history were complementary activities. Their journeys in Europe were a form of instruction and self-improvement because of their prior knowledge. English authors considering how to know and represent America regarded history as an essential framework for their accounts. Scholars crafted clear progressions from historical sources to modern explorations, as part of their efforts to create definite information about the New World. Writers transmitted their facts about America through existing European classifications for foreign cultures and societies. These authors privileged the historical accounts and contemporary observations that would support their individual interpretation of the New World. However, the diversity of new material on America, particularly English reports of their voyages, precluded any consensus on what historical information had existed about the continent. English scholars and travelers struggled to find an analytic model that would allow them to fully know the New World.

Chapter 3: English Histories of Native Americans

Introduction:

As discussed in the previous chapter, English scholars and travelers used strategies gained from historical study to describe and classify America. They projected geographical and descriptive ideas drawn from classical and medieval history onto the New World. In this chapter, I will assess how these writers constructed studies of America's past, rather than its present appearance or characteristics. Yet again, writers combined firsthand observations of the New World and biblical and classical histories. Through these sources, English scholars attempted to explain the existence of America and the ancestry of Native Americans. I will examine a diverse set of histories produced by English authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and how these narratives judged whether Native Americans could be assimilated into English colonies. English authors created versions of the Native American past that would suit their colonial projects.

Scholars and travelers almost uniformly maintained that Native Americans did not have historical records, thus Europeans would have to explain their ancient development. As noted by Jorge Canizares-Esguerra, European scholars viewed the study of history as a characteristic of civilized societies, "[m]aturity and great learning were needed to weight evidence, to apportion credit prudently, and to locate events in their right chronological order."¹²⁷ Jose de Acosta denigrated the Native Americans he encountered in Central and South America for their failure to know their past, "the entire memory and tradition of these Indians is about four hundred years and everything previous to that is pure confusion and shadows, with no possibility of discovering

¹²⁷ Jorge Canizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century, Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 84.

anything certain. And this is not to be wondered at, as they lack books and writing."¹²⁸ The Native Americans' supposed illiteracy and lack of historical records were intellectual failures, and were used by scholars to argue that these people did not have an esteemed historical development lasting over many centuries or millennia, like Europeans. This attitude reflects why Europeans believed they should supplant Native American history with their own narratives. In this chapter, I will examine the strategies used to construct and understand America's past.

The first section of this chapter considers how the English described Native Americans as a people living in a prehistoric condition that lacked any historical development. These descriptions supported the argument that indigenous peoples were fundamentally uncivil, because they had not progressed beyond the state of nature. The second section examines a countervailing set of narratives, which praised the unique cultural attributes of Native Americans. These works often suggested that indigenous peoples were living in a golden age, absent of the moral vices that accompanied political and economic development. The third and fourth sections evaluate how English scholars identified specific historical ancestors for the Native Americans. The third section focuses on English history and the theories that the Native Americans had descended from the English and were waiting to be incorporated into the English empire. The fourth section assesses the variety of biblical and classical lineages assigned to indigenous people. Authors debated when and how the Native Americans arrived in the New World and what ancient people they had descended from, ranging from the Israelites to the Scythians. The fifth section discusses mid-seventeenth century Puritan conjectures about the origins of Native Americans, as part of their apocalyptic narratives projecting the end of the world. English scholars reached different conclusions about the Native American past based on

¹²⁸ Acosta, *Natural and Moral History*, 73.

what evidence they privileged and what kind of narrative they were attempting to create. Their histories could portray Native Americans as living examples of the European past or suggest that these people lacked any commonalities with Europeans. These reconstructions led to competing perceptions of indigenous Americans as either sharing the evolutions of global history or detached from any past progress.

Section 1: The Absence of Native American History

English writers could resolve the issue of how to determine the history of the Native Americans by suggesting that these peoples had not developed over time. For several English authors, Native American society could be described without referring to historical change. Spanish scholars first generated this type of classification in the sixteenth century, after Spanish conquests in Central and South America. To support their narratives, these scholars used Aristotle's theory of natural slavery.¹²⁹ This theory suggested that some humans were incapable of governing their passions with their intellect; therefore, they could not participate in civic life and should be ruled by others.¹³⁰ Spanish writers argued that Native Americans belonged to this category because they had supposedly failed to create governments, record their history, and develop intellectual skills, such as rhetoric or art. Juan Ortiz de Matienzo, a governor in New Mexico from 1528 to 1531, justified his opinion that Native Americans were born as slaves with this description: "for them there is no tomorrow and they are content that they have enough to eat and drink for a week."¹³¹ Europeans frequently assigned characteristics to Native Americans that supposedly marked them as a prehistoric people. These characteristics included communal

¹²⁹ Pagden, *Fall of Natural Man*, 41.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

living, the failure to understand time, not cultivating the land, and unchristian practices, such as cannibalism. Spanish writers argued that Native Americans were not capable of well-governed, rational lives without the intervention of a master.

As theorized by classical thinkers and repeated by early modern European scholars, humans did not develop the features of civilization until they formed city-states and evolved out of their original state of nature. Examples of this perspective on historical development included Joannes Boemus's global ethnography, first published in 1520 in Germany, and subsequently translated by Edward Aston and published in England in 1611 as *The Manners, Lauues and Customs of all Nations*. Boemus contrasted the present condition of the Europeans with their past existence: "what perfection and happinesse we now liue at this day, and how simply, rudely, and unciuilly our forefathers liued, from the Creation of the world to the generall Floud, and for many ages after."¹³² He envisioned European civilization as constantly improving over time after the creation of organized states and national boundaries. This progressive understanding of history differed from the earlier medieval conception of "[u]niversal decline, whether dated in the classical world from a Golden Age or in the Christian from the fall of Adam and the expulsion from Paradise."¹³³ According to Boemus, modern European society was more evolved than its classical or biblical forbearers, particularly due to their historical accomplishments in literature, natural philosophy, and politics. These advancements were not universal. Boemus suggested that Satan constantly worked against human progress by teaching foreign peoples to worship false gods, in order to "abolish all knowledge, of one true and onely God."¹³⁴ Native Americans were portrayed as one of the foreign peoples tricked by Satan into idolatry. By

¹³² Joannes Boemus, *The manners, lauues, and customs of all nations* (London, 1611), *Early English Books Online*, A1r.

¹³³ Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 129.

¹³⁴ Boemus, *The manners, lauues, and customs*, A2v.

positioning Native Americans at the beginning of European history, Boemus indicated that Europeans were obligated to encourage civilized development in the New World. His narrative demonstrated how historical accounts could link classical images, Christian rhetoric, and European history to create a unified record of progression or regression in relation to civilization.

In *The Decades of the New World*, Richard Eden duplicated the perspective that the Native Americans were uncivilized, which he likely developed from his Spanish source materials. He portrayed Native Americans as controlled by Satan for their entire history, which had precluded the development of rationality or social organization. In this construction, civility was the opposite of the state of nature. He posited that the Spanish had freed the indigenous people from Satan by conquering the New World and the enslavement of these people was, "such as is much rather to be desired then theyr former libertie which was to the cruell Canibales rather a horrible licenciousnesse then a libertie."¹³⁵ The excess of liberty without government in America had led to satanic tyranny, supposedly expressed by the cannibals who oppressed the rest of the Native Americans. Eden regarded the slaughter and enslavement of Native Americans by the Spanish as necessary to cleanse their society of people who could not be reformed into Christians.

Eden's portrayal of these people reflected Saint Thomas Aquinas's theory that two types of pagans existed: those who had never heard of Christianity and could still be saved, and those who were aware of the Bible, yet continued in their supposed heresy. Eden proposed that once they had been freed from their cannibalistic rulers, Native Americans were, "simple gentiles lyuinge only after the lawe of nature, [who] may well be lykened to a smoothe and bare table

¹³⁵ Martire d'Anghiera, *The decades*, A2v.

unpainted, or a white paper unwritten."¹³⁶ He believed Native Americans to be absent of any inherited religious systems or customs, unlike, "the Jewes and Turkes who are already drowned in theyr confirmed erreure."¹³⁷ According to Eden, the Europeans could easily reform the Native Americans because they lived according to the "law of nature" and did not possess any ingrained human laws. He deemed Native American history to be empty of any cultural or political changes, offering the opportunity for the Spanish to furnish them with a government, social hierarchy, and religion. Classical ethnographies encouraged Europeans to believe that their societies had progressively become civil, unlike the societies of foreigners. According to Anthony Grafton, Greek ethnographers such as Herodotus viewed non-Greek societies as, "solid, fixed, and inalterable as the pyramids themselves: as collections of men and women who often had a chronology but usually did not, in the Western sense, have a history."¹³⁸ Applying this viewpoint to the Native American past perhaps encouraged Eden to argue that the indigenous peoples of Central and South America had not progressed to the formation of governments or commerce. He did not include the many accomplishments of the Aztec, Incan, and Mayan states, choosing instead to represent these peoples as a blank slate upon which the Spanish could improve.

In the previous chapter, I suggested that George Abbot used classical models to categorize information about Native Americans. Like Eden, Abbot argued that the Native Americans had failed to become an advanced civilization. This assessment was based in part on his belief that: "[t]here was no sort of good Literature to be found amongst them; nay, they could not so much as distinguish any times the one from the other, but by a blockish kinde of

¹³⁶ Ibid., C3v.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 48.

obseruation of the course of the Moone...but for the set calculating of ought which was done diuers yeares before they could doe nothing therein but onely grosely aime at."¹³⁹ Abbot's narrative of Native American history was that Satan controlled these people through constant warfare and keeping them in ignorance of organized government and Christianity. He admitted that the Aztec people had formed a political state, which, "was able to make some resistance [to the Spanish] (as it may be tearmed) if it be compared with the other inhabitants of *America*; although little, if it be conferred with the courses of Christendome."¹⁴⁰ Abbot acknowledged the possibility of civilization in America; yet, he argued that this civilization was inferior to Europeans. According to Abbot, the historical development of the indigenous people was not significant in comparison to European history.

English authors created parallels between Native Americans and other peoples who had supposedly not developed civilized life or who had regressed into a state of nature. The conditions of barbarism were not unique to Native Americans. Abbot described the eating habits of the native people of New France as, "very good, in so much that like vnto the Tartares and some other Northern nation, their feeding was (for the most part) vpon raw meate, their manners otherwise being barbarous, and sutable to their diet."¹⁴¹ The Tartars were a nomadic Mongolian tribe frequently derided by Europeans, beginning with the Greeks, for their incivility.¹⁴² Scholars identified several parallels between the Tartars and the Native Americans, including a lack of settled agriculture and paganism. Edward Brerewood also conflated Native Americans with the Tartars. Brerewood was a mathematician and scholar of linguistics who matriculated at Oxford

¹³⁹ Abbot, *A briefe description*, R3v-R4r.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, T1v.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, V1v.

¹⁴² Surekha Davies, "The Unlucky, the Bad and the Ugly: Categories of Monstrosity from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 68.

in 1581, the same year as George Abbot.¹⁴³ In *Enquiries touching the diversity of languages and religions, through the chief parts of the world*, published posthumously by his nephew in 1614, Brerewood contributed to the European debate over possible ancient ancestors for the Native Americans.¹⁴⁴ He argued that Native Americans were descendants of the Tartars, which could be proven by, "their grosse ignorance of letters, and of arts, in their Idolatrie, and...in their incivilitie."¹⁴⁵ Abbot and Brerewood disparaged Native Americans as representative of an ancient barbarism, unchanged across time. The conditions of incivility and barbarity were not unique to Native Americans, and could be applied to any people based on their supposed failure to develop civilization over the course of their history.

Section 2: Native American Societies as Historically Unique

English scholars learned how to describe foreign peoples as undeveloped through classical representations of barbarians, or people who lived outside the boundaries of civilization.¹⁴⁶ However, classical histories also suggested that the study of foreign societies could offer valuable lessons on how to live. Tacitus, a Roman senator and historian, wrote an ethnographic study of the Germanic tribes in approximately 98 CE. Anthony Grafton suggests that Tacitus, "esteemed the purity and courage that could accompany a life lived in huts and outside Roman *civilitas*. This life- so he and others clearly thought- was far closer than the life of modern Romans to that led by such early Roman heroes as Horatius."¹⁴⁷ According to Tacitus,

¹⁴³ Thompson Cooper, "Brerewood, Edward (c.1565–1613)," rev. Anita McConnell, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3335> (accessed March 19, 2015).

¹⁴⁴ Richard W. Cogley, "'Some Other Kinde of Being and Condition': The Controversy in Mid-Seventeenth Century England over the Peopling of Ancient America," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 68, no. 1 (January 2007): 36.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁴⁶ Pagden, *Fall of Natural Man*, 39.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

Roman history was not a clear progression to greater virtue through more advanced civilization. Classical histories offered two different lenses for how to view the history of America. English scholars debated if the state of nature that the Native Americans represented was free from modern corruption or ruled by irrationality. Determining that Native American society benefited from its prehistoric condition could allow for a more favorable assessment of these peoples. Yet, these interpretations also permitted Europeans to maintain that Native Americans had not developed the traits of civilized societies.

Joannes Boemus had asserted that modern Europeans were living in highest stage of civilization. However, he acknowledged that prehistoric people had possessed certain benefits, such as: "sea and land as common to all as the aire and firmament. No man then gaped after honor and riches, but euery one contented with a little, liued a rurall, secure, and idle life, free from toyle or trauell."¹⁴⁸ According to Boemus, early mankind developed political states to protect themselves and their property. However, life without government or national boundaries could be viewed as absent of the vices and strain of modern life. Joan-Pau Rubies has suggested that for Europeans writing on America, "the transition from barbarism to civilization (and the static dichotomy barbarian-civilized was here effectively replaced by a historical perspective) was not one of absolute gains, but instead one of tragic loss in the context of obvious gains."¹⁴⁹ English writers could view Native Americans as representative of virtues lost in the pursuit of civilization. However, this representation still relied on a European historical construct for the Native American past.

¹⁴⁸ Boemus, *The manners, lauues, and customes*, A1v.

¹⁴⁹ Joan-Pau Rubies, "Texts, Images, and the Perception of 'Savages' in Early Modern Europe: What We can Learn from White and Harriot," in *European Visions, American Voices*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2009), 127-128.

Characterizations of Native Americans as naturally virtuous existed from the beginning of English colonization in North America. Arthur Barlowe and Phillip Armadas traveled to North Carolina in 1584 on a reconnaissance mission in preparation for Walter Raleigh's settlement the following year.¹⁵⁰ Barlowe's account of the Secotan people was published in Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*. He provided a favorable description of the Native Americans he encountered: "We found the people most gentle, louing, and faithfull, voide of all guile and treason, and such as liue after the maner of the golden age. The people ouely care how to defend themselues from the cold in their short winter, and to feed themselues with such meat as the soile affordeth."¹⁵¹ The "golden age" referred to a prehistoric period when the absence of private property allowed people to live in peace without established governments.¹⁵² Barlowe suggested that Native Americans had not been corrupted by political treachery or the greed of a market economy. These people farmed only what was necessary for subsistence and had no conflicts with one another. This assessment, although one-dimensional, offered a contrasting narrative to the theory that Native Americans were engaged in constant warfare and practiced cannibalism. Barlowe suggested that the native peoples of North Carolina were not barbaric, while still maintaining that they had not developed the attributes of modern civilization, such as government or non-subsistence agriculture. These attributes could therefore be supplied by English colonization. This account was used as propaganda for establishing a settlement in Roanoke. Barlowe's description of the Native Americans promised that their prehistoric condition made them peaceful and welcoming. He also made observations on their political organization, commenting that, "[a]nd we both noted there, and you have understood since by

¹⁵⁰ Michael G. Moran, "Arthur Barlowe (ca. 1550-ca. 1620)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (July 19, 2014).

¹⁵¹ Hakluyt, *Principal Nauigations* (1600), 249.

¹⁵² Rubies, "Texts, Images, and the Perception of 'Savages,'" 127

these men, which we brought home, that no people in the worlde carry more respect to their King, Nobilitie and Gouverneurs, than these doe."¹⁵³ Barlowe described Native Americans as simultaneously separate from modern civilizations and possessing a government. For Barlowe, political and social development was evidently compatible with Native Americans' existence in a golden age.

In travel accounts like Barlowe's, observations of Native American society were constructed to fit depictions of these peoples as unsophisticated and impressionable. Barlowe praised the Secotans for their honesty and loyalty. However, this absence of guile could indicate to Europeans that Native Americans had not developed the intellectual capacity to navigate complex politics. In *The World Encompassed*, Francis Fletcher described a Native American he met during the journey as, "verie gentle, of mild and humble nature, being verie tractable to learn the vse of euery thing, and most gratefull for such things as our generall bestowed vpon him. In him he might see a most liuely patterne of the harmelesse disposition of that people."¹⁵⁴ This characterization implied that this person had not inherited any type of advanced thinking or political strategy and could be easily impressed upon by the Europeans. Fletcher argued that the Spanish were responsible for Native American aggression and cannibalism, and the indigenous people were naturally peaceful, if unrefined. He compared the Native Americans and the Scythians, "who in their barbarous ignorance, yet in life and behauiour did so farre excel the wise and learned Greeks, as they were short of them in the gifts of learning and knowledge."¹⁵⁵ According to Fletcher, the Native Americans and the Scythians did not possess intellectual skills equal to Europeans, yet they were unparalleled in their behavior and natural abilities. Barlowe

¹⁵³ Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations* (1600), 248.

¹⁵⁴ Drake, *World Encompassed*, 100.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

might view their qualities of physical strength and loyalty as preferable to the sophistry of European scholars and politicians. This belief that Native Americans possessed a kind of unique expertise was reflected in Thomas Harriot's account of the Roanoke people.

Like Fletcher, Harriot commented on the historical development of the Native Americans by discussing their intellectual capacities. He suggested that these peoples were capable of independent action and expression; therefore, they could not be classified as natural slaves. This position preserved the Christian theology of the "perfection of God's creation which required that all men, if they are to be called real men, should have real minds."¹⁵⁶ Harriot proposed that Native Americans were not irreconcilably different from the rest of humanity. He observed in Roanoke that although the native people, "haue noe true knowlege of God nor of his holye worde and are destituted of all lerninge, Yet they passe vs in many things, as in Sober feelinge and Dexteritye of witte, in makinge without any instrument of metall things so neate and so fine, as a man would scarsclye beleue the same."¹⁵⁷ The Native Americans lacked formal education, yet were naturally ingenious. Harriot used this assessment of their mental abilities to contend that these people could be quickly civilized and Christianized. John White's images of the Picts complemented this assessment. If the Native Americans were equivalent to a British tribal people, the English were capable of reproducing English governance and Christianity in the New World.

Harriot confirmed this favorable opinion of the Algonquians with his account of their religious beliefs, including their creation story that, "a woman was made first, which by the woorking of one of the goddes, conceiued and brought foorth children."¹⁵⁸ He recorded what

¹⁵⁶ Pagden, *Fall of Natural Man*, 56.

¹⁵⁷ Harriot, *A briefe and true report*, 6.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

Native Americans viewed to be their origins, offering an indigenous perspective on the Native American past that many other English accounts ignored. Harriot wrote that he had gained access to this information through "having special familiarity with some of their priests."¹⁵⁹ The Algonquians were seemingly able to shape, to a limited extent, what White and Harriot learned about their religious and cultural practices. This information was mediated through Harriot, who identified similarities between Native American religious beliefs and the practices of Europeans. He also qualified his description with his commentary that the priests did not know how many years had passed after the creation, as "they say they can make no relation, having no letters nor other such meanes as we to keepe recordes of the particularities of times past, but onelie tradition from father to sonne."¹⁶⁰ He acknowledged that Native Americans had a historical past, yet their recording of this past was supposedly inferior to what Europeans could know about their history. During his stay in Roanoke, Harriot invented what he described as a "universal alphabet," or a way of recording the sounds of any language.¹⁶¹ This alphabet was created so the English could record and correctly pronounce Native American languages. However, Harriot was not willing to acknowledge that traditions passed down orally could be as equally authoritative as written histories. He suggested that Europeans like himself were best suited to reveal the Native American past, based on their skill in historical study.

Samuel Purchas was one of the very few English scholars who considered Native Americans capable of recording their own history. In *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, he printed the Codex Mendoza, a pictorial history of the Aztec empire created for Charles V after the Spanish conquest of Mexico. The Codex was purchased by Richard Hakluyt and inherited by Samuel

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 26-27.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 25-26.

¹⁶¹ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Roanoke's Achievement," in *European Visions, American Voices*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2009), 10.

Purchas, who published it in 1625. He used the Codex Mendoza as a source for his sections on Aztec history, indicating that he viewed Aztec hieroglyphs as a legitimate or at least useful form of recording history.¹⁶² This collection was an exception among English writers. If these writers acknowledged that Native Americans possessed a history of cultural and political development, they suggested that this past had produced characteristics of physical skill or loyalty, rather than intellectual accomplishments.

Section 3: Uniting English and American History

John Dee and Richard Hakluyt were among the sixteenth century English writers who attempted to link English and Native American history. These authors proposed that English explorers had populated the New World since the Early Middle Ages. In their narratives, Europeans were capable of reforming and civilizing Native Americans; however, this process had begun centuries before the Spanish conquest. These accounts supplanted Native American history with a chronicle of English settlement in America. By placing their ancestors in the New World, Hakluyt and Dee attributed more positive characteristics and advanced skills to the Native Americans. They projected a future in which the historical relationship between the English and the Native Americans would be restored, thereby creating a unified lineage of English civilization in America from the medieval period to the present.

John Dee united English and Native American history in order to assert that cultural accomplishments and complex societies were made possible in America by English settlement. Dee claimed that King Arthur had conquered kingdoms in the North Atlantic and Scandinavia, including Greenland, Iceland, and modern-day Canada, or Estotiland and Drogió, as named in

¹⁶² Canizares-Esgurrea, *History of the New World*, 95.

his account.¹⁶³ Dee used the medieval travel account of Nicolo and Anthony Zeno as proof that the inhabitants of Estotiland possessed several characteristics of civilized peoples, including agriculture, brewing beer, fortified cities and castles, and familiarity with navigation.¹⁶⁴ The Estotiland natives described by Dee had developed beyond a state of nature. He suggested that King Arthur's conquest made these advancements possible. He alleged that the library of the king of Estotiland included several Latin books, which were, "of Christian religion, thither directlie sent by Kinge Arthurs commandment, or from *Grocland* imparted and transported for setlinge and mayntaninge of the Chrisitan religion in those parts."¹⁶⁵ In this account, Arthur was responsible for the introduction of Christianity into North America. Dee buttressed King Arthur's conquest with other alleged journeys, including Saint Brendan's discovery of Bermuda in 560 and the Welsh Prince Madoc's settlement in North America in 1170. These voyages populated the history of the New World with the English and linked the historical development of the Native Americans to English empire. In this narrative, Native Americans and the English could share a common cultural and historical lineage; however, that lineage signified for Dee that the English possessed the right to resettle America.

The apocryphal accounts of pre-Columbian English contact with Native Americans offered a compelling vision of an American history that was not unfamiliar or prehistoric. These exchanges demonstrated the possibility that Native Americans were not separate from European historical progress and Christianity. Therefore, the process of civilizing the Native Americans would be the restoration of existing values, rather than the formation of a new civilization out of a state of nature. Sir George Peckham's *True reporte of the late discoveries*, published in 1583,

¹⁶³ MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession*, 60.

¹⁶⁴ Dee, *Limits of the British Empire*, 37.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

was the first printed version of the Madoc narrative, as Dee's account had circulated as a manuscript. Peckham argued in favor of establishing an English settlement in North America. He drew on the account of David Ingram, who was marooned in Mexico during a voyage with the English privateer John Hawkins. Ingram reported in 1582 that he heard Native Americans use Welsh words during his travels.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, Peckham cited a speech delivered by the Aztec ruler Moctezuma to his subjects, which Hernan Cortes had supposedly observed. Moctezuma reminded his people that, "we are not naturallie of this Countrie, nor yet our Kingdome is durable, because our Forefathers came from a farre countrie and their King and Captaine who brought them hither, returned againe to his natural countrie, saying, that he would send such as should rule and governe us."¹⁶⁷ Through this speech, Peckham expressed the possibility that the Native American descendants of Madoc included the Aztec rulers. In this narrative, any culture and political accomplishments of the Native Americans could be attributed to the influence of the Welsh.

In *Principal Navigations*, Richard Hakluyt included the voyages of King Arthur and Prince Madoc in his catalogue of English travel abroad. Dee and Hakluyt hoped that the medieval history of English settlement in America could transform the Native Americans in the minds of the English from a foreign people to a nation of willing subjects. Myths of Welsh communities in America persisted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, featuring stories of white Indians that worshipped crosses or spoke English.¹⁶⁸ For English colonists, Madoc's voyage offered a compelling vision of pre-Columbian English travel and the possibility that traces of English history could be found in America. Dee and Hakluyt's accounts indicate the

¹⁶⁶ Gwyn A. Williams, *Madoc: the Making of a Myth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 85.

English interest in finding commonalities with Native Americans and constructing extended historical lineages. Through narratives of the American past, English scholars and travelers searched for historical unity and resolution. These histories were an assurance that cultural and religious bonds between Native Americans and Europeans, although decayed by time, could be restored by colonization.

Section 4: Native Americans in Biblical and Historical Genealogies

The works previously discussed in this chapter did not explicitly consider how Native Americans had arrived in America, or at what point in history they had diverged from other peoples. In the early seventeenth century, English travelers and colonists attempted to identify the origins of the Native Americans. Direct experiences with indigenous people perhaps encouraged them to try to locate their specific historical origins, as the Spanish had attempted to do during the sixteenth century. Knowing the identity of the Native Americans would provide information on their customs and behaviors and could replace Native American histories with a genealogy sanctioned by Europeans.

If Adam and Eve were the common ancestors for all humanity, Native Americans had originated from a biblical people. These histories reflect a scholarly culture that believed in, "the universality of most social norms and in a high degree of cultural unity between the various races of man."¹⁶⁹ Scholars studying America often suggested that the gods of the Native Americans were fundamentally the same gods worshipped by ancient pagans. If the Native Americans were culturally and religiously similar to ancient pagans, then the modern conversion of the Americans was equivalent to the historical conversion of Europeans to Christianity. Karen

¹⁶⁹ Pagden, *Fall of Natural Man*, 5.

Ordahl Kupperman has suggested that during this time period two models existed for understanding human progress, either: "a centrifugal force deep in the past that had dispersed revealed religion. Colonization then involved a reuniting of that split world and restoration to Christianity of peoples who had only a partial and corrupted form," or, "an evolving theory of parallel development according to natural principles of religion."¹⁷⁰ The belief that Native Americans had regressed into idolatry and were waiting to be converted reflects the first model. English writers attempted to create histories that would locate Native Americans within a universal biblical and classical past.

The debate over the historical origins of America originated in Spanish scholarship during the sixteenth century. Benito Arias Montano, a Spanish cleric, published in 1572 an edition of the Bible in five languages. The *Biblia sacra* included his argument that the biblical land of Ophir was located in modern-day Peru. According to Montano, the great-grandson of Noah, Ophir, was responsible for populating America.¹⁷¹ The ancient connection between the state of Ophir and the Israelites had fostered Solomon's profitable trade with this nation.¹⁷² Furthermore, the conflation of Peru and Ophir affirmed that the Israelites had possessed a complete knowledge of the world, prior to modern Europeans.¹⁷³ In this account, Solomon's imperial control of Ophir was a historical precursor to Philip II's settlements in America.¹⁷⁴

In *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, Jose de Acosta challenged Montano's identification of Peru as Ophir. Acosta suggested that Peru did not exhibit the riches of Ophir as described in the Bible and he had not seen elephants in Peru, which were the source for the ivory

¹⁷⁰ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, introduction to *America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 7.

¹⁷¹ Popper, *History of the World*, 144.

¹⁷² Ibid., 145.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 146.

Solomon received from Ophir.¹⁷⁵ He argued that Native Americans did not develop as a separate people during the period described in the Bible. He mentioned other ancient sources applied to the Native Americans that he believed were incorrect, including Plato's account of Atlantis and the crossing of the Euphrates by the ten lost tribes of Israel, after the Assyrians conquered the Holy Land.¹⁷⁶ These theories were based on the belief that America had been populated during biblical times by a civilized people, who then regressed into the current-day Native Americans. Acosta offered a contrasting narrative for the peopling of America: "the New World and the West Indies have not been inhabited by men for very many thousands of years, that the first men who entered them were savage hunters rather than civilized folk."¹⁷⁷ He believed that the Native Americans could have regressed before their arrival in America.

Acosta maintained that the biblical ancestors of these people would be difficult to determine, because their culture had deteriorated over time: "[e]ven though they came from civilized and well-governed countries, it is not difficult to believe that they forgot everything in the course of a long time and little use; for it is well known that even in Spain and Italy groups of men are sometimes found who, except for their shapes and faces, have no other resemblance to men."¹⁷⁸ All humans, including Europeans, were capable of declining into a state of warfare and irrationality. The barbaric men in Spain and Italy represented the consequences of failing to live as civilized humans.¹⁷⁹ The works of Montano and Acosta indicate the basic narrative elements used by European scholars to describe the historical origins of the Native Americans. These elements included distinguishing between ancient or recent origins and civilized or savage

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 149.

¹⁷⁶ Cogley, "Peopling of Ancient America," 41.

¹⁷⁷ Acosta, *Natural and Moral History*, 71.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 72.

¹⁷⁹ Davies, "The Unlucky, the Bad and the Ugly," 66.

ancestors. Although English authors may not have agreed with Montano's conclusion, they adopted his methods for determining the American past. How scholars assembled these histories shaped their perceptions of whether Native Americans could be restored to a civilized or Christian state. Acosta denied that Native Americans were represented in the Bible, yet affirmed that Europeans could easily reform these people.

Despite Acosta's assertion that humans had not populated America during the biblical period, several English authors contended that Native Americans were represented as a separate people in the Bible. These authors affirmed that the origins of all societies could be traced in the global dispersion of peoples after the Tower of Babel and even earlier to the three sons of Noah. In *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, William Strachey identified a biblical ancestor for the Native Americans he had encountered in Jamestown. Strachey described the indigenous people as "simple and barbarous," yet possessing the "practize of all morall Pollicyes and Offices of Vertue, as perfect, peremptory, and exact, as the vnbeleaving Grecians and the infidelious Romans."¹⁸⁰ He equated the Native Americans to prehistoric pagans, who were virtuous but lacked knowledge of Christianity. Strachey believed that identifying a biblical ancestor for the Native Americans could explain their regression to idolatry. He argued that Native Americans were descended from Ham, one of Noah's sons, whose descendants supposedly populated Africa and adjacent parts of Asia. For evidence of how the descendants of Ham had arrived in the New World, Strachey proposed that readers consult the work of Acosta.¹⁸¹ This reference indicates that Strachey did not believe that Ham's offspring traveled into North America during the biblical past.

¹⁸⁰ Strachey, *Historie of Travell*, 17.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 55.

Strachey integrated the Native Americans into a historical narrative of Ham's descendants, which described them in terms of their failure to achieve Christianity. Ham and his family were not Christian, but they possessed knowledge of the true God. Ham's descendants failed to retain this knowledge. Strachey asserted that, "what country soever the Children of Cham happened to possesse, there beganne both Ignorance of true godliness, and a kynd of bondage and slavery."¹⁸² Scholars often modified indigenous religious beliefs to appear as if they belonged in a universal history. For example, Sabine MacCormack outlines how Europeans transformed how the sun was depicted by the Incan sun cult so it would appear more similar to European iconography for the sun.¹⁸³ Strachey's work reflects this identification of a common state of idolatry and unchristian worship across both historical and modern societies. In his narrative, Native Americans possessed a biblical origin, but their development over time was not distinct from other unchristian peoples. He regarded Native Americans as one of the regressed peoples that modern Christians should reclaim. For Strachey, the historical identity for Native Americans as the children of Ham offered clear direction for a Christian reformation of America.

Other English settlers in North America generated differing theories about the ancestry of the Native Americans. Thomas Morton, a prominent colonist in early seventeenth century Massachusetts, attempted to challenge Acosta's position that Native Americans had descended from Asian nomadic tribes who relatively recently crossed into the New World. Morton arrived in America two decades later than William Strachey and settled in the Puritan settlement of Passonagessit, Massachusetts, although Morton was Anglican.¹⁸⁴ By 1626, he had assumed control of the town, which he renamed Mount Ma-re. He came into conflict with the Puritan

¹⁸² Ibid., 53.

¹⁸³ MacCormack, "Limits of Understanding," 98-99.

¹⁸⁴ "Morton, Thomas (1580x95–1646/7)," Edith Murphy in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19372> (accessed April 21, 2015).

leadership of Massachusetts, who condemned his unlicensed trade with the Algonquians and irreverent behavior, symbolized by the famous maypole raised in his settlement.¹⁸⁵ Morton was banished from Massachusetts in 1630 and he returned to England to write and publish the *New English Canaan*. This work presented his version of the conflict between Mount Ma-re and the Puritan leadership and featured his commentary on the Algonquians he encountered in Massachusetts, including their historical development.

In the *New English Canaan*, Morton rejected Acosta's argument that Native Americans had originally arrived in the New World via Asia. He argued that no people in Asia, such as the Scythians or the Tartars, would leave their home, for, "a people once settled, must be removed by compulsion, or else tempted thereunto in hope of better fortunes."¹⁸⁶ This argument ignored the issue that the Scythians and the Tatars were already nomadic. Morton presented an alternative narrative to the Asian origins of the Native Americans. He proposed that the Native Americans had descended from Brutus, the alleged Trojan founder of Britain. According to Morton, Brutus's followers did not all accompany him to Britain, and after they left Italy, a storm could have carried them to North America.¹⁸⁷ For evidence that journeys across the Atlantic were possible during this period, Morton cited Solomon's voyage to Ophir, although he did not explicitly state that Ophir was located in the New World.¹⁸⁸ This narrative perhaps reflected the influence of myths of pre-Columbian English travel to the New World.

Morton used his experiences with Native Americans in Massachusetts as evidence that they had descended from the Trojans. He commented: "the Natives of this Country, doe use very many wordes both of Greeke and Latine, to the same signification that the Latins and Greeks

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Thomas Morton, *New English Canaan, or New Canaan* (London, 1637), *Early English Books Online*, 19.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 21.

have done."¹⁸⁹ He included several examples of Latin and Greek words that supposedly appeared in the Native American lexicon. Additionally, Morton seemed to suggest that the Algonquians exhibited similar physical features as the English. He recounted that at birth Algonquian children, "are of complexion white as our nation, but their mothers in their infancy make a bath of Walnut leaves, huskes of Walnuts, and such things as will staine their skinne for ever, wherein they dip and washe them to make them tawny, the coloure of their haire is black, and their eyes black."¹⁹⁰ According to Morton, Native American children were naturally white, although their hair and eye color signified physical differences between the Algonquians and the English. He described the birth of an Algonquian child with gray eyes, which to Morton indicated that the father was an English man. His historical analysis of the Native Americans resulted in his attempt to categorize Algonquians as white, yet not identical to the English. He presented the Native Americans as altering their appearance at birth from their original whiteness, perhaps a physical symbol of how their culture had developed separately from the English over time.

Morton used the historical relationship he created between the Native Americans and the English to affirm the value of Native American society. The belief that the Native American past was not "confusion and shadows," as described by Acosta, shaped how Morton assessed their social and political development. He suggested that although they lacked technologies and scholarly knowledge, they exhibited natural human reason. He remarked: "Platoes Commonwealth is so much practised by these people. According to humane reason guided onely by the light of nature, these people leads the more happy and freer life."¹⁹¹ For Morton, this parallel between the Algonquians and the ancient Greeks could reflect the influence of Brutus's

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 18.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 32.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 57.

descendants, who had created a more perfect state in the New World than in England. Morton's heretical beliefs may have encouraged his characterization of the Algonquians as superior to English, although he maintained that they should be Christianized. His account of the Algonquians relied on his historical analysis, and the creation of a narrative that could legitimize what he experienced in the New World. This history was contradictory and did not include any indigenous perspectives, yet it represented the belief that historical study could reveal a shared past and future for Native Americans and the English.

The historical origins selected for Native Americans by English authors reflected specific determinations about what civilization entailed and how Native Americans could achieve a Christian and civil life. According to Morton, Plato's theorized utopia still represented the best form of living. In Morton's viewpoint, modern European life was a struggle between the benefits of new information and technologies and the loss of virtue and simplicity. Debates over the best form of civilization were connected to scholarly conflicts about whether classical texts represented the peak of knowledge about the world, or if modern Europeans should seek new sources and methods for acquiring information. The goal of both these pursuits was uncovering the fundamental laws underlying human existence and the natural world. Morton attempted to create through historical analysis a narrative of Native Americans and the English that could uniformly connect these societies and reveal the guidance of providence. He did not include any indigenous beliefs about their own history. Morton subsumed the Native Americans into European history to represent continuity between human societies over time, rather than to illustrate the distinctive attributes of the Native Americans.

Section 5: Providential Puritan Histories of America

Thomas Morton's history of the Native Americans was inspired by his conflict with the Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. This section considers how Puritans in England and America responded to the debate over the origins of the Native Americans by formulating their own histories of America. These scholars continued to search for an understanding of the New World in the distant past and they applied their analyses to Puritan colonization efforts in America. Following the English Civil War, Puritan scholars proposed that God had revealed America to Europe as part of the impending end of the world.¹⁹² Like earlier English scholars, Puritans regarded America as part of God's plan for humanity. They believed that the goal of this plan was to precipitate the apocalypse through the global triumph of Christianity.

English Puritan scholars attempted to create a historical narrative for Native Americans that would support their beliefs in approaching universal judgment and redemption. The catalyst for this redemption would be the reappearance of the lost tribes of Israel, which would result in the conversion of the Jews to Christianity.¹⁹³ These ten tribes had disappeared following the conquest of the Holy Land by the Assyrians. In 1650, Thomas Thorowgood, a Puritan cleric, published *Iewes in America*, which theorized that the Israelite tribes had crossed into America from Asia and then dispersed throughout the continent.¹⁹⁴ These people had deteriorated into paganism and forgotten their Israelite history, however, they supposedly retained several aspects of Jewish culture, including male circumcision and belief in the immortality of the soul.¹⁹⁵ In this historical progression, the Native Americans were a formerly favored and advanced civilization,

¹⁹² Richard H. Popkin, "Hartlib, Dury and the Jews," in *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation: Studies in Intellectual Communication*, ed. Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie, and Timothy Raylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 125.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Richard W. Cogley, "John Eliot and the Origins of the American Indians," *Early American Literature* 21, no. 3 (1986-1987), 216.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

rather than the descendants of the fully pagan Tartars.¹⁹⁶ Thorowgood proposed that: "those, now despicable, and forlorne people might long agoe have had some other kinde of being and condition [that] may yet happily, by divine appointment, be restored and covered."¹⁹⁷ The Native Americans were not innately barbarous and their past civility could be restored, which was explicitly linked to destiny of all Christians. John Dury, a Scottish preacher who had served as a minister for Puritans living abroad in the Netherlands, wrote the preface for *Jewes in America*.¹⁹⁸ He described the discovery of the lost tribes in America as the first step towards the reunification of Christianity and the return of Jesus.¹⁹⁹ Dury and Thorowgood integrated the Native Americans into the biblical past to create a narrative of Christian progress that would encompass all Christian and pagan peoples. They imagined the historical origins of the Native Americans as a revealed secret, which signified God's intentions for humanity.

Thorowgood and Dury's optimistic depiction of Native American history had both adherents and challengers among English scholars. The adherents included prominent Puritans living in America, such as John Eliot. He was educated at Cambridge and traveled to New England as a Puritan missionary in 1631.²⁰⁰ In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Eliot upheld a conservative and prescriptive style of government.²⁰¹ He hoped to convert the local Native Americans to Christianity, and from 1643 to 1646, he learned the Algonquian language to

¹⁹⁶ Cogley, "Peopling of Ancient America," 42.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 53.

¹⁹⁸ "Durie, John (1596–1680)," John T. Young in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8323> (accessed March 18, 2015).

¹⁹⁹ Popkin, "Hartlib, Dury and the Jews," 125.

²⁰⁰ "Eliot, John (1604–1690)," J. Frederick Fausz in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2011, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8631> (accessed March 18, 2015).

²⁰¹ Ibid.

facilitate his preaching.²⁰² After reading *Iewes in America*, he began corresponding with Thorowgood, who encouraged Eliot to conduct his own investigation into the origins of the Native Americans.

Eliot wrote an essay on the biblical ancestors of the Native Americans, which was published in 1660 in a later edition of *Iewes in America*.²⁰³ According to Richard Cogley, "Eliot produced a statement that he could have authored as easily in London as in the wilderness of New England."²⁰⁴ He relied on scripture for his vision of American history, rather than his experiences with Algonquians. He repeated the arguments of Thorowgood and Dury, arguing that the Native Americans were descendants of ancient Hebrews who would be easily converted because they had subconsciously inherited the customs and practices of their Jewish ancestors.²⁰⁵ Eliot was guided in this opinion by his reading of the Bible, including a passage in Deuteronomy in which Moses warned the Israelite tribes that they would be scattered across the world, and "there you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have served."²⁰⁶ The Bible predicted the idolatry of the Native Americans; therefore, these people had not lost their original beliefs, but were waiting for conversion and the restoration of God's empire over the world.

Thorowgood's work was challenged by writers did not support the providential Puritan viewpoint on history. These writers included Hamon L'Estrange, who published *Americans No Iewes* in 1651.²⁰⁷ He relied on the earlier work of Edward Brerewood, who had challenged the theory that Native Americans were descended from the Israelites in the late sixteenth century.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Cogley, "John Eliot," 217.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 219.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 218.

²⁰⁷ Cogley, "Peopling of Ancient America," 35.

Brerewood's suggestion that the Tartars were the ancestors of the Native Americans was still relevant in mid-seventeenth century England, as scholars continued to rely on historical criticism to know America. For L'Estrange, his political opposition to the Puritans likely motivated his publication of *Americans No Jewes*. He had fought as a royalist in the English Civil War, and Parliament sequestered his estate in 1649.²⁰⁸ He rejected the Puritan belief that the lost Israelites were located in America, and that their conversion was imminent. As suggested by Richard Cogley, Brerewood's, and subsequently L'Estrange's, theory, "lacked the two missionary virtues of Thorowgood's alternative: a poignant cultural tragedy for Europeans to lament, and lost civility for Indians to recover."²⁰⁹ Brerewood and L'Estrange's historical narratives were not predicated on biblical prophecy or a belief in the impending apocalypse. They constructed a past for the Native Americans, yet a past that was not providential. English efforts to formulate histories for indigenous Americans did not always result in a more favorable assessment of their civilization or a clear vision of historical progress.

Conclusion:

In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, English scholars devised a variety of historical narratives to explain how Native Americans arrived in America and their level of cultural and political development. The past was perceived as the best means of assessing Native American civilization and determining its significance in global history. In formulating these narratives, scholars participated in debates over the nature of history, whether it was inherently progressive or regressive, and whether all societies moved through similar stages of historical

²⁰⁸ W. A. Shaw, "L'Estrange, Hamon (1605–1660)," rev. Sean Kelsey, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16507> (accessed April 5, 2015).

²⁰⁹ Cogley, "Peopling of Ancient America," 54.

development. These narratives shaped how Native Americans were regarded in the English colonial projects: as a people that could be assimilated into English culture or a people incapable of progression. The histories focused on English interests, although they could acknowledge distinctive Native American customs and skills. English scholars did not entirely ignore Native American development, yet their European historical models limited the expression of indigenous viewpoints on their own past.

By the late seventeenth century, no English or European consensus existed on when or how the Native Americans had splintered away from the rest of humanity. This confusion was reflected in a Dutch text, *De nieuwe en onbekende wereld*, or *The New and Unknown World*, written by Arnoldus Montanus and published in 1671. In the same year, John Ogilby translated Montanus's work into English and republished it in London as *America: being the latest, and most accurate description of the New World*. Ogilby was a geographer and translator who worked under the patronage of Charles II to produce detailed maps and descriptions of each continent. Montanus dedicated the first section of *America* to the European debates over the origins of the Native Americans. He recorded Samuel Purchas's argument that, "because a Countrey or Pastoral Life, knowing no Commerce, but mean Hovels...unlimited by Laws, and all things else, (which the People observ'd presently after the Flood) is now found among the *Americans*, who will take them for ought else, but new Comers to that Land."²¹⁰ However, Montanus countered this explanation by suggesting, "the several Languages us'd in *America*, as in *Europe* or any other part of the known World; whereby we may easily guess, that *America* was Peopled presently after the Confusion of Tongues at *Babel*."²¹¹ He wanted to maintain a biblical point of origin for Native Americans, and he reconciled their ancient history and their

²¹⁰ John Ogilby, *America: being the latest, and most accurate description of the new vworld* (London, 1671), *Early English Books Online*, 12.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

supposed lack of civilization by asserting that other ancient nations were similarly uncivilized, such as the Tartars. He simultaneously affirmed a historical identity for the Native Americans and denied them any evolution over time. Like L'Estrange, Ogilby likely hoped to discredit the Puritan histories of America that forecasted the apocalypse and the rule of the godly over the world. In L'Estrange and Ogilby's works, history was no longer a restorative process, promising that Native Americans could be civilized. Ogilby's work perhaps reflected Charles II's expansion of English commerce in the New World. Arguing that Native Americans were identical to the Tartars denied them any unique historical position to which the English had to respond. Montanus and Ogilby's narrative demonstrates how in the later seventeenth century European scholars could identify Native Americans as a people that had existed since biblical times, yet were historically undistinguishable from other supposedly barbaric foreign societies.

Thesis Conclusion:

Sixteenth and seventeenth century English authors crafted histories of America to reveal the significance of the newfound continent within global history and God's plan for humanity. The classical, scriptural, and medieval past shaped their interest in America and their perceptions of its peoples. These writers trusted in historical study as a practice that could reconcile conflicting accounts, expose fundamental truths, and determine the future of English settlement. They believed that new information about America should be tested against existing precedents.

Historical criticism persisted in America after the establishment of permanent English settlements. Thomas Morton and John Eliot were Englishmen living in America who used history to make sense of the people they encountered. They sought a past for Native Americans that could connect these people to biblical or classical ancestors, thereby dissolving the religious and cultural differences between Native Americans and Europeans. These histories could transform the New World into a place familiar to Europeans and determine what types of behaviors and identities Native Americans had inherited.

In the late seventeenth century, as reflected by John Ogilby's account, the accepted historical framework for America disregarded lengthy classical and biblical genealogies. Ogilby contended that Native Americans were identical to nomadic Asian tribes and did not occupy the elevated historical positions developed by Morton and Eliot. In this construction, understanding the Native American past did not make these people historically meaningful. This perspective drew on existing works disconnecting Native Americans from any exalted history. For example, Christopher Brooke published *A Poem on the Late Massacre in Virginia* in 1622, as a response to a slaughter of Virginian settlers by Native Americans. He described the indigenous people as: "Errors of Nature, of inhumane Birth,/The very dregs, garbage, and spawne of the Earth,/Who

ne're (I think) were mention'd with those creatures/*Adam* gaue names to in their seuerall natures:/But such as comming of a later Brood,/(Not sau'd in th' Arke) but since the generall Flood/Sprung up like vermine of an earthly slime."²¹² Brooke denied the underlying principle for English histories of Native Americans, which was that indigenous peoples had descended from Adam and Eve, like the rest of humanity. He portrayed these peoples as less than human and separate from any shared history of human development. This perspective reflected the histories of scholars like George Abbot, who had dismissed Native Americans for their incivility. Those narratives were transferred into an ethnographic context, which suggested that Native Americans were inferior because of their customs and behavior, rather than their historical ancestors. In the disputes over the Native American past, the argument that they did not exhibit any historical development became more persuasive.

Changes in English scholarly culture encouraged this shift in historical thinking. Late sixteenth and early seventeenth century scholars had embraced a diversity of historical accounts and accessed empirical information through the study of history. The reformation of scholarship espoused by Francis Bacon in the *Novum Organum* in 1620 encouraged the pursuit of unchanging facts, which could be generated by scholars.²¹³ English scholars claimed that their narratives provided immutable information about American history. However, their inquiries encouraged more divergent accounts, as writers attempted to conceal contractions in their sources and unsolvable gaps in their chronologies. Scholars began to focus on what they considered definite about the New World: the beliefs and behaviors of the Native Americans as recorded by Europeans.

²¹² Oberg, *Dominion and Civility*, 79.

²¹³ Popper, *History of the World*, 291.

As seventeenth century scholars dismissed Greek and Roman thinkers for their shortcomings in scientific knowledge, they proposed that Native Americans represented ancient societies no longer worthy of emulation.²¹⁴ These scholars viewed indigenous Americans as existing permanently in a prehistoric state, unable to develop new technologies, knowledge, or culture. Samuel Purchas had used the Codex Mendoza to outline Aztec history. The Codex became a means to understand the mental abilities of primitive people.²¹⁵ The repudiation of Native American history as a legitimate field of study was accompanied by an adjustment in scholarship regarding mental development. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, John Locke proposed that at birth the human mind was a blank slate, to be imprinted on by education and experience. He described the process by which mental faculties were improved: "as the mind by the Senses comes more and more to be furnished with *Ideas*, it comes to be more and more awake; thinks more, the more it has matter to think on."²¹⁶ The minds of Native Americans were supposedly childlike, unimproved by ideas or experience.²¹⁷ Investigating Native American history was no longer possible or relevant to European scholarship. If the minds of Native Americans were undeveloped, they were incapable of knowing their own history, and no inherited culture or identities could alter their condition of childlike understanding. Determining a historical ancestor for the Native Americans was extraneous to studying these people for information on cognitive development and prehistoric civilizations.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Lockean perspective for understanding Native American development was widely accepted. However, this viewpoint does not reflect how the English originally approached the historical study of the New World. In the late sixteenth and

²¹⁴ Ibid., 39.

²¹⁵ Canizares-Esguerra, *History of the New World*, 2.

²¹⁶ John Locke, *An essay concerning humane understanding* (London, 1690), *Early English Books Online*, 44.

²¹⁷ Canizares-Esguerra, *History of the New World*, 111.

early seventeenth centuries, English writers believed they could construct histories of America and the Native Americans that would fully represent the newfound continent. These histories included favorable information about Native Americans, if the author determined that they were part of an elevated biblical or classical lineage. Debates over various historical narratives for America led to the opinion that Native Americans did not possess a knowable or meaningful past. This viewpoint was a consequence of English scholarship, rather than an accurate assessment of these peoples based on empirical observation. English scholars and travelers replicated the physical destruction of the Native Americans by manipulating their past, first to justify English colonization in America and then to dismiss these people as historically insignificant. The study and arrangement of history furthered English colonial goals and shaped perceptions of foreign peoples as incapable of historical progress.

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